

Fundraising After Action Report

Department **Fundraising**

Manager Maria Mulcahy

1. Introduction

1.1 Initial Set-up Dates & Structure

The Fundraising Department was set up initially in September 2001 with the appointment of Maria Mulcahy, as Director of Fundraising. Maria was not new to the Games as she was also a pro-active member of the Board of Directors of 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

The first person recruited within the Department was Niamh Moore as Executive Assistant. Over the next couple of months a plan was devised as to how to raise the funds required and what structure was required to do so.

A key element of the fundraising strategy was to establish a Fundraising Committee. This was in place by March 2002 and was composed of members of the Board, some Patrons and Sponsors etc.

It was a strong Committee, with a good mix and balance of influential high profile individuals from many walks of life; business, sporting, entertainment etc. In addition, there was a good geographical spread in the composition of the Committee ensuring representation was countrywide.

The fundraising targets for the Committee were established and each Committee member was given an area of responsibility and reported progress back to the Committee on a monthly basis for the duration of the campaign.

The Fundraising Department grew from two people to the final figure of eight during the twelve months prior to the Games. Staff was recruited on ‘as need to’ basis.

Areas of responsibility

Support an Athlete Campaign
Northern Ireland Fundraising

Building Services – this contribution would be mostly in kind.
Corporates
Golf / Sporting Organisations/ Race Days
Fundraising Gala Balls.

A decision was taken early during the planning phase that all fundraising except for the golf would take place between January and May of 2003. The groundwork for the success of the campaign was laid during 2002 with presentations taking place to companies, schools, sporting and other organisations etc. This was to create awareness and to raise the profile and brief as many people as possible on Special Olympics and the Games. It was felt that it would be easier from a psychological point of view to fundraise in the year of the Games as opposed to raising funds for an event which was taking place the following year.

This was one of the reasons that the fundraising campaign was so successful.

1.2 Preliminary Information

1.2.1 Past Games Information

There was no information from previous Games which was of relevance in the set up stages.

1.2.2 Past Games Plans & After Action Reports

The fundraising after action report from was interesting to read but of no use to our campaign

1.2.3 Site Visits/Workshops

Not applicable

2. Department Overview (Department goals)

The goal of the Department and the fundraising team was to raise €7 million through specific fundraising events, which represented 8 % of the overall budget. This figure broke down into €6 million in cash and €1 million value in kind (VIK).

2.1 Department Projects (breakdown of the Dept by Project)

- **Support An Athlete Programme.** This was the main fundraising project. Initially, at the planning stage it was titled Adopt an

Athlete but it was changed in late 2002 to Support an Athlete, as this was felt to be a more appropriate title and that it would bring more clarity and focus in the minds of the public. The target for the campaign was €3million.

- **Golfing Events.** The main golf event was the Mitsubishi Golf Classic which was held over two years. Two further golf competitions took place.
- **Fundraising Balls.** There were two major fundraising balls, one in the west of Ireland in Galway and the other in the east coast in Dublin.
- **Race Day.** This was a major fundraising event held in Leopardstown Race Course and run over two years.
- **Miscellaneous Events.?**
REHAB tickets, An Post Competition, Kelloggs etc

2.2 Major Deliverables

Support An Athlete Programme. The key deliverables here were:

- **Database of Target Companies.** A database of 2000 companies country wide was developed. Each member of the team had about 400 companies to deal with. Companies would have been met, or phoned, sent copies of the newsletter and kept informed during 2002 about Special Olympics and the World Games.
- **Promotional Campaign.** This was targeted at raising the profile of and levels of awareness of the Games. It consisted of publishing and circulating newsletters, radio and TV campaigns and follow-up telephone calls from the fundraising managers within the Department.

The TV and Radio Campaign began at the end of January and continued for 3 months. The radio campaign was particularly successful. We were very lucky in that the sponsor of the Support an Athlete Campaign was RTE, as a result we received a great deal of support on TV and Radio.

We also had a dedicated fundraising page in Countdown from January. We published and acknowledged fundraising events here, which proved very successful particularly with the schools.

- **Support an Athlete Pack.** This was a pack sent to companies /schools/sporting organisations/ etc giving them guidance on

how to organise fundraising events, the ‘do’s and don’t s’ of fundraising and where to lodge the monies raised.

The pack was prepared well in advance of the campaign and was ready to go six weeks before the campaign started. The day after the launch of the campaign 20,000 packs landed on the desks of the groups we had targeted in 2002. The personalities featured in the pack were RTE Presenters (TV and Radio) and were instantly recognised.

- **Campaign** The campaign officially lasted for three months. Six people worked on it. Their main areas of responsibility were:
 - answering the calls – and the response was incredible.
 - following up on their own contacts that they had developed during 2002,
 - ensuring that interesting events were highlighted on the radio.
 - most importantly looking after all the people who rang us.

The phones were manned from 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday from January to mid April. The phones were also manned on Saturdays from March onwards.

- **Certificates.** One of the main selling points of the campaign was that after an individual / school/ company ran their event or sent in a donation (min 1000 euro) we then sent them back a certificate advising them of the name of the athlete they sponsored and details regarding their sport and where they came from. We had to delay issuing the certificates until all the delegations were confirmed and this lead to extra work. Once we received the names of the athletes, donors were matched and specific requests were accommodated.

During the Games the sponsors could then follow the progress of their nominated athletes on a specially dedicated website. In addition, if they lived down the country we matched the donor with an athlete from their nearest host town and many of them actually met the athletes they had sponsored.

Unfortunately, some athletes did not attend the Games for one reason or another and we accommodated the public during Games time by issuing new certificates immediately.

A testament to the success of this particular part of the campaign is that the Irish Times (one of the main broadsheet

newspapers) supported an athlete, received the certificate, tracked the athlete down and featured her on the front cover of the newspaper during the Games.

- **Monitoring of Events.** Events were monitored on a daily basis and following the development of a hugely successful database system we could tell on a daily basis how many events were taking place and where. Event hosts were contacted after their event and encouraged to send their money in. Events delivered money usually within 14 days. Reminder postcards were issued to people who were delaying.
- **Thanks You Letters.** In addition to sending a certificate to all the donors they were also sent a thank you letter at a later stage and where possible visited by a member of the GOC. We also made Opening Ceremony tickets available to fundraisers through a raffle. Many of them will continue to support Special Olympics in the future because they had a good experience through the Support an Athlete Programme.
- **Sponsorship.** The project had to be co-ordinated with the sponsorship activity, coordinated by the Department of Marketing & Communications to ensure there was no crossover and to avoid companies being approached and targeted more than once.

Golf Events.

- **Mitsubishi Golf Classic.** This event was held over three years, 2001, 2002 and 2003. It was targeted at members of Golf Clubs countrywide and consisted of golf competitions at club level, regional level and national level. The final was held in Portugal each year.
- **Other Golf Classics.** Some other golf classics were organised targeted at the corporate sector (Old Head of Kinsale, Druid's Glen etc)

Fundraising Balls

- **Galway and Dublin.** Separate organising committees were put in place to run the balls. They were responsible for selling tickets, arranging sponsorship and sourcing auction items. The Ball held in Dublin was the single most successful fundraising Ball in Ireland to date.

Race Day.

- This was targeted at the horse racing community and the corporate sector. A Race Organising Committee took this project from planning through to success completion.

Miscellaneous Events.

- Other national fundraising events were organised, such as: REHAB tickets, An Post Competition, Kelloggs etc.
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2.3 Initial Organisation Chart

Initially the Fundraising Department consisted of a team of two people, one Director and one executive assistant.

2.4 Assumptions

- Dates – Summer Olympics 2003 would not alter.
- Budget – There would be no problems with external fundraising e.g. O’Brien’s fundraising, and the budget targets would not alter per event.
- Realistic Targets – Each event would bring in the targeted amount of money.
- Support an Athlete – Presentation pack and media launch would be successful in targeting appropriate clients within the country.
- Host Town Project – This would not affect the country wide Support an Athlete programme target within schools, offices and local clubs.
- Golf Challenges – Target amount of clubs to become involved in each event.
- Confirmed Sponsors – Assumption that confirmed sponsors would remain on board throughout.
- Database on server to be completed by December 2002.
- Committee Members – Assumption that all committees remain committed to their individual project e.g.; Support an Athlete, Ball 2003, Race Day etc.

2.5 Project Plan

See attached.

3. Department Organisation Charts (key Dept positions, descriptions and actual timing)

Maria Mulcahy	Director
Niamh Moore	Executive Assistant
Louise Rogan	Fundraising Manager
Celine Clarke	Fundraising Manager
Barbara Finn	Fundraising Co-ordinator/Golf Coordinator
Maeve McCreery	Regional Co-ordinator
Eilis Walsh	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Mary Clarke	Fundraising Assistant

3.1 Organisation Chart of Department Games minus 2 years

The department was set up in September 2001, 21 months out from the Games and it consisted then of one Director and one Executive Assistant.

3.2 Organisation Chart of Department Games minus 1 year

Maria Mulcahy	Director
Niamh Moore	Executive Assistant
Louise Rogan	Fundraising Manager
Celine Clarke	Fundraising Manager
Barbara Finn	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Vivian Walsh	Fundraising Co-ordinator

3.3 Organisation Chart of Department Games minus 6 months

Maria Mulcahy	Director
Niamh Moore	Executive Assistant
Louise Rogan	Fundraising Manager
Barbara Finn	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Celine Clarke	Fundraising Manager
Eilish Walsh	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Helen Donaghy	Regional Co-ordinator
Maeve McCreery	Regional Co-ordinator
Nora Rahill	Fundraising Co-ordinator, Northern Ireland
Deborah McGrory	Fundraising Co-ordinator

3.4 Final Games Organisational Chart (to include key volunteers)

Maria Mulcahy	Director
Finbar Cahill	Patron
Niamh Moore	Executive Assistant
Louise Rogan	Fundraising Manager
Barbara Finn	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Celine Clarke	Fundraising Manager
Eilish Walsh	Fundraising Co-ordinator
Maeve McCreery	Regional Co-ordinator
Nora Rahill	Fundraising Co-ordinator, Northern Ireland
Mary Clarke	Fundraising Assistant

3.5 Start & End Dates for all Staff

STARTDATE	ENDDATE	LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	JOB TITLE
4th May 2002	29th July 2003	Clarke	Celine	Fundraising Manager
2nd January 2003	10th May 2003	Donaghy	Helen	Regional Co-ordinator
13th May 2002	30th June 2003	Finn	Barbara	Fundraising Co-ordinator
6th January 2003	30th June 2003	McCreery	Maeve	Fundraising Co-ordinator
12th March 2003	23rd May 2003	McGrory	Deboragh	Fundraising Co-ordinator, NI
24th November 2001	5th September 2003	Moore	Niamh	Executive Assistant
n/a	30th September 2003	Mulcahy	Maria	Director, Fundraising
17th February 2003	31st July 2003	Rahill	Nora	Fundraising Co-ordinator, NI
4th February 2002	29th August 2003	Rogan	Louise	Fundraising Manager
1st August 2002	16th October 2002	Walsh	Vivian	Regional Co-ordinator
29th October 2002	31st July 2003	Walsh	Eilish	Campaign Co-ordinator

3.6 Recommendations

- Roles, responsibilities and job descriptions to be agreed and signed off in advance to ensure best use of resources.
- Database responsibility – Each member of the fundraising team was responsible for up to 400 clients. They also established and maintained strong relations with key large companies or organisations who contributed large sums of money. This approach worked very well.
- Appoint key people responsible for various large scale events:

- Louise – Race Day & Ball Committee Coordinator
 - Niamh – Fundraising Committee & Golf Events Coordinator
 - Celine – Support an Athlete Campaign Coordinator
- Circulate weekly rota of job specifications to all team members. This allowed varying degree of flexibility of jobs within the team and allowed each team member to become more accountable for their own jobs.
 - Specific persons should be allocated key jobs e.g. 2 persons responsible for updated database with donor money, key people responsible for taking calls in mornings/afternoons, while others followed up calls morning/afternoons etc.

4. Review of Department's Key Projects

4.1 Findings All events organised by fundraising team in conjunction with the committed well exceeded their targets. The Support an Athlete Campaign was an outstanding success, over 4000 events took place during the period of the campaign.

4.2 Recommendations Limit the period of fundraising to three months. The success of any fundraising campaign is in the advance preparation. If all contacts with prospective donors have been made well in advance, the marketing campaign prepared in advance, then the three month campaign can be used to concentrate on new people who will come on board as a result of a successful marketing and advertising campaign.

Uptake on the Golf competition for 2003 was down on previous years and as the Games were fast approaching we handed it over to Special Olympics Ireland, after training their staff member and assisting her with key contacts. The recommendation here is to monitor tightly the public response and manage carefully if you decide that the return will not exceed the effort.

5. Key Events for the Department. The main event for the Department was the launch of the Support an Athlete Campaign

5.1 Events The official launch of the Support an Athlete Campaign was held in Dublin, in January 2003. It had to make an impact as World Games was not a new story in terms of press coverage. To this end it

was very important to get a big star to launch the campaign. We were very lucky to get Roy Keane – Captain of Manchester United to launch our campaign, we received massive publicity both on TV and in the National Newspapers. We also ensured that the launch was not elitist. While sponsors attended and a considerable number of guests from the corporate world we also invited representatives from youth groups, schools, sports and social clubs etc...In addition it was held in a very public venue where passers by could be part of the daytime activities. The event was inclusive and very high profile as a result

- 5.2 Recommendations** The key recommendation here is to generate as much publicity as possible in order to increase public awareness and to target the launch at as wide an audience as possible.

6. Dependencies

- 6.1 Internal Dependencies.** We depended on the Marketing & Communications Dept and we were lucky in that it was situated next door to us. We worked well together and the campaign they coordinated was first class.

There was also a dependency with the Support and Volunteer Department specifically through the Host Town Programme. Each Host Town was responsible for conducting their own fundraising campaigns at local level in order to fund the range of events organised for the delegation they were hosting for the four days of the Host Town Programme.

The aim was that the Host Town Programme would be self financing and that sufficient money would be raised locally to cover all costs such as transport, accommodation, food etc. The guidance given to the Host Towns was to raise € 250 per delegation member and any surplus to revert to Special Olympics Ireland to be spent locally. It had also been agreed that all Host Town fundraising would end by December 2002 to ensure there would be no clash with the Support An Athlete Campaign which was scheduled to begin in January 2003.

Unfortunately some towns continued their fundraising into 2003 and this caused problems. It led to confusion among some of the public and duplication of effort with some people being approached twice on behalf of Special Olympics to donate funds. It also in some cases impacted negatively on the image of the Games and Special Olympics. There is little doubt that the Support an Athlete Campaign could have been more effective in early 2003 if the Host Town fundraising had finished in 2002 as scheduled.

- 6.2 Recommendations.** Rather than have two fundraising efforts, a strong recommendation is that there be only one campaign to raise monies for

the Games. All fundraising activity should be organised and coordinated centrally through the Fundraising Dept. A budget would then be made available to the Host Towns to pay for their initiative. If more thought had gone into the process, more money could have been raised in a more efficient way. The Host Town's fundraised for their own initiative and people understood that the money would stay locally. Therefore, when the Support an Athlete Programme started there was huge confusion at a local level and also within the Host Town Committees as to what the money was for and how it would be allocated. Some Host Town Committees were more successful than others.

Having fielded the calls, answered complaints and liaised with Host Town Committees it is my professional recommendation that a single public fundraising campaign be embarked upon in future, fully controlled by the Games Fundraising Department.

- 6.3 External Dependencies.** RTÉ sponsored the Support an Athlete Campaign. It was vitally important that we sustain media coverage during the three months and RTÉ assisted greatly with this. Our main issue was to give them appropriate recognition as a sponsor and to make sure that our campaign on their airwaves was in keeping with their commitments and broadcasting charter. After initial problems on the publicity side of things we managed the relationship well.

Bank of Ireland held the account for the Support an Athlete Programme. As we had to write back with certificates to donors we needed people to send us the lodgement slip. Despite numerous discussions with bank officials, the clerks were not really aware of how the campaign worked and we spent a huge amount of time trying to identify lodgements on the bank statement. Also, confusion arose when fundraisers lodged money in their local branch and the clerk deposited it in the Host Town account. We attempted to redeem as much of the money as possible.

Special Olympics Ireland was an external stakeholder and from a fundraising point of view it was felt that their ongoing fundraising efforts suffered as it was in competition with the fundraising campaigns for the Games. In the mind of the public there was little distinction between Special Olympics Ireland and the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games. This caused some confusion and led to the perception in some peoples, minds that the Special Olympics was asking for money twice.

- 6.4 Recommendations.** Ensure that the bank clerks are fully briefed on the way the campaign works.

Future efforts sponsored by RTE must be aware of their constraints and ensure that they are given full recognition, particularly as there were so many sponsors.

Coordinate fundraising efforts with the National Programme to ensure there is no conflict. A possible option is for the National Programme to suspend their separate fundraising efforts for the year of the Games and to have a joint fundraising campaign (i.e. Games and National Programme).

- 7. Key Issues/Risks.** The main risk was the overlap with Host Town fundraising. It caused some confusion and looked unprofessional and was managed by proactively dealing with any complaints and liaising with Host Town Committees who raised issues.

Another key risk was that public awareness levels would not be sufficiently high to reach the fundraising targets set. This risk was managed by ensuring that detailed preparatory work was done in advance during the promotional phase of the Support an Athlete Campaign. In addition the ongoing work of the Marketing & Communications Dept and the successful high profile launch of the campaign, were also relevant.

- 7.1 Recommendations.** The main recommendation here is to have one coordinated fundraising campaign this will avoid any potential conflict at local level with Host Town fundraising efforts.

- 8. Department Publications.** The only Department publication was the Support an Athlete Pack referred to earlier in paragraph 2.2. This Pack contained advice and tips on how to fundraise at local level. Twenty thousand of these packs were printed and they were sent initially to the targeted companies on the database at the launch of the campaign and thereafter to companies, clubs and individuals who expressed an interest in taking part in the campaign.

A copy of the Fundraising Pack is attached.

- 8.1 Recommendations.** The Fundraising Pack was an essential ingredient in the success of the campaign and is therefore recommended for future such fundraising efforts.

9. Summary of Main Recommendations to SOI and future GOCs

- Establish a Fundraising Committee eighteen months out from the Games. It needs to be a strong Committee of committed, influential people, with a good geographical spread.

- Plan the fundraising campaign with the Committee and assign areas of responsibility.
- The fundraising effort should consist of a range of events targeted at as many different sectors and groups as possible.
- Schedule the main fundraising effort (i.e. collection of money) for the year of the Games (i.e. January to May).
- Build a database of targeted companies, clubs and organisations a year in advance of the Games.
- Focus on the planning and preparation phase to establish contacts, build relationships etc., prior to any fundraising activity.
- Involve Marketing and Communications in raising levels of public awareness and in advertising and publicising events.
- Hold a public launch, using celebrities to generate maximum amounts of publicity via TV, Radio and National Newspapers.
- The Support an Athlete Campaign was very successful. That concept and approach should be replicated by the organisers of future Games.
- Have one Department responsible for the overall fundraising effort. This will avoid any potential conflict and confusion such as Host Towns raising money locally.
- Be aware that there may be an impact on the ongoing fundraising efforts of the National Programme, in this case Special Olympics Ireland. This needs to be coordinated and planned for.
- Ensure that there is an efficient and effective way of collecting and banking the funds raised.
- Coordinate to ensure that there is no conflict with sponsors, a close collaborative relationship with the Sponsorship Manager is required.
- Increase the fundraising team incrementally to ensure they can cope with the workload as the fundraising campaign increases.
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for the fundraising team and ensure they operate effectively both individually and as a team.
- Monitor progress continually and if necessary attend fundraising events to acknowledge the efforts of the fundraisers and also to receive cheques and cash.

- Thank all fundraisers initially on receipt of money and also follow up with formal ‘ ‘ thank you ‘ ‘ letters to recognise and acknowledge their efforts.

10. Index of Support Documentation Attached

Appendix 1	Project Plan
Appendix 2	Support an Athlete Pack

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