

JustGiving Winter Fundraising Guide

How to successfully fundraise through the winter season

JustGiving® from Blackbaud



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Introduction

End-of-year fundraising campaigns are the perfect opportunity to share your charity's story and ask for support when people are in the giving spirit... and it's time to get planning if you haven't already!

Whether you're relaunching your annual appeal or trying something new, this guide has everything you need for winter fundraising success. From insights and best practice to inspiring winter fundraising examples and ideas, we've got you covered.

It's a busy time of year with lots of charities making fundraising asks, so use the advice in this guide to cut through the noise and make your end- of-year appeal or event as impactful as possible.

We're always here to help – if you want to chat through your end-of-year campaign plans in more detail, book a free call with one of our Customer Success Managers.

Book a call



Insights.

The first step to a successful winter fundraising campaign is planning. And the best way to plan is to look at the data!

Here are the key insights from the 2023 end-of-year season you can use when planning and scheduling your charity's comms and donation asks.

Donation peaks:

Coinciding with pay day, the 1st of each month sees an uplift in donations.

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays are the most generous days of the week.

The 30th of November is the peak day for most donations over the entire winter period. The average donation value in November is £29.

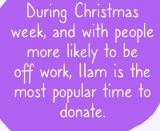
In December, the average donation is £28. People get their days off to a generous start, with 9am being the peak time for donations. This declines throughout the day from this point onwards.

In November,
mid-morning and
evenings see peak
activity, with 10am
and 8pm seeing most
donations made.

During Christmas week, and with people more likely to be off work, Ilam is the most popular time to donate.

As Giving Tuesday is increasing in popularity, this could be a great day to launch your campaign or encourage more support.

On Christmas
Day most people
donate in the
morning between
9am-12pm.



Quiter peaks:

Christmas and Boxing Day have fewest donations with this increasing towards New Year's Eve Weekends remain quiet throughout November and December

Mondays and Tuesdays are the quietest weekdays



You'll find more campaign promotion and stewardship tips later in this guide to make sure your campaign is clear and reaches the right audiences at the right times.

Planning your campaign

When it comes to planning your campaign, you'll first want to decide three things:

- Your charity's overall goal
- Your primary ask
- And your key call to action



Once you've established these, you can consider the ideas and events that will support your goal. Knowing your target audience is vital in creating the best experience for them! Ask yourself:

- What type of campaigns have resonated with your supporters in the past?
- What channels does your network engage with the most?
- How can you best connect your campaign to your cause (and your supporters' passions and interests)?



Two reminders when planning your campaign

- Even though it's winter, you don't have to stick to a "Christmas appeal"
 do what's right for your charity.
- Remember to check that your campaign's key dates don't clash with direct competitors.

Inspiration

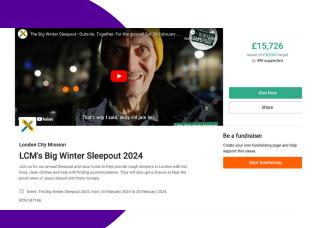
Ready to be inspired? From festive fun to winter sleep out events, here are some brilliant ideas and examples that have worked for other charities:

Winter fundraising ideas

Winter run or walk

<u>WWF's Big Winter Wander</u> was accessible regardless of supporters' locations, encouraging people to take part by offering different distances to be completed over a few days. They also created fun activity sheets to get the whole family involved, and <u>incentivised fundraising further</u> by offering completion certificates and social media badges.





Sleep out

London City Mission's Big Winter Sleepout 2024

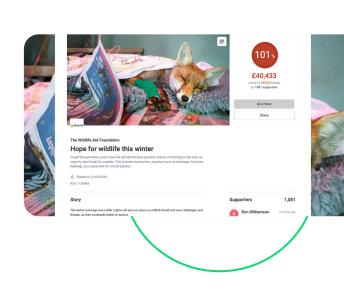
Campaign Page used a quick and simple cover video to make an impact, sharing participants' stories as well as clips of previous events to inspire and engage potential fundraisers and donors.

The Story area focused on one particular participant, Marc, and how profound the event was for him in terms of making an impact and connecting with his religious community.

Winter Appeal

The <u>Wildlife Aid Foundation</u> connected their <u>Hope</u> <u>for Wildlife winter appeal</u> to their charity's cause by highlighting the difficulties animals face during winter, such as accidents, fireworks and the cold weather.

Photos throughout the Story area reminded supporters of the animals that desperately need help at winter, and bolstered their message of hope, vision, and thanks too.





Winter Appeal

Young Camden Foundation used the cover video to share the benefits of holiday activities and food programmes to many families who are facing difficult financial decisions, focusing their attention on children and young adults who are particularly impacted.

<u>ForRefugees</u> used a simple yet effective cover photo and background image to highlight the need for their <u>Collective Aid Emergency Winter Appeal</u>.

They encouraged support by clearly explaining how donations will have an impact on refugees and make a difference, and they included a heartfelt thank you to supporters too.



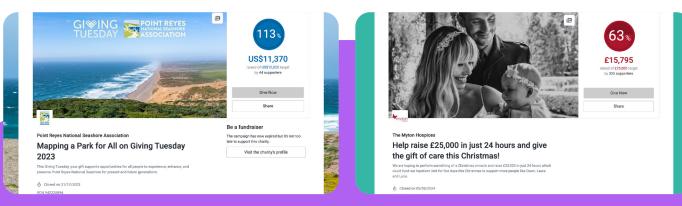
Giving Tuesday

Giving Tuesday happens every year the day after Black Friday and Cyber Monday as an opportunity to give back. **Point Reyes National Seashore Association** created a Giving Tuesday Campaign to help restore and maintain their important ecosystem.

They created a gallery at a glance using an image combining three photos in their Story section. They also suggested other ways to give and used emojis to add a little extra sparkle!

The <u>Myton Hospices</u> launched their Christmas appeal on Giving Tuesday to see how many donations they could raise in just 24 hours... and 325 people supported this Campaign and helped them raise £15,000 in just 24 hours!

They used headers to break up the page Story and highlight key information, plus used plenty of quotes to share the impact these donations would have on people at the hospice.



Point Reyes National Seashore Association

Myton Hospices

Christmas Fundraising Ideas

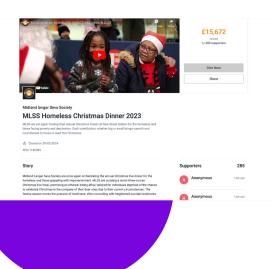
If a Christmas themed campaign works for your end-of-year fundraising, we've got lots of inspiring ideas and examples for you here too.

Toy, hamper and gift Appeals

TouchPoint's Kids Christmas Gifts Appeal 2023 raised funds to distribute gift vouchers to families who couldn't afford Christmas that year and successfully reached their target to support 600 children in the area.

They made the most of their Campaign Page Story section, added a festive cover photo and background.





Host a Christmas party or dinner

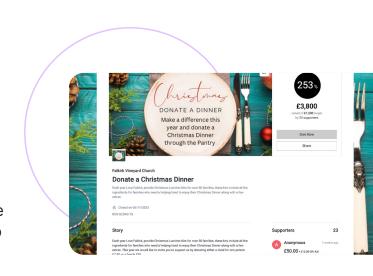
<u>Midland Langar Seva Society</u> hosted their annual Christmas Eve <u>Homeless Christmas Dinner.</u>

By using a captivating video as the cover photo, they shared snippets of the previous year's event, showing the work that goes on behind the scenes as well as showcasing all the festive fun; a Father Christmas, DJ, carol singers and musicians!

If you host an event, remember to get some clips from the day so you can share it in your next appeal!

<u>Falkirk Vineyard Church</u> used a beautiful cover photo and background to create an immediate festive feeling for their <u>Donate a Christmas</u> <u>Dinner Appeal.</u>

They over doubled their target raising £3,800 to provide Christmas Lunches Kits to families in the local community and provide ongoing support to the community pantry.



Christmas festive fun

Could you get supporters into the Christmas spirit with a Christmas jumper day, Christmas carol singing or decorating with Christmas lights?

<u>St Luke's (Cheshire) Hospice's Christmas Jumper</u>
<u>Day</u> included simple and easy instructions on how to participate.

They shared a great photo of the nurses participating in the event, who provide care and support to local people, plus a heartfelt thank you message to share positivity and a sense of community... and they raised 4 times their target!



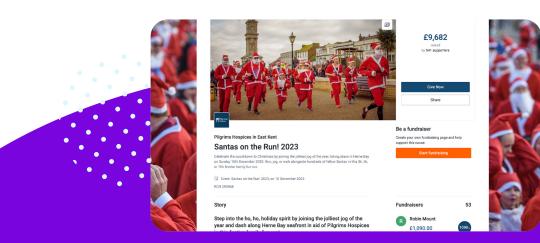
Christmas dashes, runs or processions

A fun way to fundraise at Christmas, and often family friendly, participants might get dressed up as reindeers, Santa or elves to get festive ...or in the case of the <u>Orkney Agricultural Society</u>, it could even be a tractor run!

These events may require some planning, but the event brings together the whole community and gives an opportunity to celebrate the incredible work of your charity.

<u>Pilgrims Hospices In East Kent</u> made their <u>Santas on the Run!</u> event more accessible and open to families with the option of three distances and no pressure on participants to run the course.

Their background and cover photo show how fun and festive a sea of Santas is, and being so red, also helps it stand out! Combined with a short story that shares the charity message and the impact any money raised would have, the page is simple but very effective.



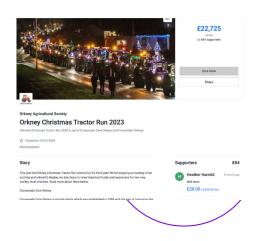
Pilgrims Hospices In East Kent

Christmas dashes, runs or processions

The <u>Children's Trust's</u> festive <u>Elf Run 2023</u> raised over double their £5,000 target!

They included a heartwarming video in their story about Spike, one of the children from the school – a must watch for any charity looking for inspiration about how to tell a story and share your charity's impact with supporters.



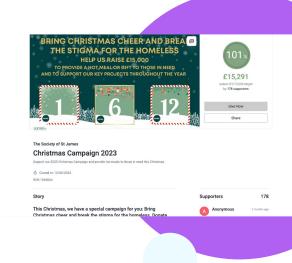


The Orkney Agricultural Society really leaned into what they had available to them: tractors! This annual event sees their colourfully lit up tractors take to the streets and in 2023 raised funds for Crossroads Care Orkney and Home-Start Orkney.

Advent Calendar

The Society of St James encouraged donations to their Christmas Campaign by offering exclusive access to an Advent calendar. Each day the Advent calendar shares something about homelessness, the charity projects, their achievements as well as how their donations make a difference.

They used the page Story section to give a clear breakdown of how each donation amount makes an impact, using a 'shopping list' style. They also shared links to their social media so people could follow along with the daily Advent calendar throughout December, and the charity could grow their network too.



Christmas Appeal

<u>Hackney Night Shelter's Christmas Appeal</u> raised an incredible £75,206, 50% over target!

They clearly set out their goal, the initiative, shared past successes and explained why supporting the cause matters. They also offered alternative and additional ways people could help, such as sharing the word and volunteering.





Multiple System Atrophy Trust used their Story area to share the work of one specific Social Welfare Specialist called Sam and the lifechanging support she gives to people – a photo of her is an extra level of personalisation. Combined with quotes from individuals who've been supported by Sam and Multiple System Atrophy Trust, the campaign really highlights the importance of every donation made.

The use of the illustration as cover and background image gives the page a warm festive feel too.

Feeling inspired? Read on to learn the best way to get your JustGiving Campaign Page up and running!



Creating your Campaign Page

Think of your Campaign Page as your online fundraising hub for your winter appeal or event. With all your donations and fundraisers' efforts in one place, it'll make tracking your progress easier too!

Be sure to make the most of all the tools on offer to create a page that stands out and resonates with supporters.

Create your Campaign Page:

- 1. Log in to your JustGiving charity account.
- 2. If using the page for an event, list the event on JustGiving (see below)
- 3. Go to the Campaigns tab
- 4. Give your Campaign a name
- 5. Follow the set-up steps.

You can leave your Campaign in 'Draft' as you customise your page before publishing it.

See examples and get step-by-step instructions for designing the perfect Campaign Page in our <u>Campaign Page Guide.</u>



Using your Campaign Page for an event?

List your event on JustGiving to make it easier for you to promote it to your supporters and encourage them to fundraise online. You can also track how much has been raised for a specific event in your reports.

How to list your own event:

- 1. Log in to your charity account
- 2. Click on the Events & Widgets tab and select Add an event
- 3. Add the event details and click Continue
- 4. Add the details of the person who is managing the event at your charity and their email address.
- 5. Click Submit event

How to list a public event:

If an event is public, chances are it's already listed on our site. To add it to your list of promoted events, follow these steps:

- 1. Log in to your charity account
- 2. Click on the Events & Widgets tab and select Add an event
- 3. Enter the name and date of the event and wait for a few seconds, the event should then appear on the right-hand side.
- 4. Click Continue with this event and add in the details of the person at the charity who is responsible for the event.
- 5. Click Submit event

Once you've listed your event, you'll receive an email letting you know we've received your request and we'll be in touch within 48 hours to confirm your event has been listed on JustGiving.

Linking your Campaign Page to your event

If you're using the page for an event that supporters can create Fundraising Pages for, it's useful to link the Campaign Page to your Event ID on JustGiving. This not only streamlines your fundraisers' page creation steps, but also ensures their pages appear on your Campaign Page and have the correct Event ID to make your reporting easier too.

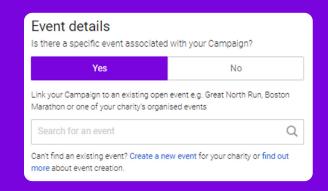
The best method is to link to your event during Campaign Page creation.

- 1. List your event first
- 2. Wait for the event to be approved by the JustGiving team.
- 3. Create your Campaign Page, where then you'll then see an option to link a listed event to your page.

Already have a Campaign created? You can still link it to the event:

- 1. Navigate to your Campaign Page and click Edit.
- 2. In the Campaign Overview section, choose to link to an existing event.

Select Yes when asked 'Is there a specific event associated with your Campaign?' And search for your event name.





Important!

- Once an event is linked to your Campaign Page, it cannot be removed.
- Only Fundraising Pages linked to that event can be connected to the page.
- It may take up to 24 hours for your event and campaign page to be linked. So, don't panic if updates are not immediate.

Optimising your Campaign Page

Even quick tips and tricks can make your Campaign Page stand out – well worth doing at such a busy time of the year for fundraising! Here are our top tips for adding that personal touch:

- Increase text size where appropriate by using the T symbol. Note: This doesn't have to be just for headers; it can also be used to highlight important information such as key dates or event details.
- Include quotes from your community. Inspire empathy by including messages from your fundraisers and beneficiaries. After all, these events are about helping other people at an important time of the year.
- Add links. You might point visitors to your charity's website, social media, or any URLs that are relevant to your event.
- Add photos and videos. We all know a picture can say a thousand words. Add depth and colour to your story by including photos and videos on your page. A great way is to showcase the work your charity's done throughout the year, or feature photos from a previous winter campaign you've run. .
- Include infographics and illustrations. Create some visual material to help communicate ideas and info in a more interesting way. This could include a 'shopping list' of specific donations amounts that make a difference, or an infographic detailing what you're able to do after reaching your winter fundraising objectives.
- Produce a video. One of the most effective ways to engage visitors and share information is by sharing a video on your Campaign Page. And it doesn't need to be complex: just grab your phone, tell your supporters about your winter campaign and what their support means. It could be informative, comedic, or really tug at people's heart strings. Whatever video you make, ensure that it fits the overall feeling that you want people to have when they take part in your event.

Missed the Inspiration section? Check out page 6 to see some great examples of charities' putting these tips into practice on their Campaign Pages.



Top Tips from our JustGiving expert:

When it comes to event fundraising, crafting compelling stories is the key to connecting supporters to your cause.

Talk about the challenges your beneficiaries are facing. Share the specific impact supporters will make by getting involved (E.g. every £25 raised will help us feed one family). Tell them the difference your charity's made through fundraising in the past. And remind them that the reason you have such incredible stories to tell is because of people like them!



Brian IsaacSenior Marketing Content Coordinator

Promote Your Campaign

Once your campaign has been created and published it's time to get sharing!

You could share your Campaign Page URL on your website, comms and on socials, or even add a button on your site linking to the campaign. Deep links are an even more effective tool though.



Deep links reduce the number of steps fundraisers and donors need to take to complete an action by bypassing your main Campaign Page and taking supporters straight into the flow of making a donation or creating their Fundraising Page. Useful if, for instance, you've already shared all the information supporters need on your website or in an email.

Use deep links with a clear call to action like "Make your donation now" or "Create your page today."



Share Fundraising Link (to create fundraisers' pages) ensures all Fundraising Pages are connected to the campaign. By reducing the steps involved in page creation, it's quicker for people to create their page and helps retain them for future campaigns. Use this wherever you are encouraging people to sign up and start fundraising.



A Donate Link (to encourage donations) takes supporters straight to the donation page. By reducing the steps, these deep links are likely to increase conversion rates and potentially increase the average donation to your cause. You'll be able to add a default amount and track the success of your link by adding a reference to it, this will then show in your Donation Report.

To find your deep links:

- Once your campaign is live, navigate to the Campaigns tab in your account
- Click View existing campaigns
- Click the 'More' menu on your end-of-year campaign
- Choose Share Fundraising Link or Donate Link.



QR codes

QR codes are another great way to bring offline donations online. In a matter of seconds, you can generate your campaign QR code - all you need to do is add /qrcode to your campaign URL and then right click, save image.



Add your QR code to your:

- Website
- Collection tins
- Christmas service leaflets
- In stores/museums
- Posters/physical marketing materials
- Email comms
- Newsletters
- Direct mail/fundraising packs

Read on to see how to incorporate these into your wider marketing plan and promotion.



Marketing Plan

To maximise your reach, use a combination of online and offline marketing channels. You don't need a big budget, the best results come from planning consistent, targeted and on-brand outputs.

Top Tips from our JustGiving Expert

- Get your message in front of the right people Use your own data to build audiences and understand who your target audience is.
- **Messaging** Make sure your creative is strong, with your main message short and to the point.
- Think, Feel, Do What do you want supporters to think when they see your campaign? What emotions do you want to spark? What action do you want them to be inspired to take?
- **Incentives** Introduce competitions or incentives and use your own audience as nano-influencers by encouraging them to share on social to help you get more coverage.
- Create a timeline Plan for key actions and marketing activities. Look back at previous years to see if anything worked particularly well.
- **Header Image** Include the campaign name, date and key info in the header image and images on social media. Write more compelling messaging in your copy that's still easy to read quickly.
- **Brand Colours** Set your brand colours in your charity account and use the same hex code for social media posts and marketing.
- **Mobile traffic** With traffic on mobile ever-growing, and highest at weekends, we make sure JustGiving pages are optimised for mobile view. Make sure this is considered in your own campaign planning too.



Lucy HillGrowth Marketing Manager



Want to grow your reach further? Ambassadors, celebrity fundraisers, corporate partners or even local sports clubs could help. Ask if they can promote your campaign to any followers, employees or members.

Make the process as effortless as possible for them by packaging up any image assets that they can use as well as suggested email or social copy. Remember to shout them out and thank them publicly for their support too!

Social Media

Don't worry if your time and resources mean your charity can't have a presence on every social media platform. As a good start, choose at least one platform that matches your supporter base best.

Top Tips from our JustGiving Expert

- Connect audiences to your cause Share real life stories and examples of your charity's impact. You could even create an Advent calendar of sorts, sharing a story each day.
- Suggest donations as gifts 56% of people we asked would appreciate a Christmas donation made on their behalf over an unwanted gift.
- Create a hashtag Hashtags work across all social media platforms. Can you sum your campaign up in two words? Then you have your hashtag! Remind your fundraisers to use it too.
- Festive reels using trending Christmas songs Share how your charity celebrates Christmas in an Instagram reel or TikTok with Christmas music to give supporters a chance to look behind the scenes and get to know your team.
- Scheduling posts Schedule posts for when people are naturally scrolling on their phones; the commute, lunch time or watching the Strictly Come Dancing final!



Becky FirthCommunity Manager

Stewardship

Timing your comms in the run up to Christmas and over New Year is key. Your supporters' inboxes will already be flooded with retail emails from companies all the way up to Christmas Eve so think carefully about when you contact them.

Key Dates to Consider

Try to get any scheduled comms sent out before 20th December.

21st to 25th December people usually start their annual leave this week so they're not checking their emails as much, plus companies really ramp up their comms for last minute sales.

Think about sharing impact stories and how donations have already helped so far to engage your supporters.

Post-Christmas (26th to 1st January) most people are busy with their friends and families, so this is the perfect opportunity to focus on campaign updates rather than making donation asks.

In the first week of January comms where you ask people to make plans for the year (e.g do a 10k race in April) perform quite well because of 'new year, new you' messaging.



Top Tip from our JG expert:

Your email subject line and pre-header are like the cover of a book, make sure they're engaging enough to make a reader want to open it (there are some handy free subject line tester tools online to help you optimise). Once open, ensure the call to action is clear and concise, your job is to make the reader click a link – leading to conversion.



Rachel Cooper CRM Specialist

SEO

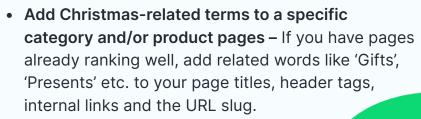
If optimised correctly, Christmas can be a gift to your search traffic.

If you are new to SEO, follow <u>best practices</u> and work on your foundations first, and remember this is something you build on over time! Tools that can help with SEO include: Google Trends, <u>SEMrush</u>, <u>Ahrefs</u> and <u>Ubersuggest</u>.

The earlier you start optimising, the better; consider building seasonal content that lives on your website year-round to develop links and page authority.

Top Tips from our JustGiving Expert

- Keep Seasonal Pages Don't delete those pages, they can be updated and reused the following year. Exclude the year in the URL otherwise the page will age and you'll lose all your hard work.
- Expand your current keyword topics Include Christmas-related search terms, such as: 'Gift/s', 'For Her', 'For Him', 'Present/s', 'Christmas' and 'Holidays'. Add them to relevant existing pages on your website. Ideally, place them in your page title, header tags, internal links and within your content.
- Add a prominent Christmas section to your website In the main navigation bar would be best, or subcategories which are well-linked from both the navigation bar and within the body text.





Antony Murray Senior SEO Lead

Best Practice Campaign Tips

Page Activation

Helping fundraisers start raising money on their page should be one of your top priorities for your end-of-year campaign. An 'activated' Fundraising Page means your fundraiser's gained that all-important first donation.



The reason this is so important is that, often, that first donation is the catalyst for receiving lots more!

If you're on our Grow Plan, check out your Fundraising Page reports to find your inactive fundraisers: they'll be the ones with zero donations so far. Encourage them to share their Fundraising Page and self-donate as a proven way to help kickstart their fundraising.

Leveraging fundraiser behaviour

When people start fundraising for you on JustGiving, they'll automatically get a series of highly-personalised emails helping them start their fundraising, coaching them on best practices, and celebrating their milestones as they go.

These emails don't only add extra delight to your fundraisers' journey...they've driven 50 million donations (!) since we launched them in 2020. Plus, those who get them raise 6% more.

Offer additional support and encouragement by sharing your own tips and motivational messages. Or make the most of JustGiving fundraising resources by reminding fundraisers to check them out.

Thanking your Fundraisers and Donors

Fundraisers also love hearing directly from your charity!

It's crucial to recognise your fundraisers' efforts. And connecting with your community is an opportunity to build stronger relationships and secure them as recurring fundraisers going into the new year.

Use your Fundraising Page Reports to get the details of your fundraisers so you can reach out to them, if possible, and go that extra mile. We recommend checking in on their fundraising with a call or text, showing your gratitude with a video message, shouting them out on social media, sending certificates, and of course sharing all the fundraising tips!

Research has shown that first-time donors who receive a personal thank-you within 48 hours are four times more likely to give again. You can set a donor thank you message in your Campaign Page set up; this is sent to any donors who log into their JustGiving account to make a donation.

Reporting

Reports can be found in your charity account under the <u>Reports</u> tab; if you are a Start Plan charity then you can still fundraise without this data but as your fundraising picks up, you might want to consider upgrading. You can use reports to better steward your fundraisers, see any correlation between marketing and fundraising, and understand the aspects of your campaign that work well and to consider using again in future.

There are three types of reports available in your JustGiving account:

Payment Reports give you a detailed breakdown of the donations paid to your organisation, including Gift Aid if you're in the UK. The details include:

- The amounts we've paid to you and any fees
- The donor details (unless they've asked to remain anonymous)
- The fundraiser whose JustGiving page received the donation (this information will be left blank for donations made straight to your charity)

Fundraising Page Reports show you all the information about the Fundraising Pages connected to your charity. This includes the fundraiser's contact details and how much they've raised. There are three types of Fundraising Page Reports:

- Pages created so you can identify new fundraisers and contact them
- Pages expiring so you know when to thank your fundraisers
- Pages with an event date so you can see all the pages created for specific events and the total raised for the event

Donation Reports show you all the information you need to know about donations made to your charity on JustGiving.

These could be donations made through Fundraising Pages or directly to your organisation. They also include contact details of donors that have opted in to receive communications from you. You can download a donation report for a week, a month or a custom period of time.

JustGiving support and resources

Here's even more information to help you before, during, and after your charity's winter fundraising.

Customer Success Team

Our amazing Customer Success team is always on hand to help your charity achieve your fundraising goals.

Whether it's helping you make the most of the tools in your account, or chatting through your JustGiving campaign plan, we're with you at every step! They pride themselves on helping charities raise the funds they need to continue their life-changing work.

Book a call with the Success Team

Customer Support Team

Our Support Team is available to help with any day-to-day issues you might be having with your account or answer any questions you have. You can also live chat with them for an even quicker response.

Email our support team charities@justgiving.com

Read Charity FAQs

Live Chat using the 'Help Bubble'

Webinars, Blogs, and Resources

Our Webinar Hub has upcoming and on-demand webinars on a range of topics.

Subscribe to the <u>JustGiving blog</u> to stay up to date with news, product updates and our latest tips.

Here's just a few you might find useful:

- Event Fundraising Guide 2024
- Event Fundraising: How to raise more online
- How Brain Tumour Research see proven results from the GivePanel x JustGiving integration
- <u>JustGiving x Liberty Pay: Becoming confident with contactless giving</u>



Resources for your fundraisers

https://www.justgiving.com/for-fundraising/fundraising-tips