



Holding a Golf Tournament

Fundamentals

- Pick a time of year you would like to have your tournament. Be flexible on you date and tee time. Many courses offer discounts for off-season or mid-week golf dates.
- Make sure there aren't other tournaments being held on the same day that might compete with yours. Your local Chamber of Commerce should know when Golf Tournaments are taking place in your area.
- Set a goal for how much you would like to raise. This will help you determine entry fees.
- Set SMART goals. Your goals need to be specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely to help guide your efforts. Examples of good SMART goals for your golf tournament are:
 - Certain number of registrants
 - Certain amount of money raised
- Assemble a planning committee to help with PR & marketing, recruiting, hospitality, volunteers, etc..
 - Rotate members of the committee through the years so that people don't burn out and others can bring fresh ideas to the event.
 - MP support is the lynchpin, they need to be onboard to get others onboard.
- Most courses have experience with people hosting tournaments/fundraisers. Call around to see what packages they offer. Make sure to ask about:
 - Select a prestigious golf course. It drives up participation and you can charge more per golfer.
 - Description of tournament services: Are golf balls, golf carts, score cards, gratuities, and service fees, etc. included?
 - Number of golfers and guarantees: When is attendee list due? Are there penalties if the estimated number of golfers is reduced?

HOLDING A GOLF TOURNAMENT

- Total costs: Costs per golfer, costs for food, beverage, services, etc. and due dates for deposit and final payment.
- Cancellation terms and weather policy.
- The person/company hosting the tournament is the one responsible for paying the golf course (greens fees, meals, other fees, etc.).
- Build a budget. Set a budget and keep careful track of it so you know what the tournament is costing you as planning progresses. The last thing you want to do is get to post-tournament stage and learn that the race has cost your nonprofit money.
- Obtain sponsors for holes, drink carts, food, beverages, and decorations.
 - This is the event's biggest money maker.
 - Because of the level of clientele, many businesses find value in sponsoring the event. They get to meet the golfers at their sponsored hole.
 - Many years the sponsors commit to the next year shortly after the event concludes.
 - A local car dealership offers a hole in one contest, which works out well because there's a fancy car at the golf tournament and insurance is affordable because the likelihood of a hole in one is low.
 - The golf carts are also sponsored.
 - They've had tailors, paramedical, restaurants and beer makers sponsor holes.
 - One year a cigar bar van joined the fun.
 - Survey your sponsors after the event to see if they liked being involved. Get them to sign up for next year right away.
 - Update the Northwestern Mutual Sponsorship Package template to fit your event.

Promote Your Event

- Put tournament details on your ALSF fundraising page.
- Use Northwestern Mutual's EventBrite account to create registration for tournament participants. Contact Jodi Nolte at jodinolte@northwesternmutual.com to request access.
- Promote your tournament via social media using Hearsay and use the Northwestern Mutual email template to invite participants.
- Map out and practice welcoming guests to ensure the check-in process, check-out process, food, and service are not confusing or disappointing.

Event Day

- Capture pictures of the event and share them with your guests.
- Think about creative food ideas.
 - Food can be your biggest expense for the event.
 - An outdoor picnic was much more popular than the formal plated dinner.

Fundraising During the Event

- Sell mulligans. People can buy a \$20 (or any price) mulligan ticket to retake a shot at the start.
- Hold a 50/50 give away (not raffle) where half the money in the pot goes to the winner and half goes to ALSF.
- Ask golfers to pay \$5 for each stroke over par.
- Charge an entry fee for a closest to the hole contest or a beat the golf pro contest.
- Have a pro on the course and tell golfers they can pay \$100 to have the pro take a shot for them.
- Hold a longest drive or straightest drive contest.
- Have a lemonade stand on the course and ask for donations.

Include an Auction

- Use Northwestern Mutual's Bidding for Good account to create an auction. We recommend using the online auction feature.
Contact Jodi Nolte at jodinolte@northwesternmutual.com to request access.
- Open the online silent auction a few days before your event and encourage early bidding.
- You can choose the option to have Bidding for Good supply personnel for the day for setup and technical support.
- Find special items that are exclusive or hard to purchase.
- Be selective in the items you are offering, less is more.
- Select three to four high-end items, such as trips for a live auction.
- At the end of the live auction, hold a "raise the paddle" to solicit direct donations. Have a few donors planted in the audience to start the paddle raising.
 - Create a situation where your FR's can look generous in front of their clients.
 - If matching gifts are utilized, a \$500 gift can be a \$1000 gift and the FR can say they are pledging \$1000 at the event. This primes the pump for others to be generous and look good.
 - See if the MP is willing to offer a match as well to help increase the amounts given.
 - Teach FR's how to utilize matching gifts before the event.