



**THON™ Nation  
Fundraiser Ideas  
THON™ 2022**

**THON™**  
WWW.THON.ORG

# A Letter To Our Volunteers

## **Welcome to THON™ Nation!**

Thank you for your interest in hosting a THON™ Nation event or fundraiser benefiting the Penn State Dance Marathon.

This document is designed to help brainstorm and plan your next fundraiser. Ideas are categorized by event type and outline the suggested steps to follow for a successful event.

If you have any questions, please contact the THON Nation Captains at [thon.nation@thon.org](mailto:thon.nation@thon.org).

## **Financial Disclaimer:**

Be sure to have a secure method of payment- such as online payment services, checks, or cash. Please note that DonorDrive may only be used to collect donations and no payments for goods or services may be processed through DonorDrive. Once all funds are collected, you can mail the amount to THON, along with the donor confirmation document (sent to you when your event gets approved) to:

Penn State Dance Marathon  
Attn: THON Nation Captains  
227D HUB  
University Park, PA 16802

## **Zoom Disclaimer:**

If utilizing Zoom, host is recommended to have a paid Zoom subscription, preferably “business” or “enterprise” as it allows for more individuals on the call and a more seamless experience. Contact [thon.nation@thon.org](mailto:thon.nation@thon.org) to discuss additional features such as screen sharing, breakout rooms, and more.

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# Fundraiser Ideas: Challenges

## 1) 5k Run/Walk

Coordinate and organize a 5k run around your area and open it to the community. You can sell tickets and offer prizes to the winners of the race. Also consider having t-shirts made for the event. Be sure to comply with any borough/city police rules and regulations. Allow people to register well in advance of the event. Make sure you have a rain date in the case of inclement weather.

### *Materials:*

- Large area for runners
- Tape/arrows for the starting/finish line and directions around the course
- Volunteers (helping runners along the map, marking finishing times, etc.)
- Timers to clock winners
- Medical Kit
- T-shirts (optional)
- Refreshments (optional)
- Money jar/lock box for registration money
- Prizes for winner(s)



## 2) Art show:

Have an art show where a group of local elementary/pre-school kids create art that captures THON's mission. First, get permission to share THON's story with them and provide them with materials to create art. Write up the kids' descriptions of their pieces to display below their art. Create a showcase event where the work is displayed and charge admission to the local community. Consider offering light refreshments.

### *Materials:*

- Displays that allow you to properly present the artwork
- Money box for donations
- Art supplies
- Light refreshments (donated)

## 3) Candy Jar Guess!

Fill a jar with a small type of candy and display this in a workplace/school. Charge a small fee of \$1-\$3 and allow participants to guess the number of candies in the jar. Whoever guesses the number of candies closest to the true amount gets to keep the jar of candy as well as a small prize (you can get this prize donated!).

### *Materials:*

- Jar
- Candy to put in jar
- Paper for guesses
- Box to collect guesses
- A prize for the winner

# Fundraiser Ideas: Challenges

## 4) Pie-A-Professor (Boss, Co-worker, etc.)

To facilitate this fundraiser, you first need to identify somebody that would be okay with getting “pied” in the face! Usually, this person is someone in an authority position such as a boss or professor, but it doesn’t have to be. Charge people a small fee of \$1-\$10 to pie the selected person!

### *Materials:*

- Pie pans
- Whipped cream or shaving cream
- Plastic tablecloth to protect the ground
- A poncho for the person being pied
- Cleaning supplies

## 5) Silent Auction

Start by contacting local business owners or leaders who would be able to donate or contribute something for the auction. The most successful silent auctions are well advertised early on to attract as many people as possible. Be sure to set a specific beginning and ending time to auction. While silent auctions require commitment to ensure their success, they have the potential to raise significant sums of donations to support a cause!

### *Materials:*

- Host venue
- Donated items to auction
- Table
- Bid sheets (paper)
- Pens/pencils for bids
- Clipboards
- Volunteers to monitor tables



# Fundraiser Ideas: Games

## 6) Bowl-a-THON

Host a bowling night where friends and family pledge money for the number of bowling pins they knock down. Try to see if the bowling alley will donate or reduce the price of the lanes and shoes for the event.

### *Materials:*

- Bowling alley and bowling equipment (donated or reduced price)
- Pledge sheets for donations
- Envelopes to collect money from those who pledged
- Marketing materials

## 7) Dodgeball/Sports Tournaments

This fundraiser is an awesome idea to get a group of people together for some friendly competition! All you need is a group of people and the equipment to play whatever sport your tournament will be. A suggested buy in to the tournament could be \$5.

### *Materials:*

- Whatever equipment is needed for the sport being played

## 8) Gold-Out Sports Games

Work with your hometown community/athletic department to host a gold-out game. Sell gold-out merchandise such as t-shirts, headbands, and rally towels. You could also host a tailgate before the game with an entry fee and possibly have a family story shared at halftime.

### *Materials:*

- Gold-out merchandise
- Money jar to collect donations
- If hosting a tailgate:
  - 1) Grill
  - 2) Food



# Fundraiser Ideas: Food

## 9) Bake Sales

Selling a variety of small baked goods at a bake sale is a fantastic way to raise money for THON. When planning a sale, start by finding a high-traffic area in your location to maximize the number of potential donors. Often, the baked goods that you sell can be donated by local community members. Remember to bring appropriate signs to inform your audience of the cause that you're benefitting.

### *Materials:*

- Table
- Tablecloth
- Poster board for signs
- Money jar
- Baked goodies

## 10) Cake Walk

Ask local bakeries or parents to donate cakes for a cake walk. This event is essentially like musical chairs, just with numbered squares in a large circle. In the event, the host will play the music as participants run around. When the music stops, each individual will stand on a number and whoever is standing on the selected number will win a cake! Charge \$5 minimum to participate in the cake walk.

### *Materials:*

- Cakes (donated)
- A large space to host the event
- Music equipment
- Numbered squares
- Money jar
- Decorations

## 11) Chicken BBQ Sale

Find a local company or organization that has the equipment needed to host a BBQ that would be comfortable splitting the proceeds. Sell tickets to those interested in exchange for a BBQ dinner. The price of every ticket can be decided by you depending on how much you plan to donate back to THON.

### *Materials:*

- BBQ pick up location
- Tickets
- Ingredients to create the meal
- Money jar
- Napkins and utensils
- Boxes for the meals

## 12) Ice Cream Social

Host an ice cream social with fun flavors and toppings. Either sell tickets to enter the ice cream social or sell the ice cream per scoop. Consider having the ice cream social during a lunch break or set up a special time for the event. Also don't forget to have options for people with different food allergies!

### *Materials:*

- Large space
- Ice cream and toppings (donated)
- Bowls, spoons, and napkins
- Ice cream scoopers
- Money jar
- Decorations

# Fundraiser Ideas: Food

## 13) Picnic

Host a picnic in your community to bring people together and raise money for a good cause. Have backyard games like beanbag toss, frisbee, etc. Participants can either pay a specific fee or any donation for entry. To increase your proceeds, ask local restaurants to donate food for the event!

### *Materials:*

- Large outdoor venue/park
- Money jar
- Foods of your choice
- Backyard games
- Entertainment - optional (ask a local band to play)
- Marketing materials

## 14) Restaurant Nights

Some restaurants are willing to donate a portion of their proceeds for the day or night to your cause! Sometimes it will be a percentage of all their proceeds for the night, or in other cases, customers will have to mention the fundraiser or present a flyer to credit your fundraiser. Reach out to restaurants to ask if they would be willing to participate. Make sure to thank them!

### *Materials:*

- A restaurant to host the fundraiser
- Materials to advertise the event such as posters or flyers



# Fundraiser Ideas: Group Events

## 15) Car Wash

Look for a local business that will allow you to host a car wash on their property and might also provide you with car wash materials. The day of the event advertise with signs leading up to the property. Charge either a flat rate or ask customers for a donation for each wash. You may also want to consider selling food (such as hotdogs or candy) at your car wash to boost profits and donate more to THON.

### *Materials:*

- Car wash venue
- Hose, soap, buckets, towels, etc.
- Food (donated)
- Money jar
- Markers and poster boards for signs
- Marketing materials to advertise your car wash ahead of time through social media and other platforms

## 16) Dress Down Days

This fundraiser is perfect for your hometown Middle/High School or even for the place of employment for your parents and friends. Typically, this fundraiser is coordinated by asking each member of the faculty/staff/co-workers to pay a small fee of \$1-\$5 once a month for the opportunity to dress casually. It is completely optional if the respective staff member chooses to participate by donating a small proceed to benefit THON. Often, dress down days can be scheduled for the last Friday of every month to establish consistency.

### *Materials:*

- Donation Jar
- Thank you notes to all people that are participating or facilitating the fundraiser (optional but recommended)

## 17) Garage Sale/Flea Market Event

Consider hosting a “garage sale” or flea market spectacle within your community. Allow members of the community to purchase a table to sell their unwanted items which others would appreciate. We recommend charging \$10-\$20 per table, but the decision is ultimately up to you. To raise funds, the event host can split the sales each table makes 50/50 between THON and the person who sold their items (or a different desired ratio). Make sure to provide clear rules and regulations to members of the community who choose to participate (i.e. make sure they do not sell anything inappropriate, etc.). Consider having food such as hot dogs and chips available for purchase around lunchtime to earn extra money. If you do the sale outdoors, be sure to have a rain date in the case of inclement weather.

### *Materials:*

- Large open area to host the event
- Signs pointing to the garage sale
- Money jar
- Food (Donated)
- Rules for the participants

**Tip:** To make this a virtual event, use social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat) to promote the items you are selling and collect money using an online payment service. You can ship the items, personally deliver them, or have the buyer pick them up.

# Fundraiser Ideas: Group Events

## 18) Movie Night

Host a showing of one of your favorite films! This works especially well if you have a large room and projection/large screen TV. Sell tickets to enter the showing or ask for donations at the door. Consider selling refreshments to increase your fundraising total!

### *Materials:*

- A venue to play your movie
- Access to your movie
- Money jar
- Tickets
- Refreshments (optional)



# Fundraiser Ideas: Holiday Themed

## 19) Candy Grams

With cardstock, some ribbon, and candy, you can sell candy grams during holidays for \$1.00 each!

### *Materials:*

- Candy of choice (check allergy info)
- Ribbon
- Cardstock
- Markers
- Money Jar
- Sign-up sheets with their info, who they want to sell it to, and their address

## 20) Gift Wrapping

This fundraiser can run for a few weeks throughout the holiday season. Contact your local mall, community center, or school gym to see if you can host your fundraiser in its facilities, or you can host from your own home! Charge a flat rate for each gift.

### *Materials:*

- Gift Wrap
- Tape
- Scissors
- Labels

## 21) Gingerbread House Making

Host a Gingerbread house making competition. Participants can pay \$10, or a fee of your choosing, to enter the competition. A portion of the proceeds or can be awarded to the creator of the best gingerbread house.

### *Materials:*

- Gingerbread House supplies
- Marketing materials

## 22) Poinsettia/Roses/Carnation Sales

Sell flowers (namely Poinsettias, Roses, or Carnations) around different holiday seasons. You could also allow senders to write a personalized note on the bouquet.

### *Materials:*

- Poinsettias, Roses, or Carnations (donated)
- A lock box to collect all fees
- Marketing materials to advertise leading up to the event

## 23) Pumpkin Carving Contest

Supply pumpkins and charge individuals to enter a carving or decorating contest. A portion of the proceeds or a different prize can be awarded to the creator of the best pumpkin.

### *Materials:*

- Pumpkins (donated)
- Signs and marketing materials to advertise the event
- Carving materials or decorating materials
- Money jar
- Prizes (donated)

# Fundraiser Ideas: Remote

## 24) Alumni “Speed Dating” via Zoom

This event is easy to organize and enables alumni to meet each other in a virtual setting, which allows people from different parts of the world and different graduating classes to meet each other and share their various Penn State experiences. The breakout room feature will allow people to meet each other and then participants are encouraged to switch into a new room after 5-10 minutes. Members can pay \$5-\$10 to join the call, which will benefit THON.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic devices with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Suggested topics or questions to discuss (feel free to add your own ideas)
  - 1) Where do you live now? What do you do for a living?
  - 2) How have you been handling quarantine?
  - 3) What is your favorite Penn State memory from your time in college?
  - 4) What is your favorite Penn State memory since your graduation?
  - 5) Do you have any family members who have attended PSU after you?

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer. The breakout rooms must be enabled when you schedule the meeting! It is recommended that the host advertise this even through Facebook groups, other social media platforms, and by contacting prior friends from Penn State. Contact [thon.nation@thon.org](mailto:thon.nation@thon.org) to discuss the logistics of the event. Members can pay \$5-\$10 to join the call, which will benefit THON.

## 25) Alumni Reunions (Virtual)

While Alumni reunions typically take place in-person, the virtual setting allows specific groups to have larger reunions as more alumni are likely to attend due to ease of accessibility. Unlike “Alumni Speed Dating” this event allows alumni from specific organizations to bond over shared experiences no matter how far they may be from each other. The breakout room feature can be utilized for a more personal experience but is not a necessity. Alumni can pay the host \$5-10 to get on the call, which will benefit THON.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic devices with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Document of questions and topics for discussion tailored to the specific organization:
  - 1) How did this organization help you post-graduation?
  - 2) Have you talked to any of the current members in this organization?
  - 3) Most memorable experiences with this organization?

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer. Breakout rooms must be enabled when host schedules the meeting. It is further recommended that host notifies the student chapter of the event so they can make the entire alumni base aware.

# Fundraiser Ideas: Remote

## 26) Auction

In this event, each member attending the Zoom call can be auctioning an item and individuals can communicate using the microphone or chat feature as to what items they would like to bid on. A fee to participate can be charged and/or the money auctioned can be donated on its own. This aspect is up to the host and participants of the event. If desired, this could also be held via social media as an alternative. Items can be posted on an Instagram or Facebook page and can be auctioned on each post.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Items for auction
- Secure method to collect funds

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer. Participants should live relatively close. shipping is factored into the auction price is imperative.

## 27) Bingo

Host your own virtual Bingo Night by having participants print out their board at home. The host can call out the numbers and participants can mark them as they are called. Participants can contribute funds to play and winners can be rewarded with a prize.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Online Bingo Number Generator
  - 1) If you own a physical one, you can pick the numbers and show the participants
- Bingo board(s)
- Bingo chips/dauber/small pieces of paper/coins to mark your board
- Prizes - such as gift cards
- Secure method to collect funds

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer.



# Fundraiser Ideas: Remote

## 28) Game Night

Host your own game night by having participants play from the comfort of their own home. You can play Jackbox, Scribbl.io, and more.

Participants can pay a fee to play and winners can be rewarded with a prize.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Jackbox.tv must be purchased (only one person needs to own it), but many other games are free to play online
- Prizes
- Secure method to collect funds

## 29) Online Gaming Tournament

Host a tournament for a popular video game (NBA 2K, Madden, etc.) where the winner earns a prize and the money collected goes to THON. There would be a base amount to enter, and the tournament can be streamed online to build even more supporters who could potentially donate.

### *Materials:*

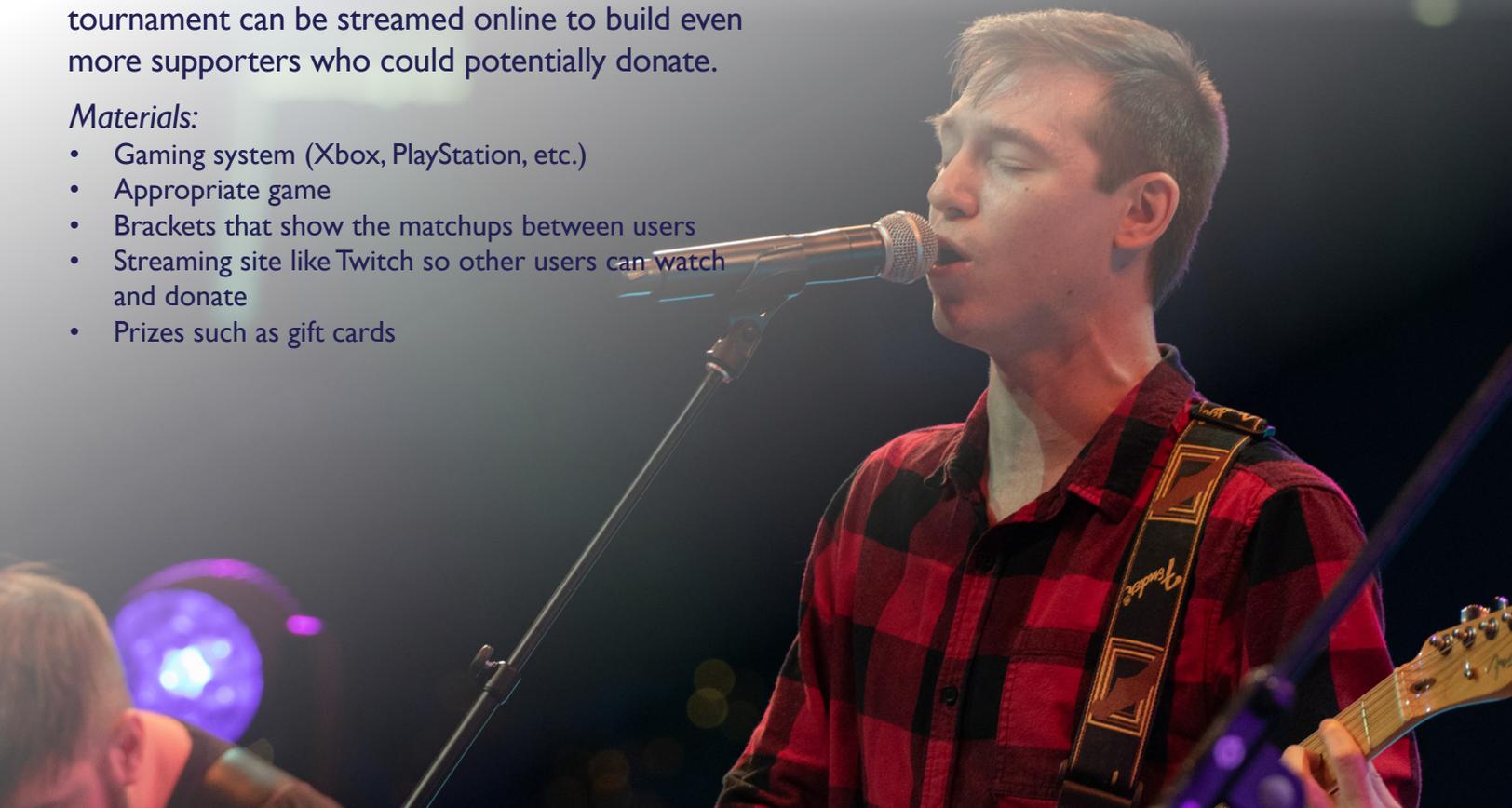
- Gaming system (Xbox, PlayStation, etc.)
- Appropriate game
- Brackets that show the matchups between users
- Streaming site like Twitch so other users can watch and donate
- Prizes such as gift cards

## 30) Talent Show/Open Mic

A virtual talent show or open mic night allows family members and friends to watch performances from the comfort of their homes. A fee can be donated to watch the online event, whether it be singing, a dance recital, or even standup comedy. This virtual event can be run using Zoom. A winner can be chosen at the end through the viewers' votes and top performers receive a prize.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Performers
- Google Polls/Microsoft Forms for voting
- Small prize for the winner of the performances - such as a gift card
- Secure method to collect funds



# Fundraiser Ideas: Remote

## 31) “Ted Talk” Events

Invite prominent speakers or figures in the local community for a speaker series that would engage the audience. There could be a specific theme, or just various speakers that would engage the audience. Each viewer will attend the meeting via Zoom and will pay a base fee to attend the event.

### *Materials:*

- Speaker(s) with expertise on certain subjects
- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Secure method to collect funds

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer. The mute feature on Zoom should be enabled for the attendees so that the speaker does not encounter any distractions from the audience. Contact [thon.nation@thon.org](mailto:thon.nation@thon.org) for logistical information.

## 32) Trivia

This event can be held over Zoom or another virtual meeting service platform. Players can compete individually or in teams. Feel free to randomize selections using breakout rooms or make it more personalized by creating your own groups of however many players each.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Host to ask the questions and participants to **\*\*privately message\*\*** their answers Google Polls/ Microsoft Forms for voting
- Secure method to collect funds

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer. Encourage having a “buy-in” price to participate of how much or as little as you see fit. Then, winner(s) can get a prize/portion of the money and the rest goes to THON!



# Fundraiser Ideas: Remote

## 33) Virtual Classes

Can be classes of any sort which are taught to viewers. Some examples include art, cooking, fitness, but the possibilities are endless! If the host of the event has a certain expertise in a specific area, they could host a live teaching session via Zoom. Or, if the person who wants to host the event would rather have someone else be brought in to teach the course, that would also work just as well. This allows the instructor to pass on their skills to others and allow viewers to feel both a sense of connection and learn a new trait to pass the time. A base payment for the class would go towards THON.

### *Materials:*

- Electronic device with virtual meeting service capability (Zoom)
- Instructor
- Desire to learn a new skill/trait
- Secure method to collect funds

**Important:** Refer to Zoom disclaimer.

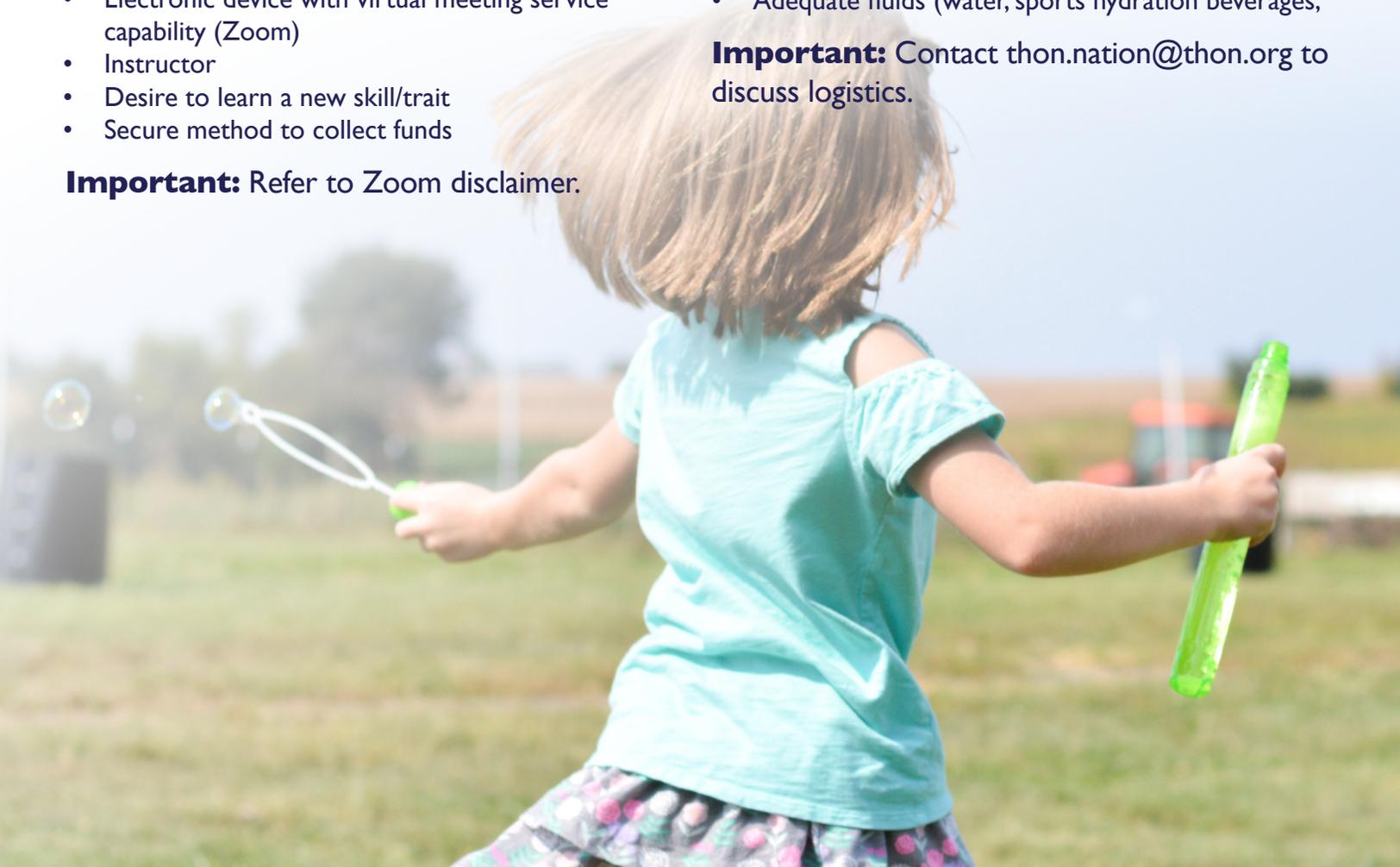
## 34) Virtual Race/Fitness Challenge

Runners or participants can complete the fitness event wherever/whenever they would like to within a certain deadline. People who sign-up to join can pay a certain amount of funds which would be donated back to THON. We recommend that all of the proceeds be donated to THON while the winners receive a prize from sponsoring organization.

### *Materials:*

- Computer or mobile device to sign-up
- Area to perform challenges or treadmill to run the length of the race
- Optional: prize
- Proper running attire
- Timing device (watch, phone)
- Adequate fluids (water, sports hydration beverages,

**Important:** Contact [thon.nation@thon.org](mailto:thon.nation@thon.org) to discuss logistics.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Who can fundraise through THON Nation?**

Alumni, Friends of THON and Four Diamonds Families, and Friends of THON are eligible to fundraise through THON Nation. Students are NOT allowed to organize the event but are still encouraged to participate.

## **How do I submit an application?**

Submitting an application is simple! Once your event is planned, visit the [THON Nation Event Application](#) and fill out the form. A THON Nation representative will be in touch with you shortly afterward to send you materials and answer any pressing questions.

## **What rules do I have to follow for my fundraiser?**

Please refer to the [THON Nation Policies](#) document. Additionally, all THON Nation events must adhere to the CDC and your state's local guidelines regarding COVID-19.

## **How do I submit my collected funds?**

Once all funds are collected from your event, you can mail the amount directly to THON, along with the donor confirmation document (sent to you when your event gets approved) to:

Penn State Dance Marathon  
Attn: THON Nation Captains  
227D HUB  
University Park, PA 16802

## **Can I credit an organization or IDC?**

Yes! We absolutely welcome and encourage crediting be a part of your fundraiser. An option to credit can be found in the event application. Once your event has ended, make sure to mail the Donor Confirmation Form to THON.

## **How else can I get involved with THON Nation?**

You can host as many event fundraisers as you like - for this year and for the future. THON Nation participants can also create their own DonorDrive page [here](#).

*THON is a student-run philanthropy committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. Our mission is to provide emotional and financial support, spread awareness and ensure funding for critical research - all in pursuit of a cure.*