

+Introduction

This toolkit is designed to empower Girls on the Run councils in planning and executing a Sneaker Soirée. With consistent messaging and design, it offers a customizable collection of planning tools, marketing assets, and day-of-event resources at every stage of the process, with the flexibility to tailor the event to specific audiences and communities. The Sneaker Soirée provides a meaningful opportunity to raise critical funds with the goal of creating a memorable, mission-driven experience that celebrates the Girls on the Run mission in a vibrant and engaging way.

In this document, you can find the following:

- Overview of Campaign Resources
 - Email Appeal Templates and Customizable Graphics
 - Social Media Copy and Customizable Graphics
 - Sponsorship Packet Template
 - Event Invitation Template
 - Event Program Template
 - PowerPoint Deck Template
 - Day-of Event Signage Template
- Best Practices
 - Enable 'Get Text Messages' abilities
- Sample Event Timeline
- Sample Run of Show

Overview of Event Resources

Pinwheel Website Page Template

Girls on the Run HQ has a website page template for fundraising events. You can preview it on our template website here: <https://www.gotrwebsite.us/sneaker-soiree>. For help adding this page to your site navigation, contact support@pinwheel.us. For more information about how to edit your website, please review the [ERS Website User Guide](#).

Pinwheel Fundraising Event

You can use Pinwheel to set up a fundraising event to have folks register and/or sponsor your event. Here are a couple of considerations. For more information about setting up events in Pinwheel, please visit [the Pinwheel Help Center](#).

- Settings
 - Event Type = Fundraising Event
 - Event Info tab: Create External Event Name, Internal Event Name, Event Start Date and End Dates, and Registration Open and Close dates.
 - Payments tab: Determine if processing fees will be paid by participants or event organizer and select payment methods.
 - Receipt tab: Consider whether you would like anyone on staff to receive an email each time a payment is made.
- Categories – you can use categories for ticket types or sponsor types.
- Messages

- When the event is closed, update the message to include your council general annual fundraising page: “Thank you for being an awesome 'possum! Our Sneaker Soirée (or other special event) has ended, but we still need your help! Please visit [\[link to your general fundraising webpage\]](#) to make a donation and give a girl in our community the confidence she needs to thrive!”
- Be sure to update Confirmations, as well.
- Custom Questions – use custom questions to collect more information, such as text message consent if you plan to use text messaging to communicate with attendees.
- Donations – update the donation page message. Be sure to add a Beneficiary (your council).
- **TEST it!** This is a vital step so that you can understand the guest experience, from the donation page to the emailed receipt.

Email Templates and Customizable Graphics

For councils using Pinwheel Email Marketing, email templates are pre-loaded in your Pinwheel environment.

- Four emails templates can be found [here](#).
- Email copy and customizable graphics.
 - The email copy includes customization with fields requiring council-specific details **highlighted**. Please update or remove information that does not pertain to your event.
 - The customizable call to action templates (Emails 2 and 3) each include multiple variations: councils can customize the template by removing sections and sending the template multiple times to address various audience types and goals.
 - A turnkey National Partner email footer graphic can be found on the Council Portal [here](#).
 - Please click here for customizable Canva template links to [email header](#), [drop-in](#), and [local sponsor recognition footer](#) graphics.
 - Several graphics are available as both photo and graphic-only options, enabling councils to select the option that best aligns with available content and customization abilities.

Email Templates and Suggested Audiences:

- **Email 1: Save the Date**
 - **Audience:** Donors, coaches (past and present), sponsors, caregivers from the past 2-5+ years, Board members, committee members, newsletter subscribers
 - **Purpose:** Inform audiences about the event, share opportunities to attend (tables and tickets), and discuss sponsorship opportunities (lightly) with a link to learn more.
- **Email 2: Customizable Call to Action**
[Buy a Ticket | Buy a Table | Become an Event Sponsor]
 - **Audience:** Donors, coaches (past and present), sponsors, caregivers from the past 2-5 years, Board members, committee members, newsletter subscribers
 - **Purpose:** Invite audiences to the event and share sponsorship levels. These emails are more detailed and longer than the ‘Save the Date’ email but follow a similar structure. They have opportunities to list council-specific details, depending on the council's needs/priorities and when the email is sent. By utilizing other customizable blocks, councils can send this email multiple times for different event needs.
- **Email 3: Customizable Call to Action**
[Don't Miss Out/Event Reminder for Tickets and Tables | Don't Miss Out/Event Reminder for Sponsorship Opportunities]

- **Audience:** Donors, coaches (past and present), sponsors, caregivers from the past 2-5 years, Board and committee members, newsletter subscribers
- **Purpose:** Call to Action reminder of the opportunities that are still available (i.e., only four tables, 25 tickets, or updated sponsorships with sold levels indicated, etc.). Express urgency and build excitement.
- **Email 4: Thank you to attendees & sponsors**
 - **Audience:** All attendees, sponsors (financial and in-kind), vendors, media
 - **Purpose:** Serves as a general thank you no matter the capacity of giving. Tee up invitation to future opportunities.

Note: For councils using the Pinwheel Email Marketing System, all emails can be found as templates within Pinwheel beginning on **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**.

Social Media Copy and Customizable Graphics

Post copy, hash tags, and alt text for eight social media posts and corresponding social media tile graphics are available [here](#). [Click here](#) for a customizable Canva template link to social media tile graphics. Please note that if you customize any of the graphics, you will need to update the provided alt text for those images accordingly.

Note: Executing a social media campaign alone will likely not yield the desired results.

Customizable Sponsorship Packet Canva Template

[Click here](#) for a customizable Sponsorship Packet Canva template.

Customizable Event Invitation Canva Template

[Click here](#) for a customizable Event Invitation Canva template.

Customizable Event Program Canva Template

[Click here](#) for a customizable Event Program Canva template.

Customizable PowerPoint Deck Template

[Click here](#) for a customizable PowerPoint deck slide.

All slides include animated elements. To export the slides, customize content in Canva and then click “Share” in the upper right-hand corner, and then select “Download”. You will have the option to download the slides as a PowerPoint deck (.PPTX) or download the static slides as .PNGs and the animated slides as videos (.MP4) to leverage the animated elements and add both slide types to a PowerPoint or Google Slides deck. Downloading the slides as a PowerPoint deck (.PPTX) may require additional formatting in PowerPoint.

Customizable Day-of Signage Canva Template

[Click here](#) for a customizable Day-of Signage Canva template.

Best Practices & Tips for a Successful Event

Planning an event of this scale requires thoughtful preparation, clearly defined goals, and a strong connection to the Girls on the Run mission. Success starts with early planning, building a dedicated volunteer team, and engaging community partners. It's equally important to incorporate meaningful mission moments that inspire guests and foster a deeper connection to the cause. The aim is to

create an experience that not only generates vital support but also celebrates the heart and impact of Girls on the Run. To help guide your planning, below are a few best practices to consider for your upcoming event:

- **Start early:** Begin planning at least 6-9 months in advance to allow ample time for outreach, logistics and promotion. Create an event timeline highlighting key dates to guide you
- **Set clear goals:** Establish event goals including attendance, revenue etc...
- **Build a strong committee:** Recruit a reliable and enthusiastic team of volunteers and assign clear roles to help manage tasks efficiently. (Ideas -board members – past or present, coaches – past or present, other GOTR supporters)
- **Engage local partners:** Involve community businesses and sponsors who align with the Girls on the Run mission to support the event through sponsorships, donations, in-kind donations or cross promotion
- **Stay mission focused:** Weave in Girls on the Run values and impact stories to create authentic moments that connect attendees to the heart of the program
- **Use provided templates and tools:** Leverage the resources in the toolkit, customize and implement as many or as few as needed
- **Promote consistently:** Develop a marketing plan and use email, social media, and PR strategies to create a buzz and drive ticket sales
- **Plan for inclusivity and fun:** Create a welcoming environment for all guests and design an event experience that's joyful, celebratory, and reflective of the Girls on the Run culture
- **Follow up:** After the event thank attendees, sponsors, and volunteers promptly and collect feedback to enhance future fundraising events

Text Messaging

Text messages are an effective way to reach your audience. Remember to only text those who have consented to receive texts from your council. For instructions on how to use the Text Messaging module in Pinwheel, [click here](#).

Considerations:

- Text messages can be an effective way to communicate with guests who have purchased event tickets.
- The maximum number of characters is 160 per text. Consider using a service like [Bitly](#) to shorten your fundraising campaign link.
- Choose a delivery option: you can choose to send now or schedule for later. Scheduled texts examples – “Auction Now Open!” or “Auction closes in 30 minutes!” or other important event reminders and details.
- Consider using donate keyword text automations (ex: text CONFIDENT to 12345 to give...) during your event's appeal as another option for donors. For more information about how to use automations, [click here](#).

Sample Event Timeline

This sample event timeline can be adjusted and customized as needed based on your council's event.

6-9 Months Out:

- All-staff / board kick off meeting to brainstorm (potential sponsors, plan for personal and targeted outreach, overview of event's milestones and benchmarks)
- Confirm volunteer committee and identify leads for key event areas (check-in, volunteers, vendors, special guests, etc.)
- Establish event goals, budget, and track expenses
- Confirm location, date, and time; sign necessary contracts and pay deposits as needed
- Review and secure entertainment contracts (DJ, band, balloons, florist, etc.)
- Determine if an online bidding platform will be used and select a third-party service if needed
- Customize marketing materials provided in Sneaker Soirée social media toolkit
- Draft a solicitation letter for auction item donation and share with your committee
- Create a tracking system for auction item donations, including fair market value of items
- Schedule meetings with potential sponsors and share the sponsor toolkit
- Work to secure a major sponsor for inclusion in all marketing materials
- Secure major raffle items and determine auction type (silent auction, live auction, or both)
- Send out receipts or acknowledgments for all monetary and in-kind donations received
- Build event website or landing page and update the council website and ERS carousel
- Meet with the venue (can they provide centerpieces or other décor)
- Secure caterer and beverage sponsors
- Or identify potential local businesses or restaurants for in-kind food and beverage donations
- Determine interactive fundraising activities (wine pull, bourbon pull, lei game, paddle raise etc.)
- Secure event emcee, guest speaker, and event photographer (can be a volunteer)
- Consider any permitting or insurance requirements for the event

4-5 Months Prior:

- Make the event live, ensure the event website is accurate, and begin promotion
- Meet with the online auction company (if using one)
- Create an event email list and customize Sneaker Soirée toolkit emails
- Email save-the-date with ticket/table purchase link
- Create and promote a Facebook event; announce on social media
- Continue soliciting auction items and securing event sponsors
- Secure wine and bourbon donations (if planning a wine/bourbon pull)
- Continue to send acknowledgment letters and thank-you notes for secured donations
- Secure a media sponsor (TV, magazine, podcast, radio, influencer)
- Draft a press release for the event
- Develop a communications timeline for media outreach
- Confirm keynote speaker, any special needs, and any panelist (if applicable)
- Identify potential corporate matching opportunities for donations
- If applicable, confirm if any VIP guests or board members will be attending and coordinate any special requests

2-3 Months Prior

- Continue event promotion alongside other council happenings
- Utilize email and social media marketing materials
- Update all council communication channels to include information about your event (newsletter, emails, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram)
- Draft a Run of Show for event logistics

- Customize and day-of event signage
- Send personal invitations to key stakeholders, top donors, and community leaders

1 Month Prior

- Send a text reminder to guests (if using texting or an online bidding platform)
- Continue marketing efforts (newsletter, emails, chamber of commerce, coaches, families)
- Secure and receive all donations
- Finalize auction items and list online
- Secure event volunteers
- Finalize wine/bourbon donations
- Create event layout in coordination with venue
- Confirm vendor details
- Order necessary event materials
- Order customized day of event signage
- Execute final marketing push for ticket sales
- Increase weekly marketing communications
- Print all signage, programs, and necessary materials
- Assign roles to volunteers for event day tasks (e.g., registration, auction assistance, hospitality)
- Reconfirm RSVP counts with sponsors and VIP guests

2 Weeks Prior

- Final push for ticket sales
- Text guests a final reminder
- Create table assignments
- Print auction sheets, table signs, and event signage
- Finalize and distribute Run of Show and event PowerPoint slides

1 Week Out

- Finalize and print Run of Show; share with emcees, volunteers, and venue lead
- Send email to attendees to build excitement and encourage last-minute ticket sales
- Update catering, beverages etc... with updated headcounts

Week of Event

- Check in with all vendors and speakers
- Finalize Run of Show
- Email attendees with important event details (any special event notes, parking details etc..)
- Set all auction items to go live
- Conduct sound checks and test event technology
- Finalize event-day logistics

Post-Event

- Express gratitude to attendees, sponsors, and volunteers within 24-48 hours

- Share remaining auction items on social media for additional fundraising
- Continue fundraising efforts to meet goals
- Conduct committee debrief (include board members and key volunteers)
- Send post-event email with gratitude, total funds raised, and next year's date (if secured)
- Pay outstanding invoices
- Create and share a digital photo album from the event
- Send thank you notes to donors and acknowledgment letters to all contributors
- Ensure all auction items are delivered to winners (as needed)
- Review and document event successes and areas for improvement for future planning
- Compile a final event impact report summarizing funds raised, attendance, and success stories
- Share a post-event success with your GOTR community, highlighting key moments and fundraising outcomes

Sample Run of Show

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM | Vendor & Volunteer Arrival & Setup

- Venue opens for setup
- Auction items displayed and tested (if online bidding is used)
- Registration table, signage, and décor set up
- Final sound check and walk through
- Volunteer briefing and role assignments

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM | Guest Check-In & Cocktail Hour

- Doors open to guests
- Guests receive name tags and drink tickets (if applicable).
- Silent auction opens
- Passed hors d'oeuvres and drinks available
- Photographer captures guest arrivals and networking moments
- VIP and sponsor recognition during mingling
- Interactive fundraising games begin (e.g., wine pull, bourbon pull)

6:30 PM – 6:45 PM | Welcome Remarks & Program Introduction

- Emcee welcomes guests and provides an overview of the evening
- Recognize sponsors, key donors, and special guests
- Brief introduction of Girls on the Run and its mission
- Overview of auction process and event activities

6:45 PM – 7:30 PM | Dinner & Entertainment

- Dinner service begins (buffet or plated meal depending on event format)
- Live music, entertainment, or video presentation
- Table-to-table engagement by board members and GOTR team or key volunteers

7:30 PM – 8:00 PM | Guest Speaker & Impact Story

- Introduction of keynote speaker
- Speaker shares story related to Girls on the Run impact
- Recognition of program participants, alumnae, or coaches
- Fundraising appeal and instructions for donations

8:00 PM – 8:30 PM | Live Auction & Fundraising Appeal

- Auctioneer or emcee conducts live auction
- Paddle raise or Fund-a-Need moment
- Final call for silent auction bids

8:30 PM – 9:00 PM | Closing Remarks & Celebration

- Thank you to sponsors, guests, and volunteers
- Silent auction winners announced (or notified digitally if online)
- Final fundraising tally shared (if possible)
- Dance floor opens or networking continues
- Photo opportunities

9:00 PM – 9:30 PM | Event Wrap-Up & Guest Departure

- Final goodbyes and guest exit
- Auction item distribution
- Vendor breakdown and clean-up
- Volunteer debrief and thank you

Post-Event (Next Day & Beyond)

- Express gratitude via email and social media
- Auction item follow-up (as needed)
- Survey staff, board members, and event volunteers for feedback
- Final fundraising report and impact summary
- Event recap for future planning

For Sneaker Soirée-specific or fundraising support, please email partnerships@girlsontherun.org. For questions about marketing-related resources, please email marketing@girlsontherun.org