

# ACLU-SDIC

## *DIY Fundraising Toolkit*

19



33

**ACLU**

San Diego and  
Imperial Counties



San Diego and  
Imperial Counties

**Dear friend of the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties:**

Thank you for your interest in holding a fundraiser for the American Civil Liberties Union of San Diego & Imperial Counties (ACLU-SDIC)! We are so grateful for your support, and we appreciate you thinking of us. In response to our many requests for information about raising money on our behalf, we have developed the following toolkit to make it as easy as possible for you to be a fundraising ambassador.

No fundraiser is too small (or too large). Whether it's a lemonade stand that raises \$100, a house party that raises \$1,000 or a dinner party that raises \$10,000, we cannot wait to hear what you have in mind!

**Fundraising tip:** You don't need to be an expert on our work to hold a successful event. We can provide some talking points on our work, **but the most powerful way you can be an ambassador is by sharing how your own experiences and passions connect to our mission.** Let your audience know what inspires you to take action.

Thank you so much for being a partner in the ongoing movement to protect and defend civil liberties.

In solidarity,

*Courtney Brown*

Courtney Brown  
Director of Philanthropy  
ACLU-SDIC

# FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT

## STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER

### Choose an Event Type

You can turn almost any event into a fundraiser, whether you own or operate a venue, individually produce goods and services, or enjoy hosting a house party. Plan and run the event on your own, or collaborate with friends.

**Here are some examples of events you could host:**

- Film Screening
- Theatrical Production
- Concert
- Lemonade Stand
- Bake Sale
- Art Show
- Dinner or Happy Hour
- Dance Party
- Neighborhood/House Party
- Jewelry/quilt /woodwork/pottery (etc) Sale



## **Name your event**

Choose a name that is easy to remember and descriptive. For example, “Fundraiser for the ACLU-SDIC ” is very generic, but “Playwrights for a Cause” or “Jewelry for Justice” are intriguing and describe the event.

## **Select the date and time**

Choose a date that does not conflict with major holidays or other events in your community. Please note: If you are interested in requesting a ACLU-SDIC speaker for your event, please inquire at least 4 weeks in advance of your intended event date by filling out the [ACLU-SDIC Speaker Request Form](#). We cannot guarantee a speaker for every event.”

## **Decide on Your Fundraising Goal**

**Set a reasonable fundraising goal based on the type of event you are hosting.** Sharing your goal with your supporters is a great way for them to align with your mission and help get you there!

## **Find a location**

Depending on your event type, you may be able to hold the fundraiser in your home or in a public space like a park. If you decide to host in a public space, be mindful of whether or not you will have to apply for a permit. If you need a larger space, we recommend asking friends and family if they have connections to a bar, restaurant, theatre, etc. Many businesses are willing to donate their space for a good cause! Some of our fundraisers even found a corporate underwriter.

When selecting a location, you will want to consider if the space is ADA accessible so that there are no limitations on who can attend your event.

## **Promote your event**

If you plan on sending invitations for your event, make sure you send them at least a few weeks in advance — four to six weeks is ideal. An invite template is at the end of this guide. We recommend creating a [Partiful](#) or [Evite](#) online invitation to track RSVPs. If appropriate, designing a poster

that you can distribute in your community, and/or sharing your event in your local newspaper's calendar of events, community calendar online, or local community organization's website are great ideas. Be sure to include that your fundraiser will benefit the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties in your promotional materials.

### **Post Event: Share your success**

- Share your story and photos via social media and email - tag @sdicacclu so we can thank you. It's always courteous to ask people if you can take and share their pictures!
- Send a follow-up thank you email to attendees and recap the highlights of the event. Include photo(s) for an extra touch.
- Send donations by check (**make the check out to ACLU-SDIC**)  
American Civil Liberties Union of San Diego & Imperial Counties  
P.O. Box 87131  
San Diego, CA 92138-7131
- [You can also donate online here!](#)

### **The ACLU-SDIC is NOT responsible for:**

- Payment or reimbursement for event costs
- Staff to plan, manage or staff your event
- Permission for hosts' use of ACLU Foundation's Tax ID#
- Sharing of ACLU donor lists or contact information
- Creation or management of ticketing platforms
- Public promotion of your event through ACLU channels
- On-site collection of donations
- Guaranteed availability of an ACLU speaker
- Individual tax receipts for donations collected and submitted as a lump sum

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Can the ACLU-SDIC partner with, co-sponsor or promote my event?

Unfortunately, we cannot promise to promote third-party events, but we will occasionally do so. Depending on staff availability, alignment of institutional goals and values, size and revenue goals, we may be able to consider co-sponsoring. Please indicate if you are interested in co-sponsorship when you fill out the [ACLU-SDIC Speaker Request Form](#) or please reach out to [philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org](mailto:philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org) to discuss your idea. We will review and respond to your request; if we do co-sponsor, we will promote the event.

### 2. Do I need permission from the ACLU-SDIC to hold a fundraiser?

If you are an established legal entity, to ensure alignment with Better Business Bureau standards, in advance of your event, ACLU-SDIC needs a written record of how you intend to use the proceeds from your event.

If you are raising money for the ACLU-SDIC as an individual, you do not need permission from us, but we would love to hear about your event and support it if able. So, please do share your plans. If you plan to promote your event as a benefit for the ACLU-SDIC, you can say that the event benefits the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties. **However, you may not use our logo in any promotional content unless approved.** Its use is reserved for events produced and/or formally endorsed by the ACLU-SDIC.

### 3. Can a representative from ACLU-SDIC attend/speak at my event?

While we cannot promise to fulfill every request, we have been successful at accommodating many requests for ACLU-SDIC representation at third-party events. Participation depends on staff availability as well as the event being aligned with our mission and advocacy objectives. If you'd like to request an ACLU-SDIC representative at your event, please indicate it in the [speaker request form](#). Your request date should be made at least four to six weeks before the date of your event. We will do our best to accommodate your request and let you know in advance if someone can come.

#### **4. What's the best way to donate the proceeds from my event?**

You may direct people to our [online donation page](#) or collect donations at the event and then make a single, lump-sum donation of the proceeds to us, either via our online donation page or by mailing a check to us. In order to be tax-deductible, all checks should be payable to ACLU-SDIC Foundation and mailed to ACLU Foundation of San Diego & Imperial Counties, P.O. Box 87131, San Diego, CA 92138. Please include the name of your event in the memo line of the check so we can properly allocate your donation.

#### **5. Can the ACLU-SDIC provide donation receipts to individuals who donate money at my event?**

The ACLU-SDIC is only permitted to provide donation receipts for donations that are made directly to us. If your event attendees write checks to the ACLU Foundation of San Diego & Imperial Counties, and all attendee checks are mailed to the ACLU-SDIC (at the address above), they will receive tax acknowledgement letters. However, if cash donations are accepted from many people and donated all at once via a single check or donation to our website, we cannot issue tax acknowledgment letters. We will send the organizer(s) a thank you/acknowledgement letter. You can also make an [online gift](#) to receive a receipt via email.

#### **6. Can the ACLU-SDIC track my event donations made through the ACLU-SDIC's online donation page?**

Donors can make donations on this [ACLU-SDIC Events Donation page](#). Guests will be asked to provide the name of the event host or the event itself. Please contact [philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org](mailto:philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org) and we can provide a QR code for guests to be able to donate easily from your event.

#### **7. Can the ACLU-SDIC supply a copy of its tax-exempt letter so my event can avoid paying sales taxes on event expenses?**

No. While your event is for charitable purposes, the expenses of third-party events are not considered tax-exempt expenses.

**8. What is the relationship between the ACLU-SDIC and the ACLU?**

ACLU-SDIC is an affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Donations made by residents of San Diego and Imperial counties to the ACLU-SDIC are shared between the ACLU-SDIC and the ACLU, and vice versa.

**9. Can I designate the proceeds from my event to support a specific program or need?**

To remain flexible in responding to urgent, rapidly changing needs, we prefer that donations support our general fund. However, as the donor, you have the option to indicate (in writing) how you'd like us to use your donation. If this fits with an existing program (e.g., voting rights), we can earmark the gift.

**10. Can the ACLU-SDIC provide me with “swag” (promotional items and give-aways) for my event, i.e. buttons, stickers, posters, etc.?**

We are able to provide most fundraisers with a small bag of materials, including Know Your Rights information and branded swag. Please let us know if you are interested in receiving promotional materials for your event by emailing [philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org](mailto:philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org). The ACLU has a distribution company that handles all other promotional items. There are a variety of things that can be purchased at <https://shop.aclu.org>.

Other questions? Reach out to [philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org](mailto:philanthropy@aclu-sdic.org)

## ADDITIONAL WAYS TO SUPPORT THE ACLU-SDIC

1. [Volunteer with us!](#)
2. Follow us: @sdicacclu on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [BlueSky](#) and [LinkedIn](#)
3. [Become an ACLU member](#)
4. [Make a tax-deductible donation](#)

## EVENT INVITATION TEMPLATE

You can use the sample email below to invite your friends to your fundraiser. Feel free to use the template in part or in its entirety. We recommend utilizing an online invitation service to collect RSVPs and further engage your friends via social media so that they can share and help you reach your goal.

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Dear Friend **[or Name]**,

I am thrilled to invite you to my event, **[event name]** on **[event date]**, which will benefit the work of the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties.

This is something that I am passionate about, and I hope that you will share my enthusiasm and provide support in reaching my goal of **[fundraising goal]**.

Today, now more than ever, people are ready and energized to do the work to **defend justice, promote democracy and fight hate!** By supporting the ACLU-SDIC, we are helping to defend the rights of all people in our region.

**[Event details, RSVP, when, where, etc.]**

I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

**[Name]**

## POST-EVENT THANK YOU EMAIL

You can use the sample email below to send your event attendees action items and ways to be further involved with the ACLU-SDIC. Feel free to use the template in part or in its entirety. This is a good way to keep supporters engaged in the work we do and an opportunity for the ACLU-SDIC to meet new advocates and supporters.

Dear Supporter **[or Attendee Name]**,

Thank you for joining me at **[event name]** on **[event date]**, which benefited the work of the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties. During these times, there is no better way to feel inspired than by gathering in community! We appreciate you for showing up and showing out.

Because of your support, we were able to raise a total of **[\$[dollar amount]]!**

**{Include some of the event highlights and pivotal moments. Pics are great too.}**

Today, now more than ever, the ACLU relies on the greater community to help get this important work done. Thank you once again for showing your support.

Sincerely,

**[Your Name]**

P.S. Here are some ways to stay informed and involved in the work:

- [Take Action with ACLU-SDIC](#)
- Follow the ACLU-SDIC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [BlueSky](#) and [LinkedIn](#)
- [Make a tax-deductible donation](#)

**Thank you so much for your support.  
We the People Means ALL of Us.**

**ACLU**

**San Diego and  
Imperial Counties**