



SOROPTIMIST®  
Investing in Dreams



**Circle of Friends**

**VIRTUAL**

**FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT**

# Welcome

**Thank you for agreeing to be a host for a Circle of Friends Virtual Fundraiser!** This is an opportunity to share more about the important work and mission of Soroptimist with your nonmember friends and colleagues. It is likely that you've connected with many nonmembers about why you are a Soroptimist, so this is an opportunity to invite those contacts to get more engaged in a fun and virtual way.

One of the positive aspects of this time of physical distancing is that it's bringing together people all over the world through technology. While we are physically distancing, we don't have to socially distance. The virtual fundraiser is a wonderful way to connect, while raising funds for women and girls!



# Table of Contents

**Welcome.....2**

**Create your Fundraiser.....4**

Invitation List .....4

Select a Date .....5

Identify a Theme .....5

Send Your Invitations .....6

Sample Invitation Text.....7

Follow-Up.....8

**Plan Your Event Agenda .....8**

Welcome Intro .....8

SIA 101.....9

Storytelling.....10

Present the Opportunity.....11

Q&A.....13

**Technology .....13**

**Fundraiser Follow-Up .....14**

24 Hours.....14

2 Weeks.....15

**Host Support.....15**

Thank You.....15

# Create Your Fundraiser

## Invitation List

Put together a list of 10-15 names of nonmember friends whom you'd like to invite to your fundraiser. Think about those who you have talked to about your work with Soroptimist and have shown genuine interest- they should be at the top of your list! Also include friends who aren't as familiar with Soroptimist, but have an appreciation for our mission and/or women's and girls' issues. Also think about those who are philanthropic and care about social issues.



+ **TIP:** Keep in mind that not everyone you invite will attend, so inviting this many people will hopefully generate a minimum of 5 attendees.

## Select a Date

Select a date approximately 10-12 days in advance at a time when you believe that those on your guest list will be able to attend. 45 minutes to 1 hour will be plenty of time for the event.

**+ TIP:** For example, if you are inviting mostly those who are retired, late morning or afternoon may be a good option. If you are inviting someone who has young kids, consider when they might be free after bed time or during nap time.

## Identify a Theme

Do you want to have a fun theme for your fundraiser?

**Some ideas include:** wear your favorite hat, bring a photo to share of a woman or girl who you admire, bring your favorite beverage and/or snack. Get creative!

## Send your Invitations

Now it's time to send out your invitations! We suggest using free electronic invitations like Evite, Paperless Post or Smilebox. They offer colorful graphics and an easy way to track your responses.

You may want to send the invitation in a personal e-mail or send a snail mail card. It's really up to you to decide the best way to reach your friends and generate interest. **Don't forget to include an RSVP date!**



**+ TIP:** The more personal your outreach, the more likely they are to attend! On the next page we've provided you with a template to help get you started!

## Sample Invitation Text

*Dear <Insert Name>,*

*Please join me for a virtual fundraiser supporting Soroptimist International of the Americas on <Insert Date> from <Insert Time>!*

*You may have heard me share about the great work of Soroptimist, a global volunteer organization dedicated to the economic empowerment of women and girls. Soroptimist's Dream Programs- Live Your Dream Awards and Dream It, Be It- are two ways that we provide support. I look forward to sharing more about these programs with you!*

*Particularly during this challenging time, women and girls who already face hardships will experience even more difficult circumstances. With lockdowns, school closures, and financial impacts, their challenges are now magnified—affecting their education, well-being, and increasing their risk for domestic violence and abuse. I am confident that our collective strength combined with the opportunity to work together, will get us through this challenging time.*

*<Customize> So bring a beverage and snack, wear your favorite piece of jewelry and join me for a time of socializing and discussion about how we can come together right now to support women and girls globally!*

*(Include Zoom meeting info with a link to sign-in to the event)*

## Follow-Up

If you haven't heard from some of your invitees, follow up three days before the virtual fundraiser with a personal e-mail or phone call to find out if they plan to attend.

It may be that they forgot to respond or had questions. If they can't make it, but want to give, send them a link to the giving page on the [website](#).

# Plan your Event Agenda

**We suggest breaking your event into the sections below.**

## 5 Minutes: Welcome Introduction and Conversation

Guests sign on to virtual meeting and socialize while waiting for others to arrive. Take this time to greet your guests and introduce people who don't know each other.

**+ TIP:** Have a few conversation questions prepared related to your theme or topics that would interest your guests.



## 10 Minutes: SIA 101

**Introduction to SIA, Dream Programs, LYD.org;** share your personal story about why you are a Soroptimist, how long you've been involved, some of the projects your club has done in the local community (focused on the Dream Programs). Share your story...What inspires you in your Soroptimist volunteer work?

*For nearly 100 years Soroptimist International of the Americas has been transforming the lives of women and girls around the world. Rooted in our belief that education is the key to social and economic empowerment—we are committed to our mission of providing women and girls with access to education and training. With nearly 30,000 Soroptimist members across 21 countries and territories we are not only investing in the dreams of women and girls within our own communities, but WORLDWIDE. From educational grants to professional mentorships, our Live Your Dream Awards and Dream It, Be it programs provide thousands of women and girls each year with the tools they need to succeed. Whether we are investing in the dreams of courageous women or encouraging young girls to reach their full potential, Soroptimist is dedicated to inspiring hope, opportunity, and power.*

## 10 Minutes: Storytelling

Share a video that highlights the story of one of the Live Your Dream Award winners or invite an award winner you know to join you on the call personally! Staff can help you to set this up in advance. Personal stories of those directly impacted help donors to connect emotionally with our mission.

Ask if anyone has any questions or comments about the information you shared or the story of the award winner. Invite dialogue by sharing something that really stands out to you about Soroptimist and/or the story that was shared.



**+ TIP:** Keep an eye on the time! You will need to be sure there is time for the ask before the 45 minutes is up.

## 5 Minutes: Present the Opportunity

Invite your guests to support Soroptimist in the following three ways:



*It's been an incredible opportunity to be part of such a passionate and devoted community. We're an unstoppable force, dedicated to creating positive and lasting change in the lives of women and girls around the world.*

*And I think you're all going to fit right in!*

*So whether you choose to make a generous contribution, join a Soroptimist club in your community, or connect with us via social media—we would be honored to welcome you to our Soroptimist family! Who will join me in making a gift that will have a direct impact in the lives of women and girls around the world?*



## Invest in the Dream Programs with a personal donation.

- **A gift of \$25** will sponsor one girl to attend a *Dream It, Be It* mentorship event in her community!
- **A gift of \$50** will buy a bag of groceries to help a domestic violence survivor feed her family.
- **A gift of \$100** will support the cost of childcare so that a mom doesn't have to miss work or school.
- **A gift of \$250** will support a student loan bill to show a woman you believe in her path to financial freedom
- **A gift of any size** will help us to continue to provide resources to women and girls so that they have what they need to achieve economic empowerment!

Link is shared on-screen and through the chat box for attendees to donate online.

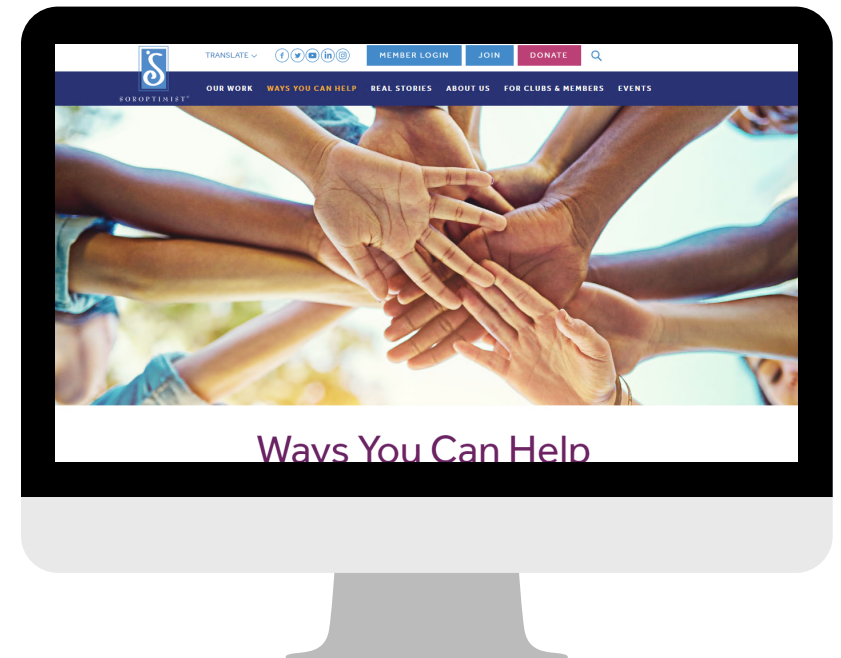
**+ TIP:** Let everyone know that you will be following up with an e-mail the next day that shares these three opportunities with more information.

## 20 Minutes: Q&A

Be sure to save enough time to allow your guests to ask questions.

# Technology

Staff will set up a Zoom meeting for your fundraiser and make you the host. You will have the option to share documents, videos or other materials online through the Zoom platform. If you are not familiar with Zoom functionality, further training will be provided and staff is available to serve as tech support during your event.



**+ REMEMBER:** With any technology, there can be issues: bad internet connections, people have trouble connecting or dogs and kids may make noise in the background when you are talking.

# Fundraiser Follow-Up

You will be the main point of contact and cultivation for your guest in the weeks and months following the event. Staff will develop ongoing stewardship opportunities and work with you to help them stay engaged.

We understand there may be guests who aren't interested in being connected. And that's okay! You will be able to thank them for participating and ask if there is anyone else they know who would be interested in attending an event like this in the future.

## Within 24 Hours

You will be provided with an e-mail to personalize and send out within 24 hours to all those who attended your fundraiser. It will outline three ways to get involved and provide links to click through to the appropriate online opportunities.

**+ FYI:** Staff will follow up with you when your guests respond with a gift and/or other engagement so that you can thank them personally.

## Within 2 Weeks

You will be provided with an e-mail to personalize and send out within 24 hours to all those who attended your fundraiser. It will outline three ways to get involved and provide links to click through to the appropriate online opportunities.

## Host Support

We're in this together! If you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to your staff liason.

## Thank You

Thank you for your commitment to a better world. It's because of changemakers like you that we are able to empower women and girls worldwide with the tools to create a brighter future for themselves, their families and the world.

Together we can do more than we could ever do alone. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.