

Remote Income Generation

Museums rely on their visitors to generate a large part of their income to cover their operating costs, but what if a museum is closed for a long period of time?

Fortunately there are still some ways to look at generating an income. This document is designed to raise awareness of some of those options and share some of the actions museums in the region are taking.

Online Donations

Some museums have been sending out pleas for visitors and loyal supporters to make donations to support them over this time, like this example from Brooklands Museum which was posted on Twitter.



The Case for Support

- Museum's mission statement
- What is unique about the museum?
- Project need
- Project benefits
- Why now, and why us?
- Why not any other alternatives?
- Who is supporting the campaign?
- What will it cost and how much do you need?

If you are thinking about any fundraising activity, then it pays to plan your campaign in advance.

Use this list from the [AIM success guide to fundraising](#) to write a short *Case for Support*, check it with your team and then use it to base your message on.

Making online donations work for you

Museums know that they need to promote the donation request to generate income. That means sharing it with your supporters in a meaningful way that makes sure that they donate now!

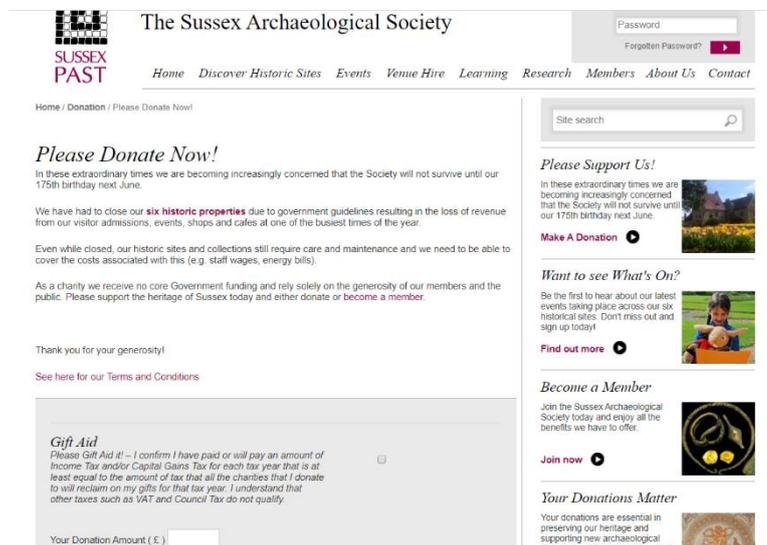
Top tips for online donations

- Make it easy to give (obvious and with as few clicks as possible)
- Link it to a campaign that needs action **now** eg 'by donating today, you can help us keep the museum running'
- Fit your campaign to your brand
- Use social media to share the message and encourage people to proudly share when they've donated
- Can you link donations to online resources you are putting up? eg if you have enjoyed seeing this virtual exhibition/using this online learning resource, plus support us over the coming months by making a donation.
- Personal fundraising can have a big impact, so support individuals in raising money for you eg Could a Trustee set up a personal campaign with a story about what the museum means to them?

How to set up online donations

If you have online payment capability already (possibly for an online shop or membership scheme), just add a donation in as a product within your sales system. eg from Sussex Past

Don't forget to enable people to gift aid their donation



The screenshot shows the website for The Sussex Archaeological Society. The page is titled 'Please Donate Now!' and includes a navigation menu with links for Home, Discover Historic Sites, Events, Venue Hire, Learning, Research, Members, About Us, and Contact. The main content area contains a 'Please Donate Now!' section with a 'Make A Donation' button. Below this is a 'Gift Aid' section with a checkbox and a 'Your Donation Amount (£)' input field. The right sidebar features a search bar and several promotional sections: 'Please Support Us!', 'Want to see What's On?', 'Become a Member', and 'Your Donations Matter'.

If you don't have online payments already, you can set yourself up so that visitors can use PayPal <https://www.paypal.com/uk/webapps/mpp/accept-payments-online>

At a basic level, the set up is free and PayPal takes a 2.9% + 30p cut per transaction

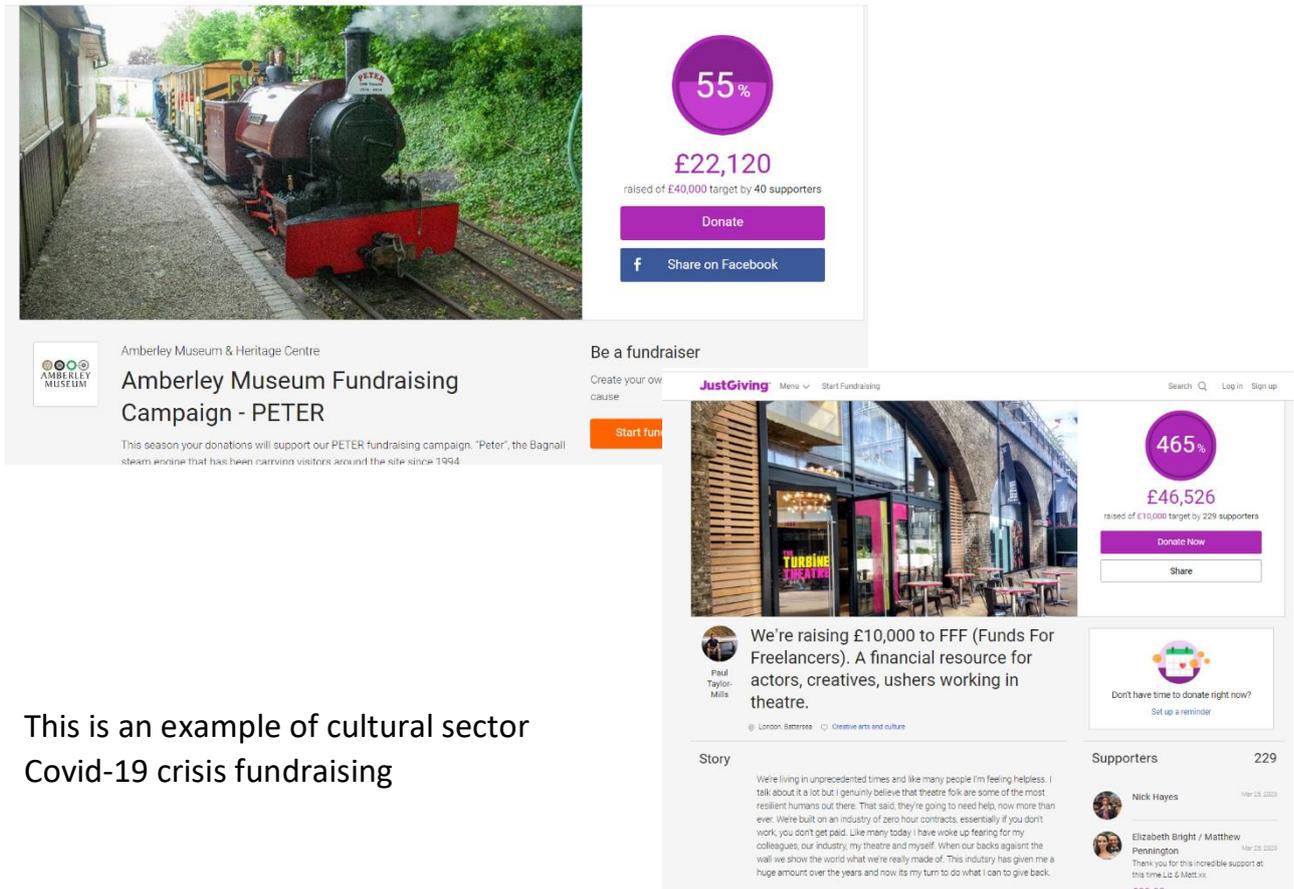
Compiled 1st April 2020

Donation Platforms

There are also a number of websites that can be used by charities to collect donations. Here are some examples in use by museums in the region.

- GoFundMe - takes a 2.9% commission +25p per donation
<https://uk.gofundme.com/c/how-it-works>
- CAF donate – takes a 3.6% commission
<https://www.cafonline.org/charities/caf-donate>
- National Funding Scheme – takes a 4.5% commission + 22p per donation + 45% of gift aid donations
<https://www.nationalfundingscheme.org/faqs-about-donate/#covid-19-response>
- Justgiving – FREE to start and then £15 per month + VAT (for fundraising under £15k a year) + standard payment processing fees + 5% Gift Aid reclaim service fee (optional)
<https://www.justgiving.com/>

For example Amberley Museum have a page for a steam engine restoration project.



Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre
Amberley Museum Fundraising Campaign - PETER
This season your donations will support our PETER fundraising campaign. "Peter", the Bagnall steam engine that has been carrying visitors around the site since 1994.

55%
£22,120
raised of £40,000 target by 40 supporters

Donate

Share on Facebook

Be a fundraiser
Create your own cause

JustGiving Menu Start Fundraising Search Log in Sign up

465%
£46,526
raised of £10,000 target by 229 supporters

Donate Now

Share

Story

We're raising £10,000 to FFF (Funds For Freelancers). A financial resource for actors, creatives, ushers working in theatre.

Supporters 229

Nick Hayes Mar 25 2020

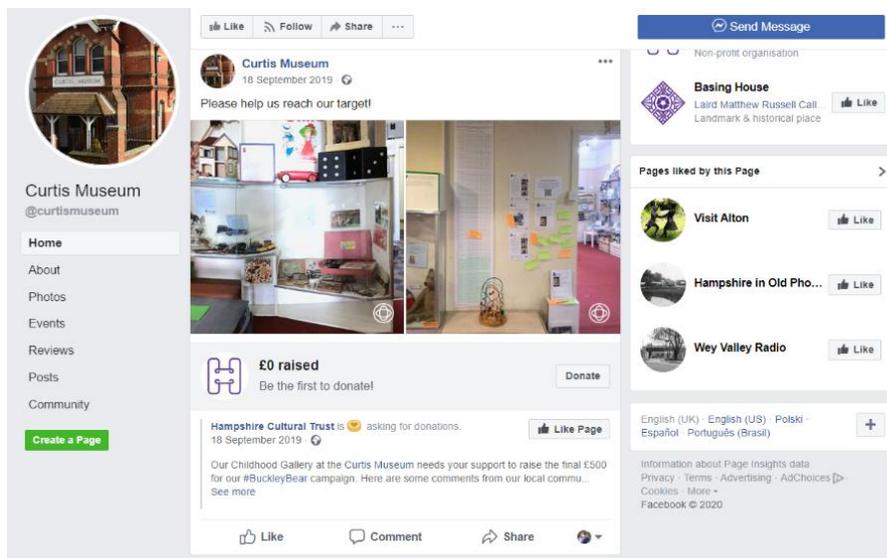
Elizabeth Bright / Matthew Pennington Mar 25 2020
Thank you for this incredible support at this time L.L. & Matt xx
£20.00

This is an example of cultural sector Covid-19 crisis fundraising

Compiled 1st April 2020

- You can add a Donate button to Facebook or other social media, but you will need to enable a payment system for this to collect donations.

<https://www.facebook.com/help/269698566852985>



Here's an example from the Curtis Museum

Tickets, Refunds and Vouchers

If you have sold tickets for an event or forthcoming admission, consider asking visitors if they would be willing to donate the ticket cost, rather than receive a refund.

ALVA (Association of Leading Visitor Attractions) reported that where members had asked visitors to donate rather than receive a refund on booked tickets (as a consequence of coronavirus cancellations) 74% of people opted to donate the cost.

Read more about this here <https://www.indigo-ltd.com/blog/gdprcovid19>

Some museums are continuing to sell online admission tickets for future use. This gives you some help with your cash flow while closed, but do check your terms and conditions, thinking about when visitors may realistically be able to use their tickets.

Wriggle has launched the [Indie Kitty](#) to support independent businesses by providing a voucher service which gives visitors a chance to pay now, use later. This may be a good option for your museum shop or café.



A couple of ideas from The Lightbox - suggesting visitors make a 'virtual coffee' donation and also asking people to pre-pay their membership



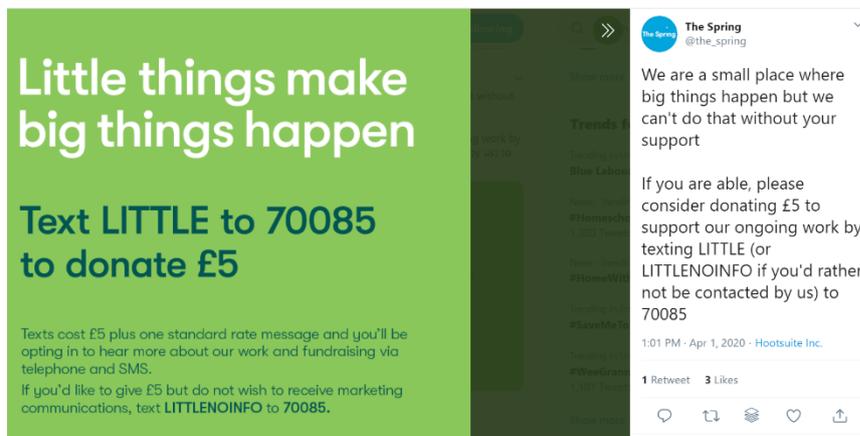
Donations by Text

Some platforms are designed so that you can ask donors to donate by text message.

Donr enables you to do this, with a scheme that costs you 5% per donation. This scheme is simple to set up and can also support Gift Aid.

<https://www.donr.com/covid-19-info-hub/>

The Spring shared this campaign on Twitter



Donations while shopping

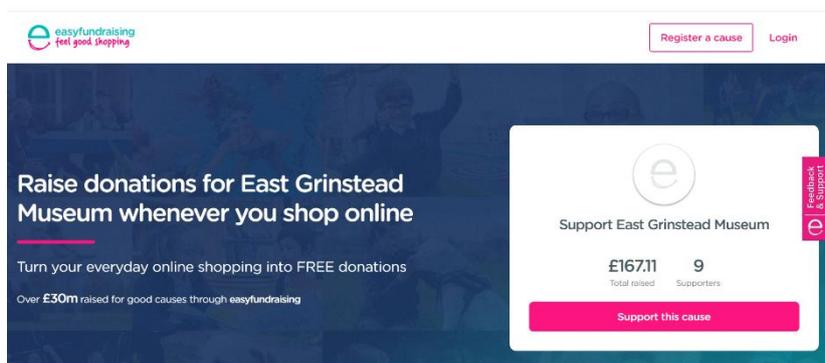
Another way to elicit small levels of donations if you are a charity is through online fundraising schemes such as easyfundraising or Amazon smile.

With these schemes, each time someone makes an online purchase, a small percentage is given to the charity by the retailer. It doesn't cost either the charity or the individual customer anything.

All you need to do is register your charity with one of these and then share the information far and wide with your supporters.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

<https://org.amazon.co.uk/>



Here's an example from East Grinstead Museum

Online Quizzes

Virtual Quiz Events enables you to set up a quiz and benefit from 60% of the money raised from participants. This could be an ideal way to keep in touch with volunteers and supporters, and raise some funds at the same time.

<https://www.virtualquizevents.com/how-we-work/>

Online Retail

An Online Shop

If you have access to your shop stock or can set up a stock of products at home, then this could be worth looking into. In the current lockdown situation, it may be too problematic to obtain and then package and send shop stock to purchasers, so plan carefully before you embark on this option.

Before starting an online shop think about:

- What makes you unique as an organisation? What unique product or experience could you offer?
- Who are your customers? What could excite them to buy?
- What could you sell which is unique, exclusive, scarce or valued?
- Do you already have a captive audience that you could market products too or would you need to promote your wares?
- How could you build a long-lasting customer relationship which can result in repeat purchase and customer loyalty?

For tips on how to set up an online shop, see the resources on the SEMDP website <https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/effective-retail-guilfoyle/>

Shopify have an app that allows you to round up your transactions to the nearest pound and donate the surplus [Round up for Charity](#)

Print on demand service

If you can't access your stock, a good alternative might be to look at print-on-demand. If you have good quality images (where you own the copyright) that would look good as prints, greetings cards, phone covers, cushions etc. you can use a print-on-demand service for visitors to order items which are then printed and delivered to order, direct to the purchaser.

<https://www.prodigi.com/products/> offer services through
<https://www.magnoliabox.com/>

<https://superfastpod.com/> supply a wide range of products which can be set up through Shopify.

This useful blog gives you lots of information and hints about how to set up a print on demand service <https://www.shopify.co.uk/blog/print-on-demand>

For more information on online income generation and other approaches to digital, take a look at the [Digital Culture Network guides](#)

Alternative income generation methods

Catering services

For some museums, it may be possible to keep an aspect of your business running. For example, Gilbert White's House took on the running of a village shop from their café a few years ago. They are also providing take-away options to people in the village. <http://www.gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk/>

Current Government guidelines on takeaway provision are here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance>

Property & Investments

Other museums have property or land that they let out and so they are able to continue to take in rents while closed.

Museums should also speak to their financial advisor about investment income and how best to maximise those resources.