

# Mass Events 2023

What have we learnt?



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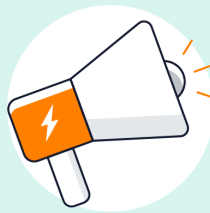
Thoughts from the 2024 TCS London Marathon Charity of the Year.



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## Foreword from Samaritans

I've often felt that in our profession there are times when a crystal ball could come in handy, so to be able to delve into the minds of our runners and the people who donate to them is invaluable!

This report has a wealth of insights that can be practically applied when you're planning your 2024/25 events portfolio, when you're phasing your budget, or when you're considering who your participants are and what marketing content they might respond to. It also highlights what support and guidance could make the most difference to our runners' ability to maximise their fundraising, with insights we can share with them too, so they're better able to understand their donors, and calm their fundraising nerves.

It's also reassuring to see that past participants highly rate the charity support they have received. This is where we excel! As events fundraisers, our focus on creating a memorable experience for runners ensures they feel fully equipped to raise money, are ready to stand on the race start line, and ultimately draws them closer to our causes.

But this report confirms what many of us see day to day, from runners' fears around asking for money, to signing-up for events far later than they were pre-pandemic. At Samaritans we'll use the insights from this report to check in on our supporter journeys and make adjustments that aim to address runners' current needs and concerns.

Whilst there are challenges, most importantly the results of this research leave me feeling hopeful. There's a real appetite amongst the public to take part in mass events over the next 12 months and results show there's clearly a willingness amongst the public to donate to those who do – they just need to be asked!

It feels apt to end on a message of hope, because as 2024 TCS London Marathon charity of the year, Samaritans participants are running to show others there is always hope. They're running because they believe in tomorrow and are fundraising to ensure Samaritans helpline services are here for anyone who's struggling to cope, and for that, we can't support and thank them enough.

Sarah Ball

Head of Community & Events Fundraising, Samaritans



## Introduction

The last year has seen momentum starting to build again around mass participation events after the challenging period of the pandemic. The TCS London Marathon being back in its customary April slot provided an important sign of a return to normality. And while this return to business as usual was welcome, the cost of living crisis applied a different pressure for charities, mass event participants and their supporters.

This report examines the overall state of play for fundraising events, as well as looking ahead to what the future holds. It starts by looking at participation levels in general, and then focuses on the challenges people face taking part in distance races. This section also looks at how many fundraisers there are taking part in mass participation events.

The research then looks at charity branded events, including the different types of challenges that people are entering, the motivations behind why they are taking part, and whether they are getting involved again next year. This part of the report also covers the barriers that are stopping people from taking part in these types of events.

The study then goes on to examine the fundraising effectiveness of participants. It covers the types of charities they raise for, and why they select these causes. This section looks at how far in advance participants sign up for events and what motivates them in their fundraising. The research then covers how they use their online fundraising pages and social media to help raise money.

Finally the report puts the spotlight on donors. The study looks at how many times they are asked to sponsor friends and family taking part in mass participation events and whether this has any impact on their giving.

The second edition of this annual report concludes with a summary of the key insights from the research and how charities should consider using them.

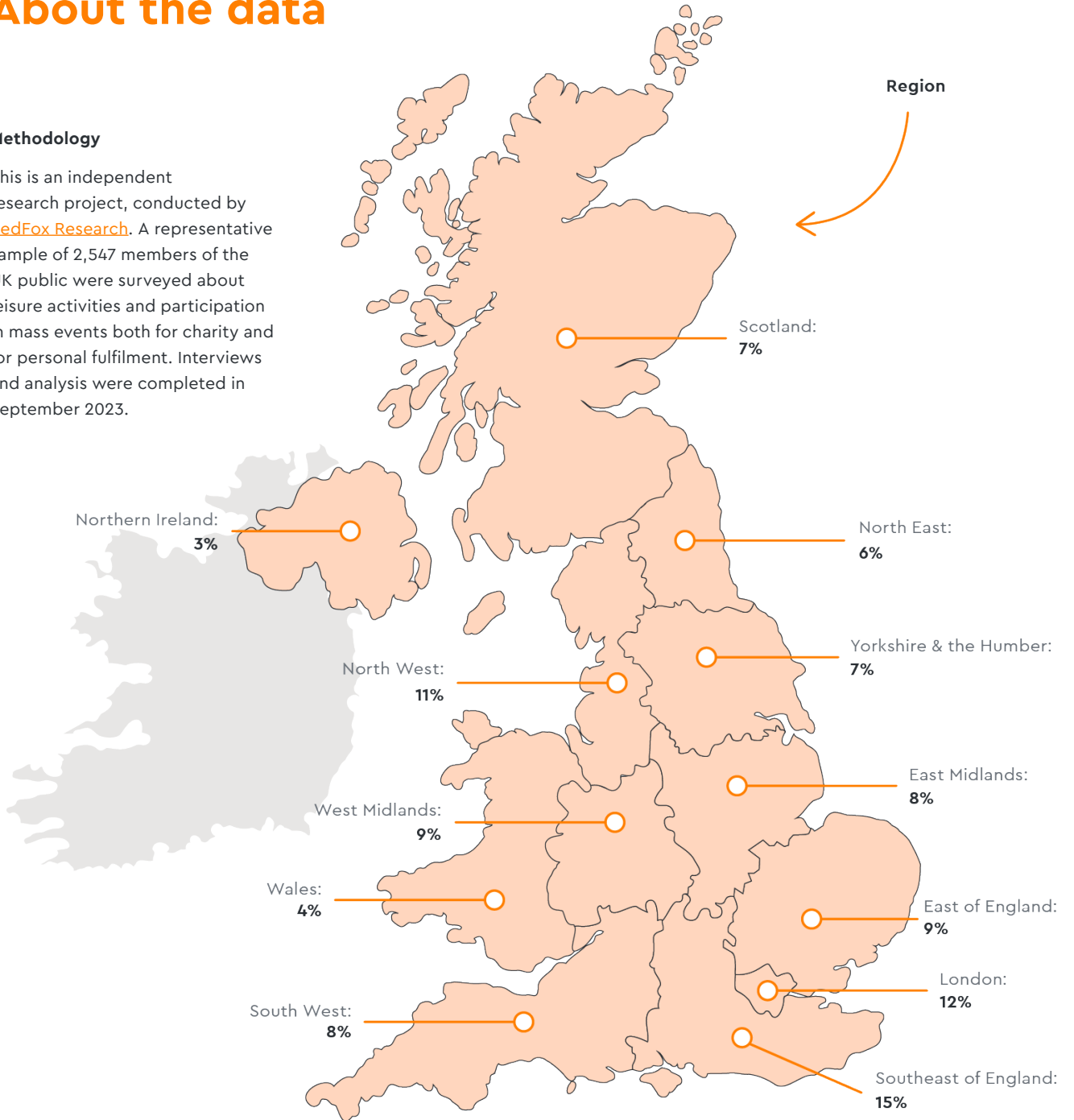




# About the data

## Methodology

This is an independent research project, conducted by [RedFox Research](#). A representative sample of 2,547 members of the UK public were surveyed about leisure activities and participation in mass events both for charity and for personal fulfilment. Interviews and analysis were completed in September 2023.

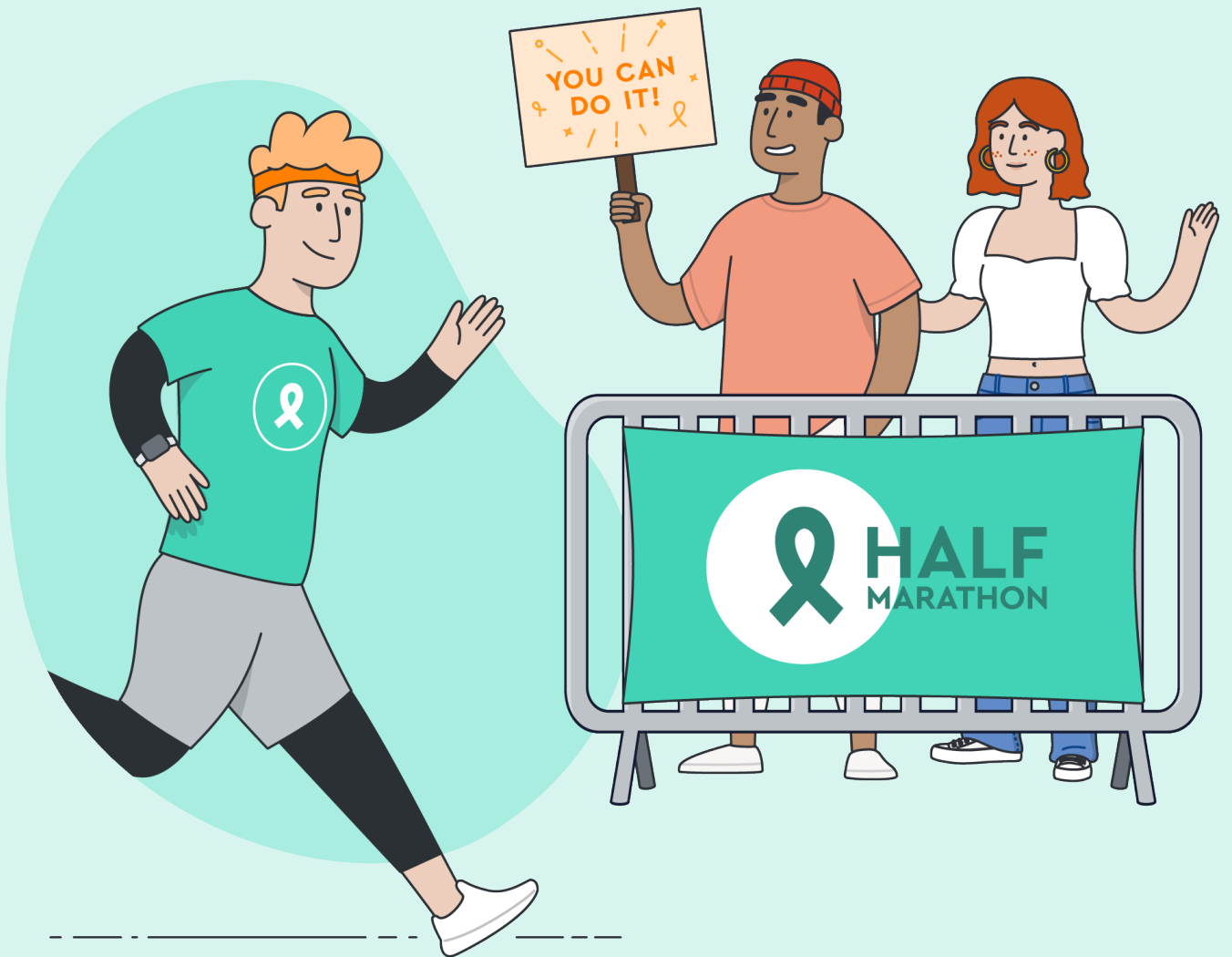


| Age   |     |
|-------|-----|
| 18-24 | 14% |
| 25-34 | 21% |
| 35-44 | 21% |
| 45-54 | 24% |
| 55-64 | 20% |

| Gender      |     |
|-------------|-----|
| Male        | 47% |
| Female      | 53% |
| Other / ref | <1% |
| Non-binary  | <1% |
| Not stated  | <1% |

Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

# The state of play



## The state of play

Mass participation events have a crucial role to play in the fundraising mix for good causes. To understand the public's enthusiasm for taking part in these events for charities, it's important to first understand the market as a whole – for example how many people are getting active and how many people are casual or serious runners.

Figure 1 provides this baseline, showing how many people take part regularly in different forms of exercise. Walking, unsurprisingly leads the way with nearly three quarters (74%) of the population saying they do this for fitness and leisure. Swimming comes in second with nearly a third of the population (31%) doing this on a regular basis. This is closely followed by more than a quarter (27%) who describe themselves as casual runners; then cyclists (26%), distance runners (8%) and endurance racers (6%). Combining the running groups means a total 29% of the population would consider themselves regular runners.

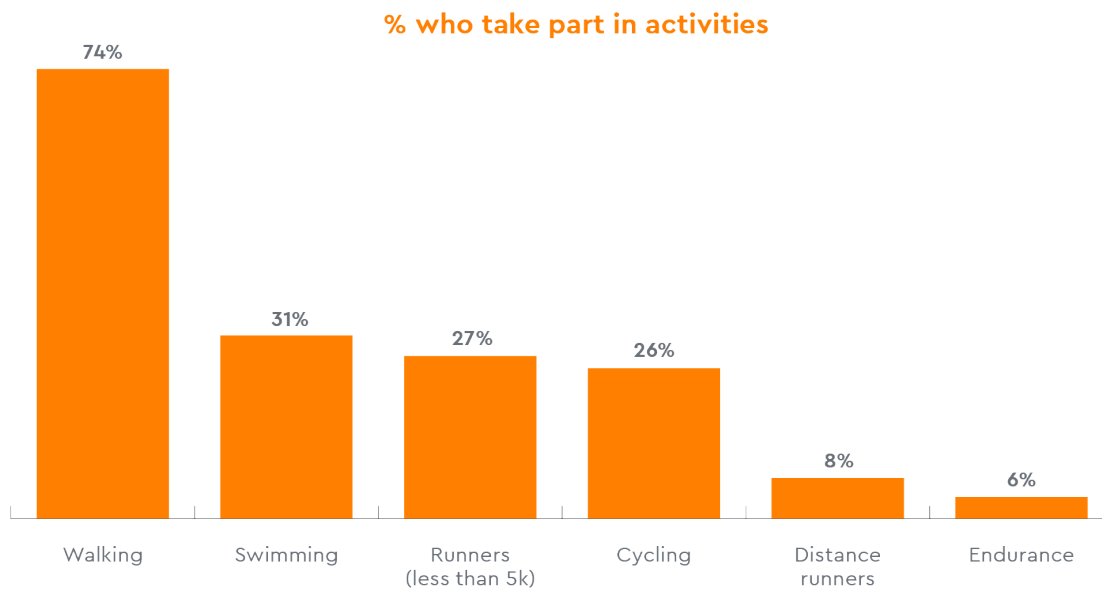
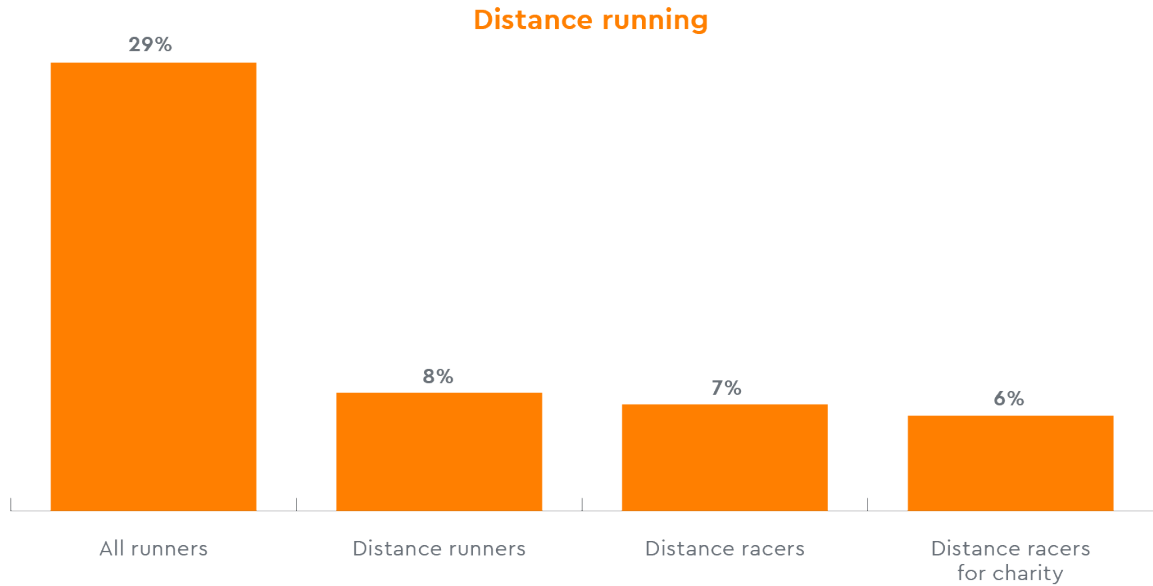


Figure 1: Percentage of the public regularly taking part in activities for fitness

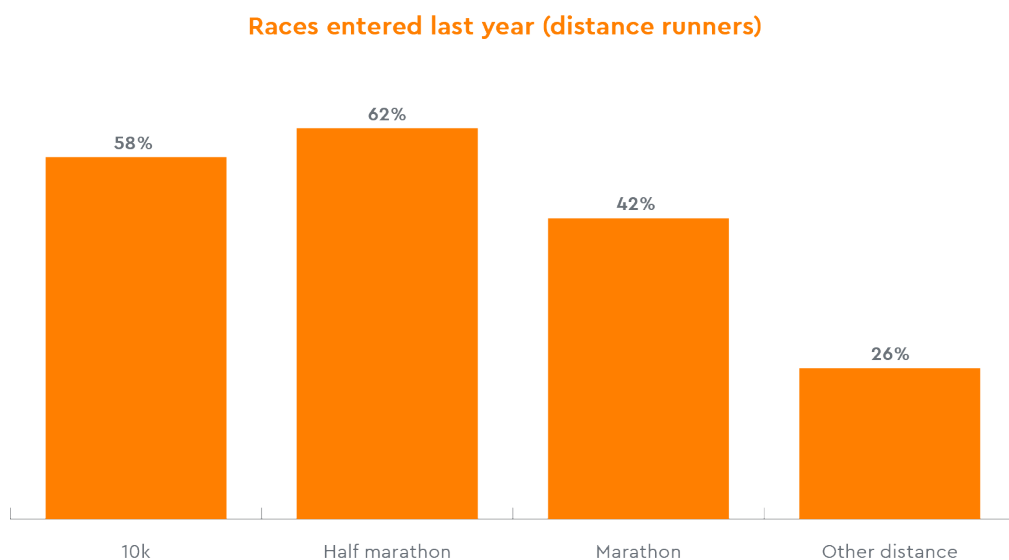
While all regular runners are an important audience for charities to be engaging in events, perhaps the most significant group is the 8% of the population who are distance runners. Figure 2 shows that the vast majority of these runners take part in races or challenge events on a regular basis and a large proportion of them do this for charity – around 6% of the population do this.

## The state of play



**Figure 2: Proportion of population who run, distance run, race and fundraise**

Figure 3 shows the type of races and challenges that distance runners have taken part in over the last year. The most popular is a half marathon with 62% having done this, followed by 58% undertaking a 10K. A healthy two fifths (42%) of distance runners have taken part in a marathon in the last year.



**Figure 3: Distance runners – event participation in last year**



## The state of play

And eight out of ten (79%) of these participants entering major events are doing so for charity (Figure 4). Half marathon runners are the most likely to raise funds for charity with 87% doing so, closely followed by marathon participants (83%). Interestingly, for marathons 36% are independent fundraisers who have got a place through a ballot, or other non-charity place, and decide to raise money - this compares to 29% of half marathon participants. 10K runners are the least likely to be doing so for charity, though 60% still consider these events an opportunity to raise funds.

The top three reasons for opting out of fundraising seem to reflect the cost of living to an extent. 21% of those who didn't fundraise said they didn't like asking people for money. 18% said they took part in too many events and so didn't always fundraise. Finally 16% said they didn't want to be put under pressure to fundraise.

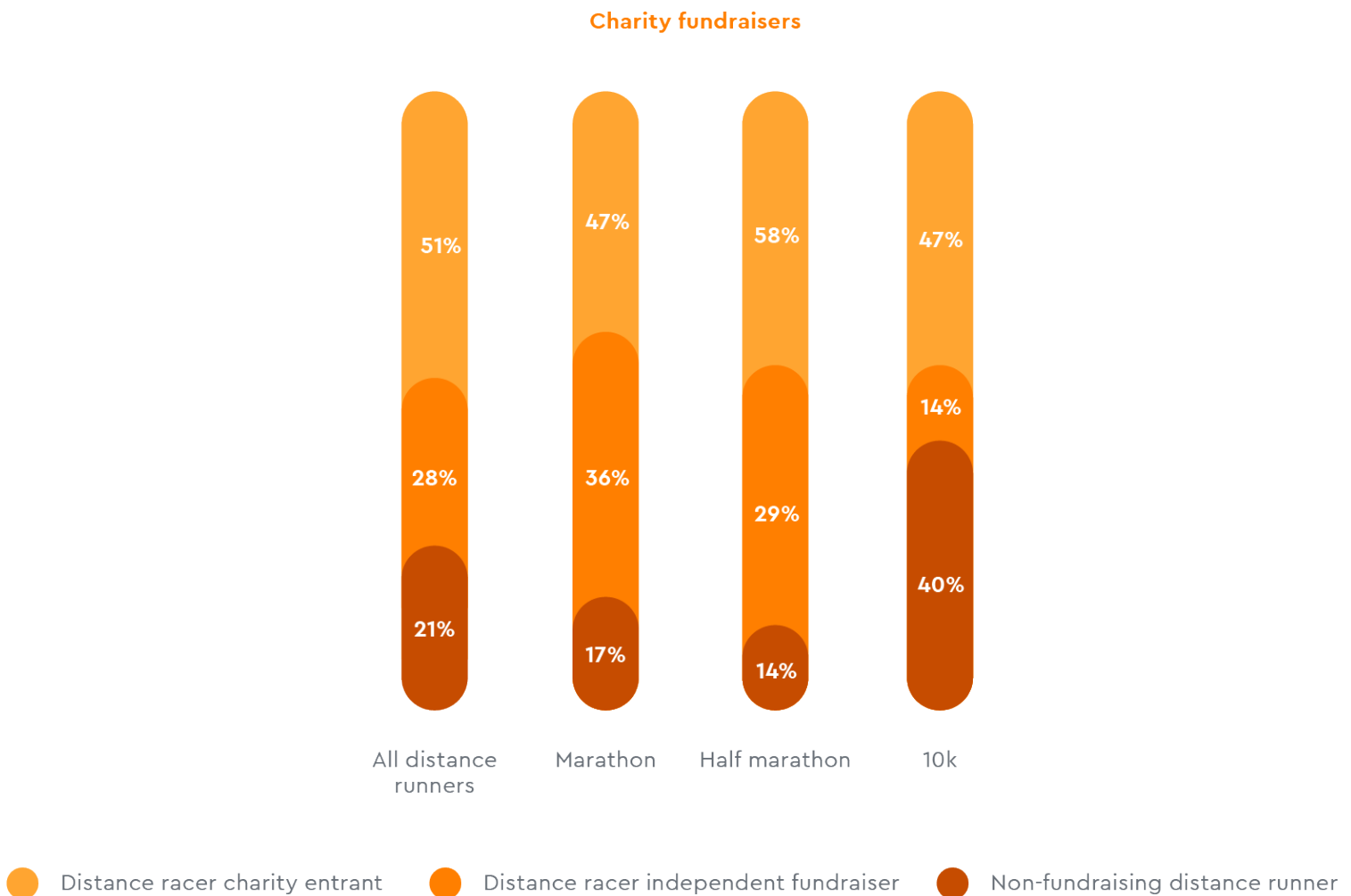
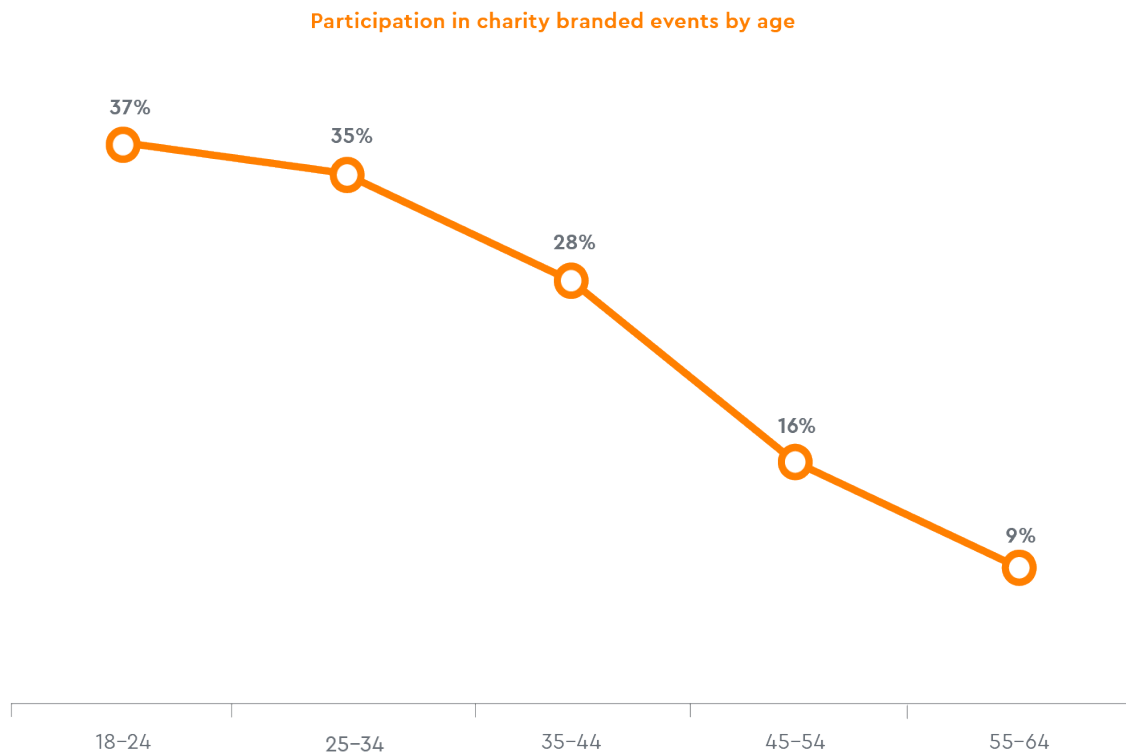


Figure 4: Distance runners – fundraising during events

## The state of play

### Charity branded events

Including both walks and runs, just under a quarter (24%) of the population say they have taken part in a charity branded mass participation event in the last year. Figure 5 shows how this breaks down across age groups. Younger people, aged 18–34, are far more likely to take part, with over a third getting involved. It's likely this is at least in part driven by their larger social circles with friends or family encouraging them to get involved in events they are taking part in. It's also likely that work based fundraising is having an impact here with company participation and fundraising drives getting younger age groups involved.



**Figure 5: Participation in charity branded events (split by age)**

Figure 6 compares the fundraising motivations of those participating in charity branded events with distance runners. This shows something of a paradox, with more than a quarter of participants (28%) using charity branded events as a way to complete a challenge they are keen to take part in. On the other hand, over two fifths (41%) of those taking part in distance races are primarily motivated by raising money for charity, and are taking on a challenge to help them achieve that goal. For charities, it's worthwhile considering that they are providing a gateway for fitness for many people. For some good causes, this may fit well with their organisational aims and be worth considering from a services perspective. For other charities, it is worth understanding how this gateway could then slot into a ladder of other physical activities to keep these individuals interested in fundraising for the cause.

## The state of play

### How fundraising supports personal goals

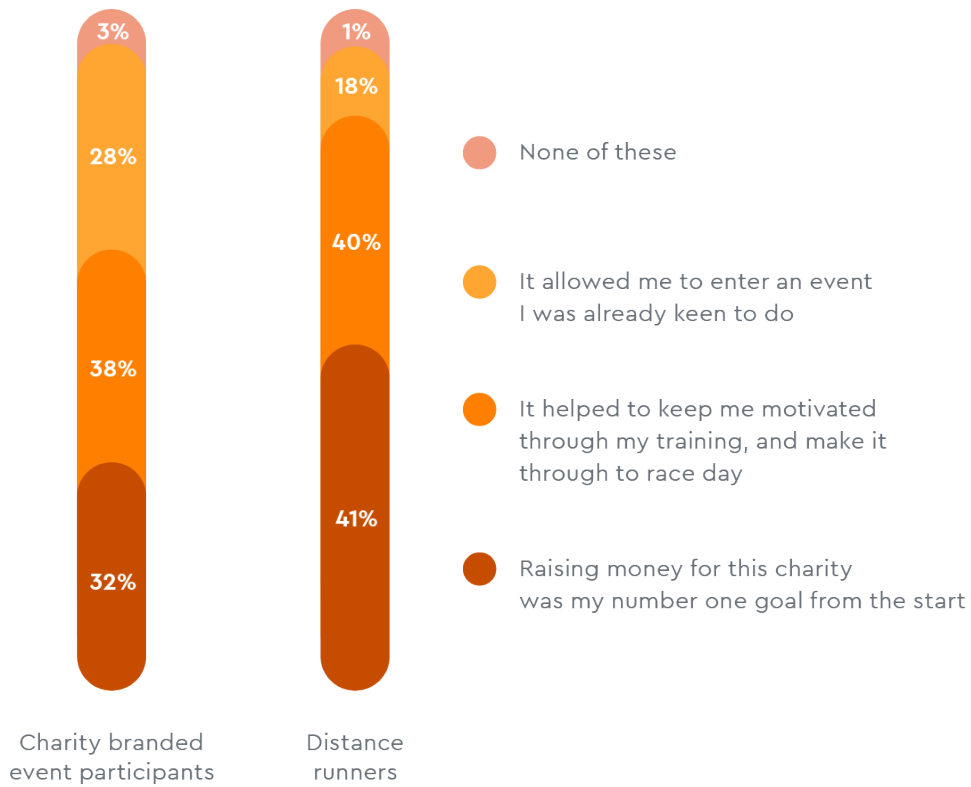


Figure 6: Fundraisers motivations

Whatever the motivations, there is positive news in terms of the future. One in five (21%) of the public has either already signed up for a charity branded event for the next 12 months or has chosen one and plan to sign up. Figure 7 also shows that a further 42% are at least giving some consideration to signing up to a charity branded event. This is a significant audience with a wide range of motivations – for charities it is worth considering how to target these potential participants. For example, for more entry level events, it is worth good causes giving some thought to how they can market them as a good way to start the fitness journey.

## The state of play

### Charity sign-ups next 12 months

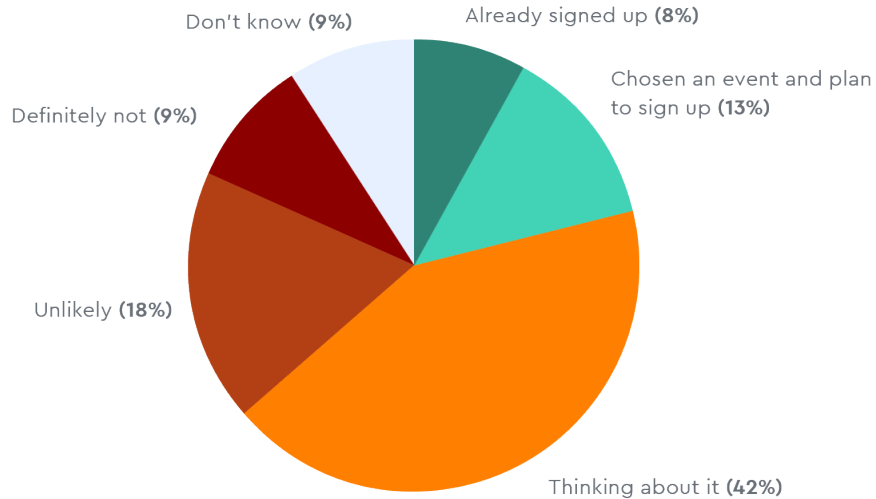


Figure 7: Sign ups for charity branded events in next 12 months

Figure 8 shows the types of charity branded events being chosen. Running is the most popular with 55% stating they are going to take part, followed by walking events (46%). There is a significant drop before 21% say they plan to take part in a cycling event and then 18% swimming. The selections are rounded out by triathlons (9%) and endurance (4%). This is a shift from 2022's figures on this question which saw runs and walks tied in the top spot, and swimming events are growing in popularity, being nearly on a par with cycling events after being only half as popular last year.

### Choice of charity events (all who have firm plans)

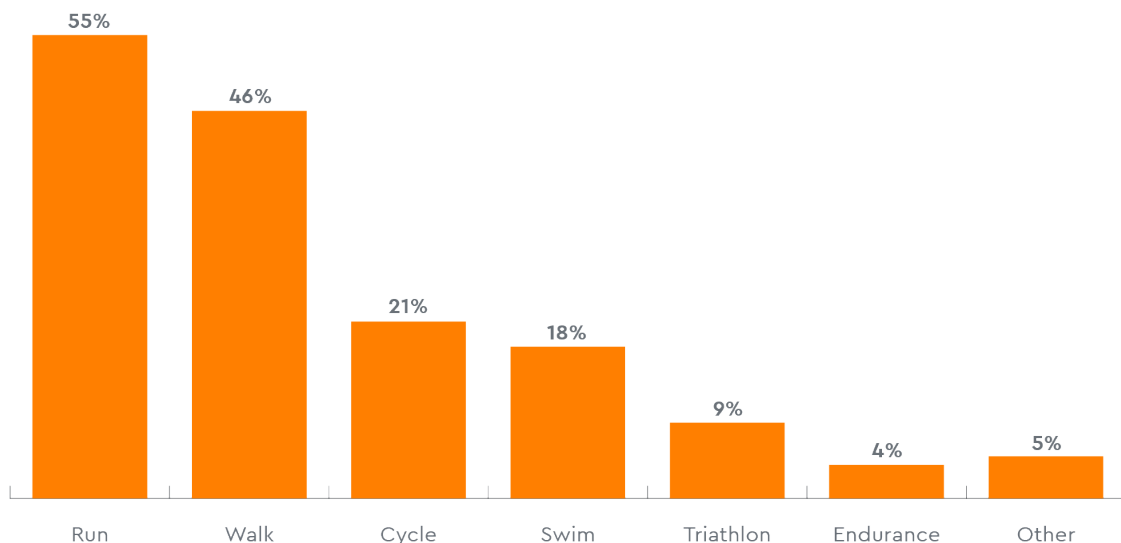
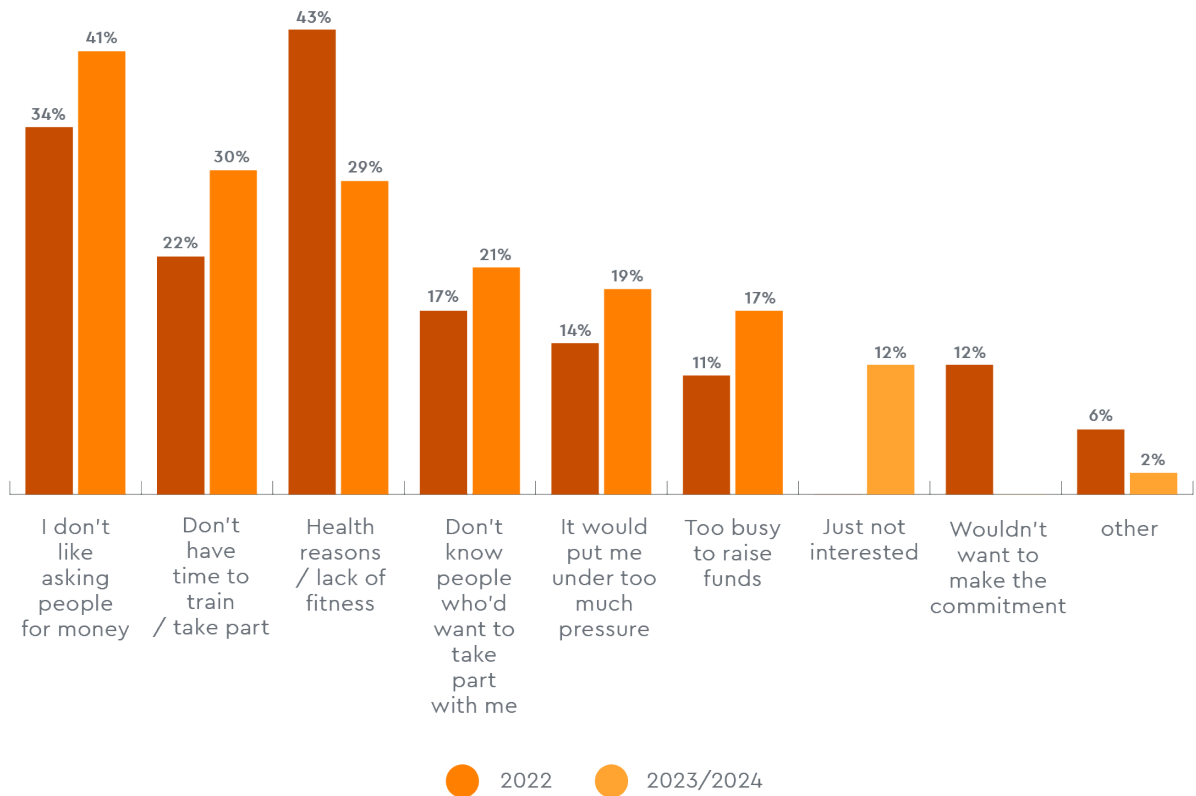


Figure 8: Choice of types of charity events (those committed to participating in next 12 months)

## The state of play

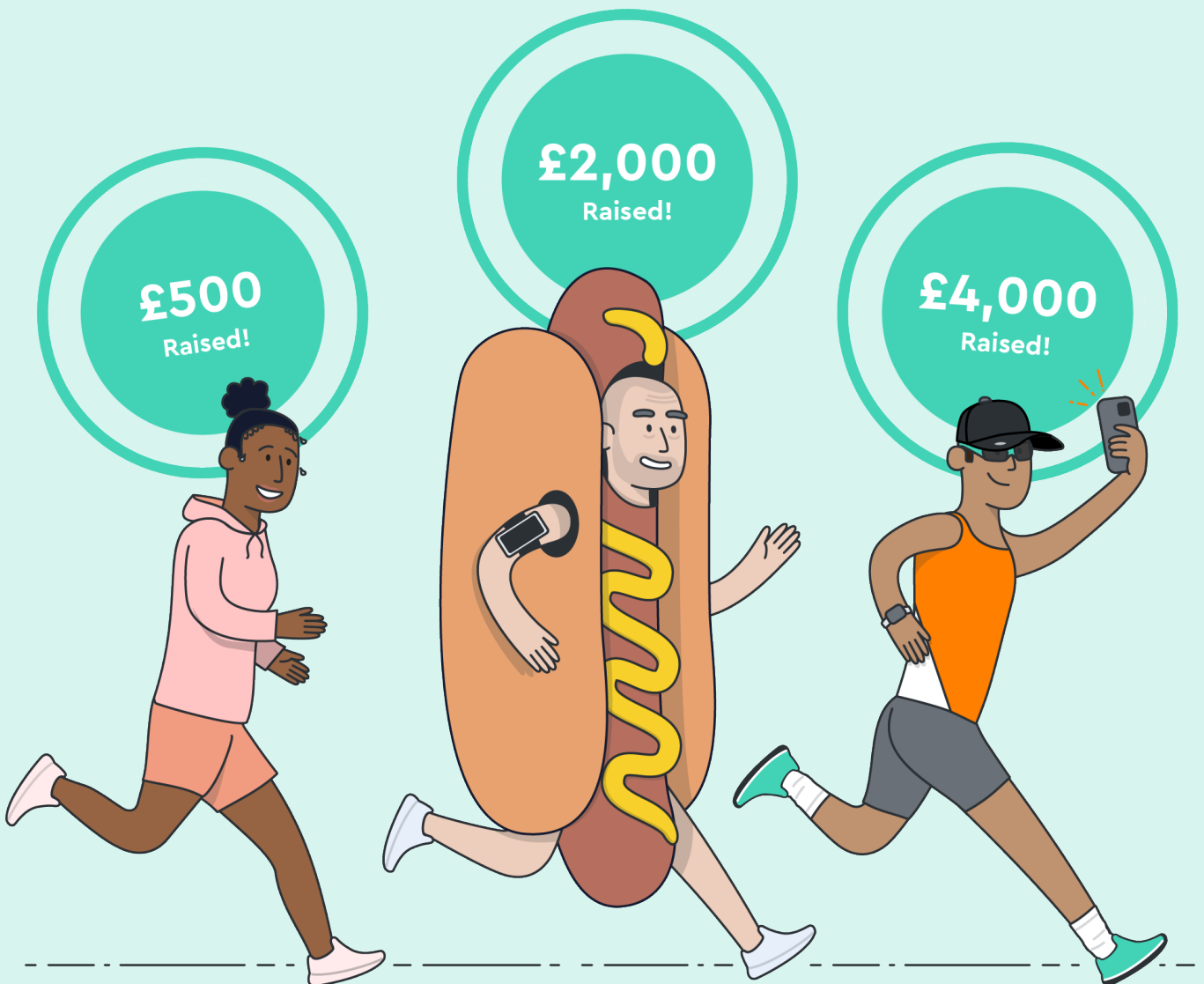
While there are healthy numbers of people signing up, Figure 9 shows the barriers stopping others from getting involved, and how this has changed between 2022 and 2023. One barrier that has dropped considerably is health and fitness – from 43% last year to 29% this year. However, there has been a rise in those saying they don't like asking people for money (34% to 41%) and people saying they are too busy to raise funds (11% to 17%). For charities this provides a clearer focus on how to help remove some of the barriers by providing help to show people how to fundraise. Another interesting area that has risen is not knowing people who'd want to take part with them. Participation in charity branded events can have an important social aspect as well, and finding ways to connect people through fundraising teams could be a way to remove this barrier and also help provide some support on raising money.

**Barriers to taking part in charity event  
(all who never participate in mass events)**



**Figure 9: Barriers to participation (2022 and 2023)**

# Fundraising effectiveness



## Fundraising effectiveness

There is a wide range in the amounts raised by event participants. Partially this is down to the event being undertaken, but it also is down to the abilities and experience of that fundraiser, the support given by the charity they are raising money for and the channels they use.

Figure 10 shows this range, from those who raise up to £100, to the small percentage (2%) who do over £10,000. Broadly the fundraisers fall into three groups. Firstly the Grass Roots, who raise up to £500 per event – just under half (47%) of all event fundraisers fall into this group. Then there are the Semi-pros who raise between £500 – £3,000 per event. Around two fifths (42%) of participants make up this group. Finally there are the Grand Masters who raise more than £3,000 per event. While a great group to have taking part for your charity, there are a limited number of them with only 11% of event fundraisers falling into this top category.

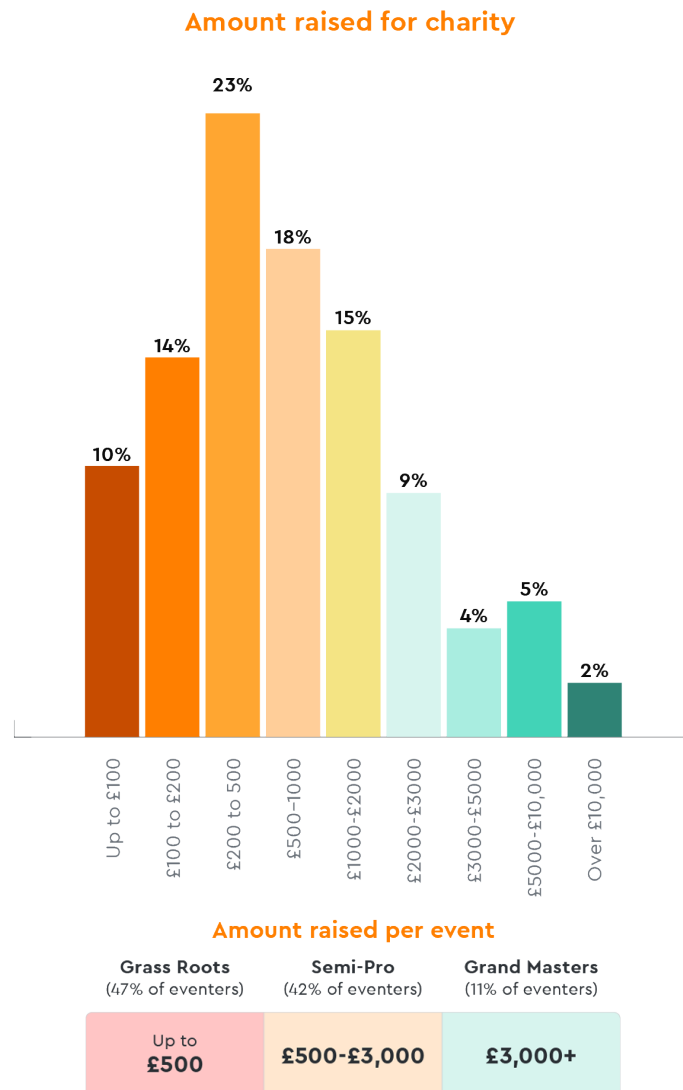
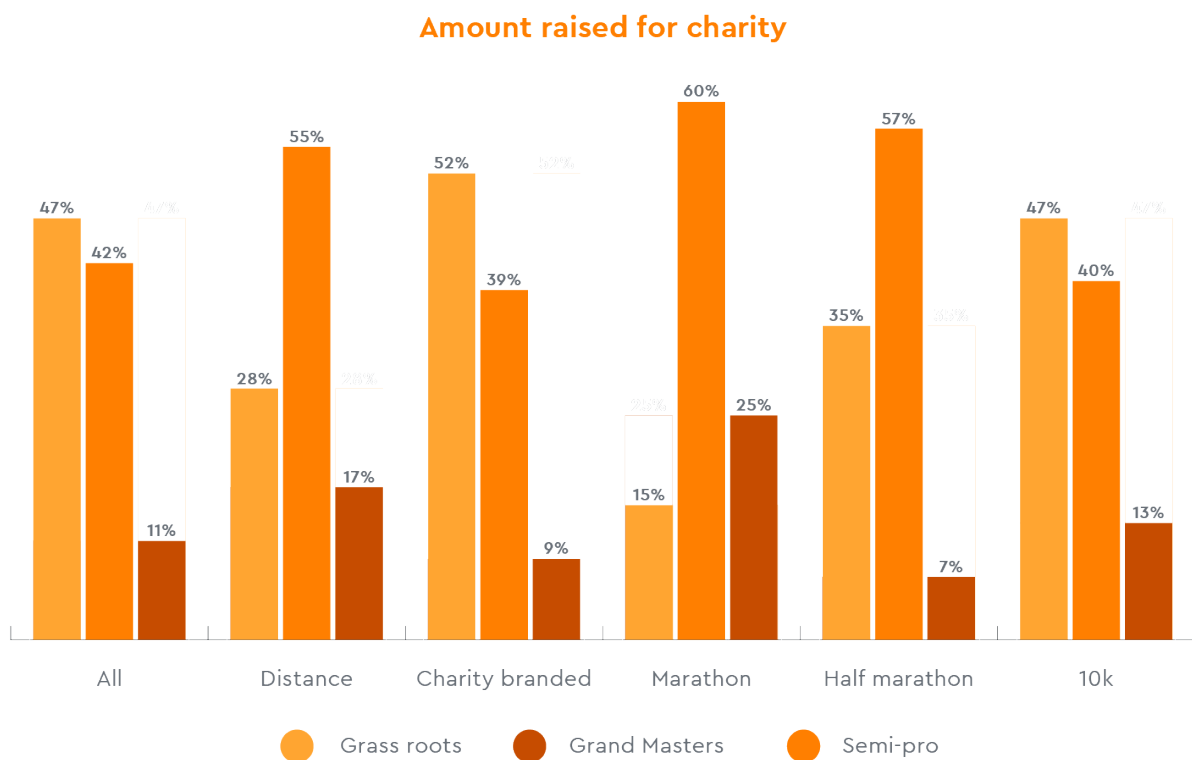


Figure 10: Amount raised for charity by event fundraisers

## Fundraising effectiveness

Those taking part in third party distance races tend to raise more on average than those participating in charity branded events, as shown in Figure 11. More than half (52%) of charity branded event participants fall into the Grass Roots category, compared to just over a quarter (28%) of distance runners. Distance runners also have nearly twice as many Grand Masters (17% vs 9%) as charity branded events. In part this is down to the nature of charity branded events tending to be easier to access for a wider audience.

However, the difference in fundraising is underlined when looking at longer distances such as half marathons or marathons. For marathons, 85% of participants raise more than £500 and nearly two thirds (63%) do the same for half marathons. Those taking part in 10Ks for charities are more closely aligned with the levels of fundraising seen for charity branded events.

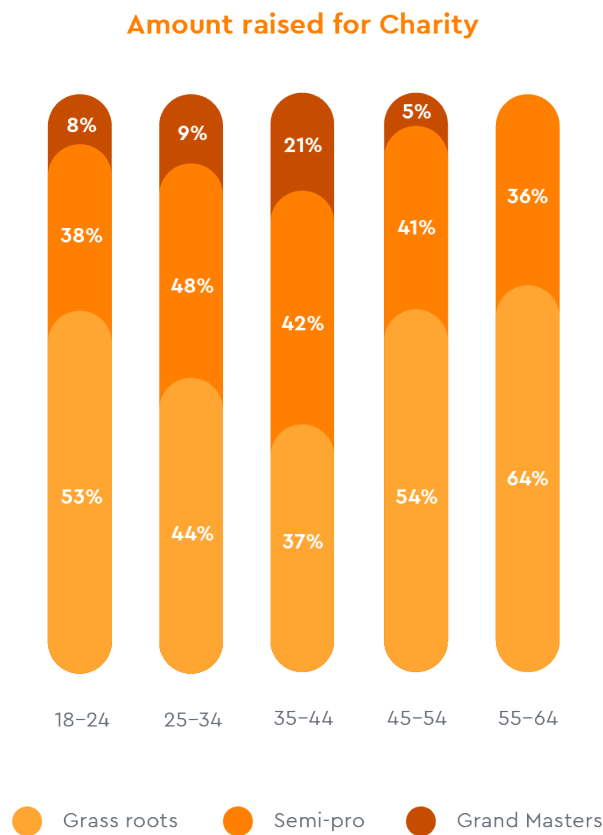


**Figure 11: Amount raised for charity – splits by distance/charity event participants and distance levels**

Figure 12 shows how much is raised by different age groups. The most effective fundraisers are in the 35–44 year old age bracket with 63% raising more than £500 when they participate. This is followed by 25–34 year olds (57%), and a tie between 18–24 year olds and 45–54 year olds – both on 46%. However, 18–24 year olds have far more £3,000+ fundraisers, underlining the value of getting younger age groups involved as event fundraisers. There is also a clear build towards a peak and then a drop off in fundraising effectiveness after age 45.



## Fundraising effectiveness



**Figure 12: Amount raised for charity – split by age**

The charities that people support when taking part for a good cause are shown in Figure 13. Four of the top five areas are in the top five causes that are regularly the most donated to in Enthuse’s quarterly donor research, [Donor Pulse \(Figure 14 shows the Autumn edition\)](#). Research into disease is the most supported charity type with 25% of event fundraisers supporting this area. This is similar to the 22% of donors who give to it. The NHS, hospitals and hospices are also largely similar with 16% supporting them against 20% donating generally, and mental health is closely aligned with 15% of event fundraisers matching the 16% of general donors.

There is a notable exception to the top five in the shape of animal charities. This is normally the second most popular type of charity to donate to (about 20% of people give to it on average), but only the eighth most popular type of cause to run an event for, with just 3% of people doing this. There are also marked differences from participants backing the causes of children (12%) and poverty (6%) compared to how many people donate to these – children (19%) and poverty (15%).

Though there are obviously differences in how people donate generally versus running for a charity - such as in-memory fundraising or celebrating causes personal to the individual - there may be opportunities for charities in these cause areas, particularly for animal charities. With the public happy to donate, securing more charity participants could be an opportunity to expand fundraising.

## Fundraising effectiveness

### Causes supported – last event completed

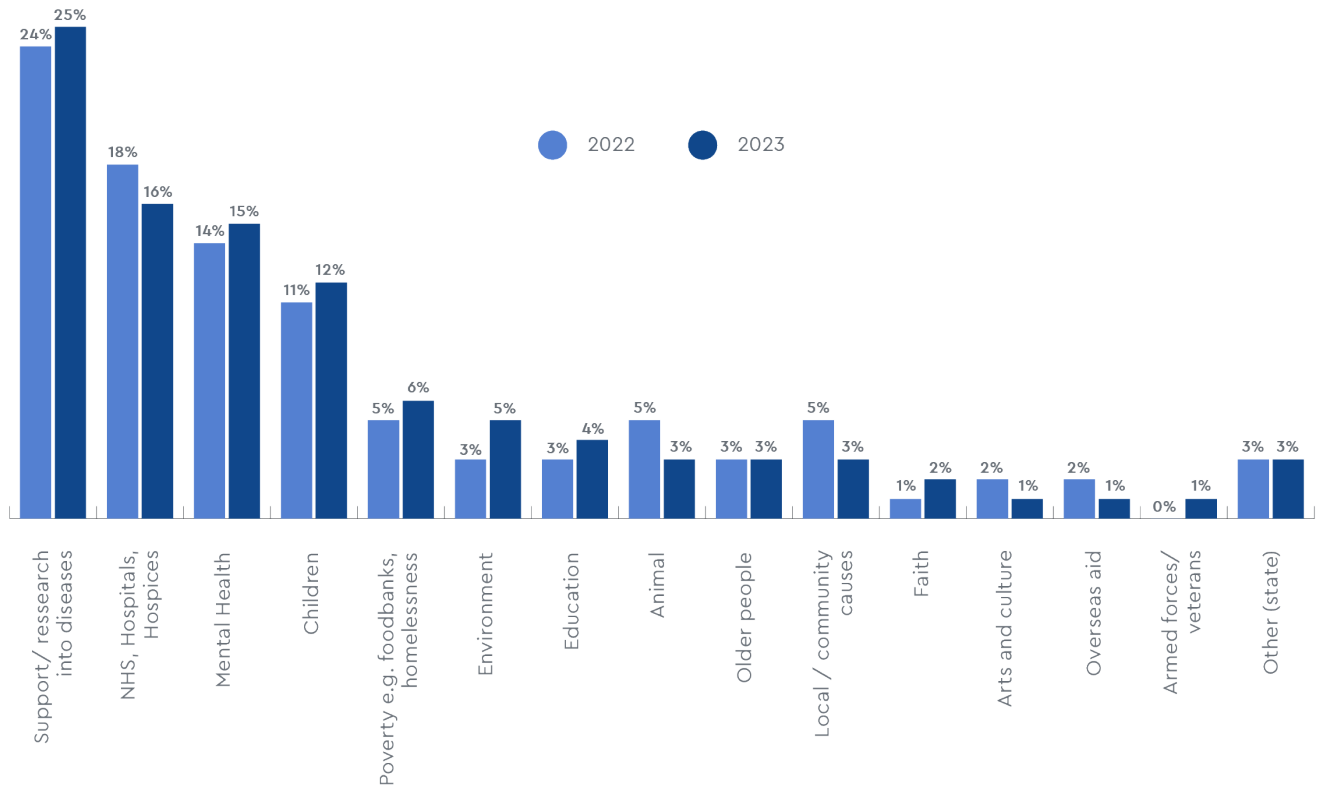


Figure 13: Types of charities supported by event participants

| Causes supported: last three months     | Autumn 2022 | Winter 2022 | Spring 2023 | Summer 2023 | Autumn 2023 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Support / research into disease         | 23%         | 23%         | 19%         | 21%         | 21%         |
| Animal                                  | 24%         | 20%         | 21%         | 20%         | 20%         |
| NHS, hospitals or hospices <sup>1</sup> | 26%         | 24%         | 21%         | 20%         | 20%         |
| Children                                | 21%         | 25%         | 21%         | 19%         | 19%         |
| Mental health                           | 19%         | 16%         | 16%         | 15%         | 16%         |
| Poverty e.g. foodbanks, homelessness    | 19%         | 21%         | 19%         | 19%         | 15%         |
| Local / community causes                | 12%         | 11%         | 11%         | 11%         | 10%         |
| Old people                              | 8%          | 9%          | 8%          | 7%          | 8%          |
| Overseas aid <sup>2</sup>               | 6%          | 7%          | 13%         | 10%         | 8%          |
| Environment                             | 9%          | 9%          | 9%          | 8%          | 8%          |
| Education                               | 6%          | 6%          | 5%          | 5%          | 7%          |
| Armed services / veterans               | -           | -           | -           | -           | 6%          |
| Faith                                   | 5%          | 6%          | 6%          | 5%          | 6%          |
| Arts and Culture                        | 3%          | 2%          | 3%          | 3%          | 3%          |
| Humanitarian aid for Ukraine            | 13%         | 11%         | -           | -           | -           |
| Other                                   | 4%          | 6%          | 4%          | 4%          | 3%          |

Figure 14: Types of charities donated to in the last three months

## Fundraising effectiveness

There are a number of different motivations for why people choose to back charities, with the most common being having a personal reason to be grateful to a cause, with over a third (35%) of people stating this (Figure 15). One in five (21%) cite having supported the cause before, underlining the importance of building long term supporter relationships. There are though some important differences in these motivations between distance runners and charity branded event participants.

Distance runners are much more likely to have supported the cause before with more than a quarter (28%) stating this. Although at the other end of the spectrum one in eight (12%) say they found their charity to support as part of their event registration process. With distance runners being such strong fundraisers this is an important area for causes to make sure they are maximising by being part of the process from day one. Interestingly for charity branded events more than a quarter (27%) chose their charity because a friend or colleague got them involved. One aspect for charities to consider here is their fundraising plans with workplaces and how they can ensure their events are on the radar of a wide range of companies. It also points to providing ways to help participants sell the idea to their friends and colleagues as part of campaign materials.

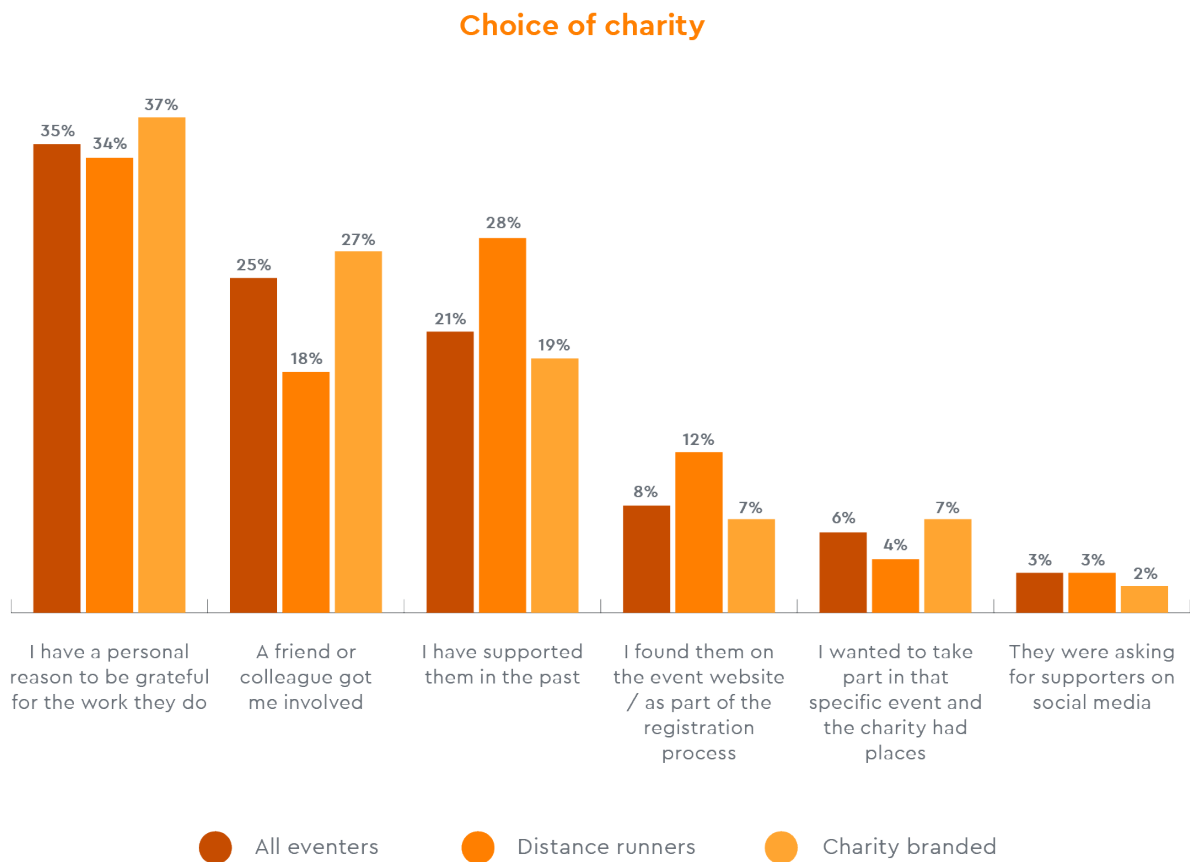


Figure 15: Reasons why people choose a charity to support

## Fundraising effectiveness

Figure 16 provides details of how long before an event, participants sign up. Just under half (47%) do so with less than three months to go, leaving a relatively short space of time to fundraise. However, this is moving in the right direction as the figure has shifted nearly twenty percentage points since last year when it was 65%. The average across 2017–2020 was just over 40%, so this year’s figure is a marked return towards pre-pandemic levels. Even with this shift there is still a need for charities to provide fast track fundraising ideas to help their supporters get the most out of their opportunities.

Perhaps surprisingly distance runners and charity branded event participants behave in very similar ways in terms of when they sign up. With only a slight difference in the number who sign up six months and over before events – 21% compared to 17%.

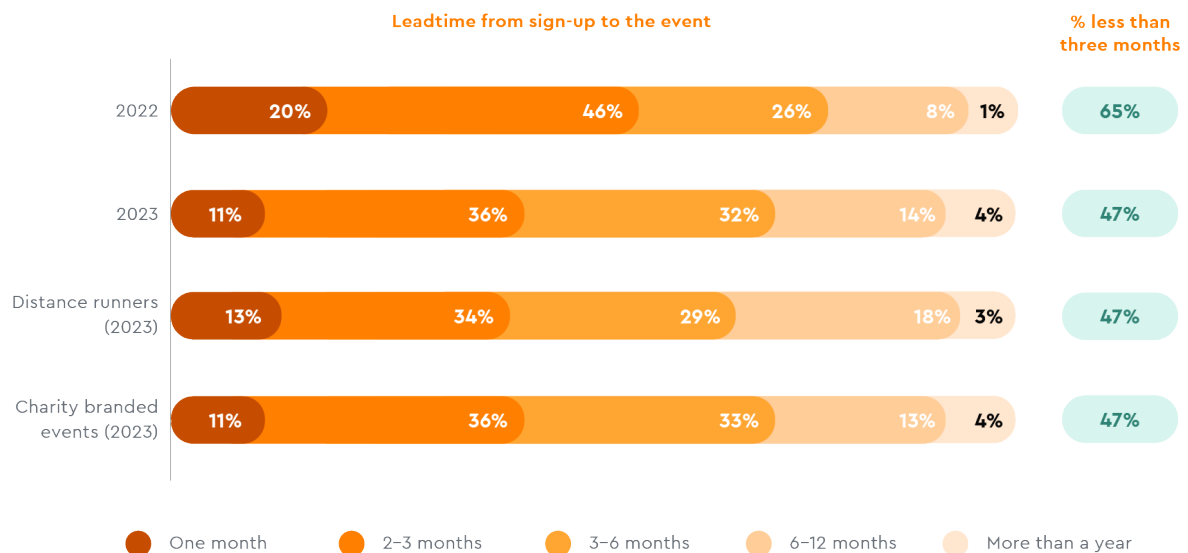
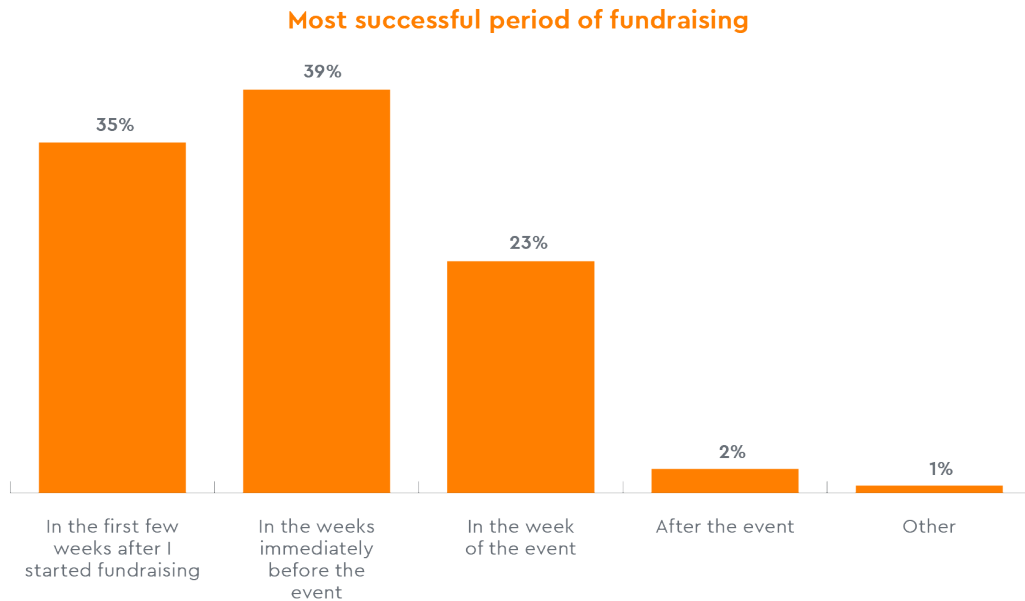


Figure 16: Time period participants sign up before event

Figure 17 shows the most successful fundraising periods for participants. At first glance it looks like the best period is in the run up to the event where two fifths (39%) of all fundraisers state they have the most success. And while this is the case for both the Grass Roots and Semi-pro categories, 45% of those who raise £3,000 or more say their most successful fundraising period is in the first few weeks after they get their fundraising set up.

While conventional thinking is that just having more time is an advantage, actually starting straight away is perhaps a bigger one. This insight is useful for the other categories of fundraisers to know. It is easy for participants to think that donors will only be interested when the event is close at hand, so helping them to understand that starting early is the most successful strategy should be an important message to deliver in fundraising packs from charities.

## Fundraising effectiveness

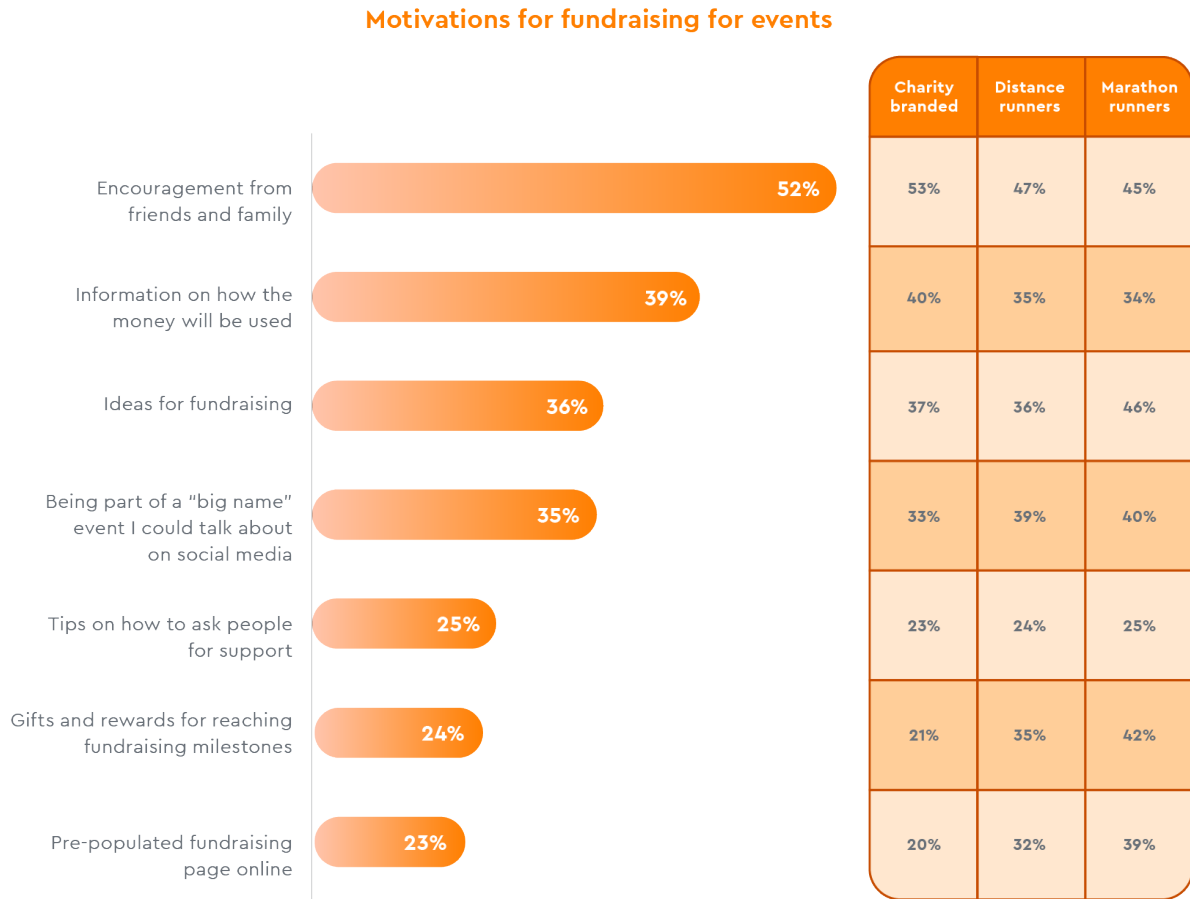


|  | Grass Roots (Up to £500) | Semi-Pro (£500-3000) | Grand Masters (£3000+) |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| In the first few weeks after I started fundraising | 37%                      | 33%                  | 45%                    |
| In the weeks immediately before the event          | 39%                      | 44%                  | 23%                    |
| In the week of the event                           | 23%                      | 21%                  | 24%                    |
| After the event                                    | 2%                       | 2%                   | 5%                     |

**Figure 17: Most successful fundraising periods for events (overall and split by fundraising levels)**

Turning to what helped motivate participants in their fundraising, Figure 18 shows that encouragement from friends and family was top of the list (52%). However, marathon runners think ideas for fundraising are more helpful (46%) in keeping motivated. Other important areas included information on how the money will be used (39%) and being part of a major name event (36%). Perhaps surprisingly in the current economic climate, whilst still important, tips for how to ask people for support came quite low down the ranking for all types of participants with just 25% saying this helped them. However, this is more about timing – tips for asking for sponsorship are important for helping people get started, but once they have got into their fundraising flow these are less helpful. Looking again specifically at marathon runners, one other area that stands out is the importance of a pre-populated online fundraising page which two fifths (39%) found useful. Having fundraising pages integrated with event registration is a really important element for this key group.

## Fundraising effectiveness



**Figure 18: Fundraising motivations**

While there are a number of different elements that help to motivate participants, there is good news for both event organisers and charities in how participants see the support they provide (Figure 19). A total of 82% of distance runners rate their support from charities for preparing for the event as either good or excellent, and the same number said this about causes supporting them raising money. For event organisers, 89% of distance participants rate their event support as good or excellent and 84% thought the same about their help raising money. When looking at charity branded events, 89% of participants rated preparation for the event as good or excellent and 88% said the same about raising funds. A very positive result for all event types.

## Fundraising effectiveness

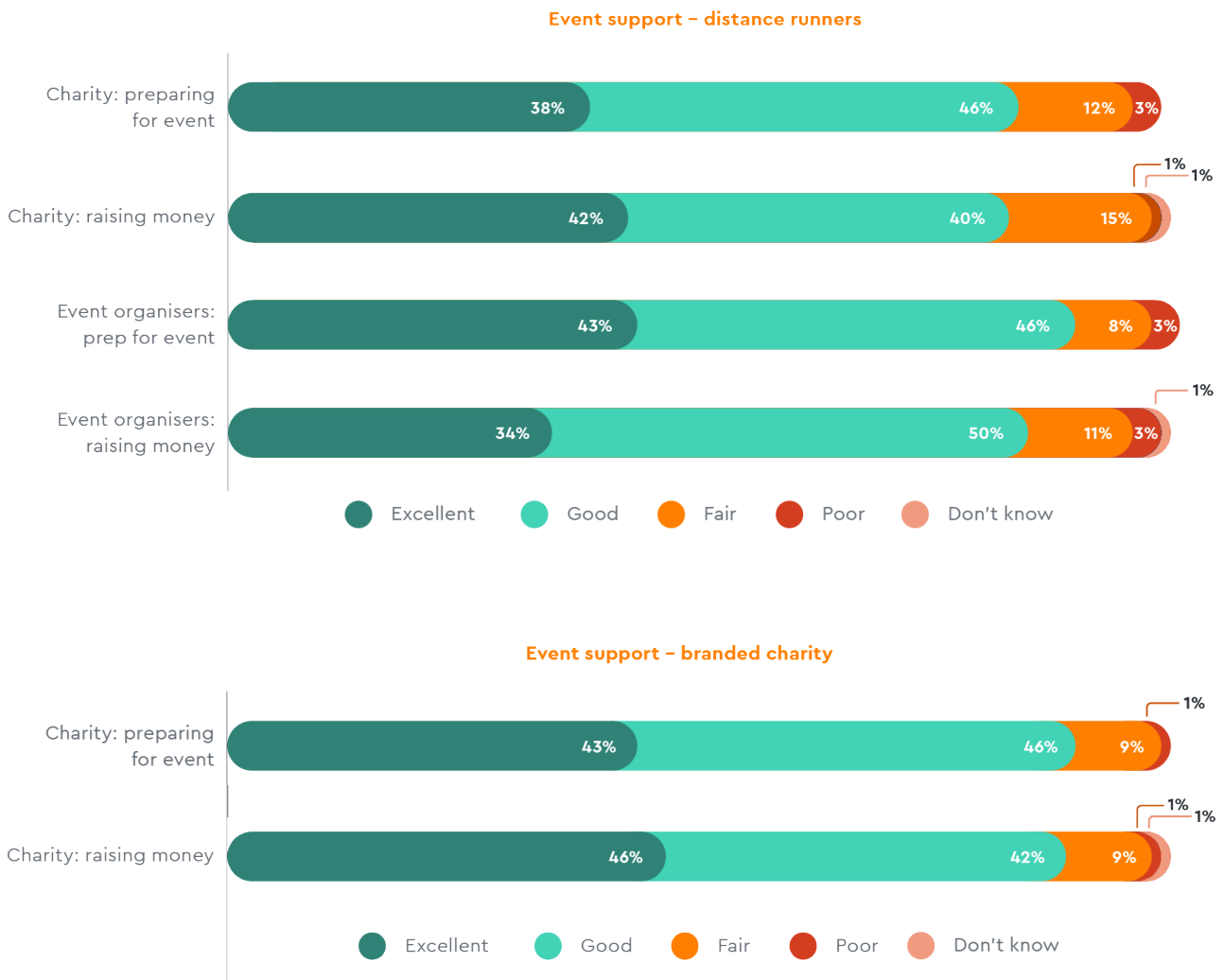


Figure 19: Event support (split by distance runners and branded charity event participants)

The research also looked at what experienced charity participants rated as their top five tips to help others maximise their fundraising. These figures are shown in Figure 20, with the top two tip areas being very closely matched. The most important piece of advice (46%) was to go as far and wide in your network as possible so social sharing integration on fundraising pages is vital. Connected to this was contacting as many of your work colleagues as possible, which was suggested by 32% of participants.

## Fundraising effectiveness

### Advice for maximizing fundraising

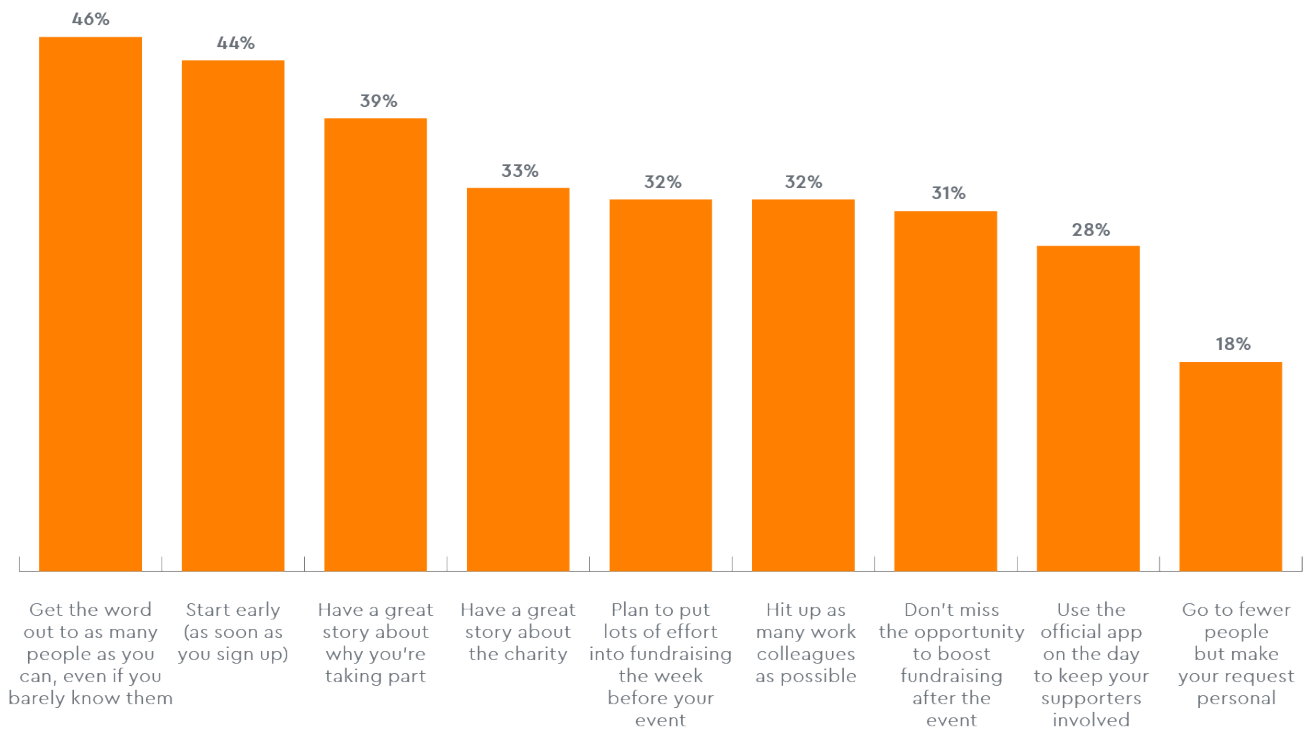


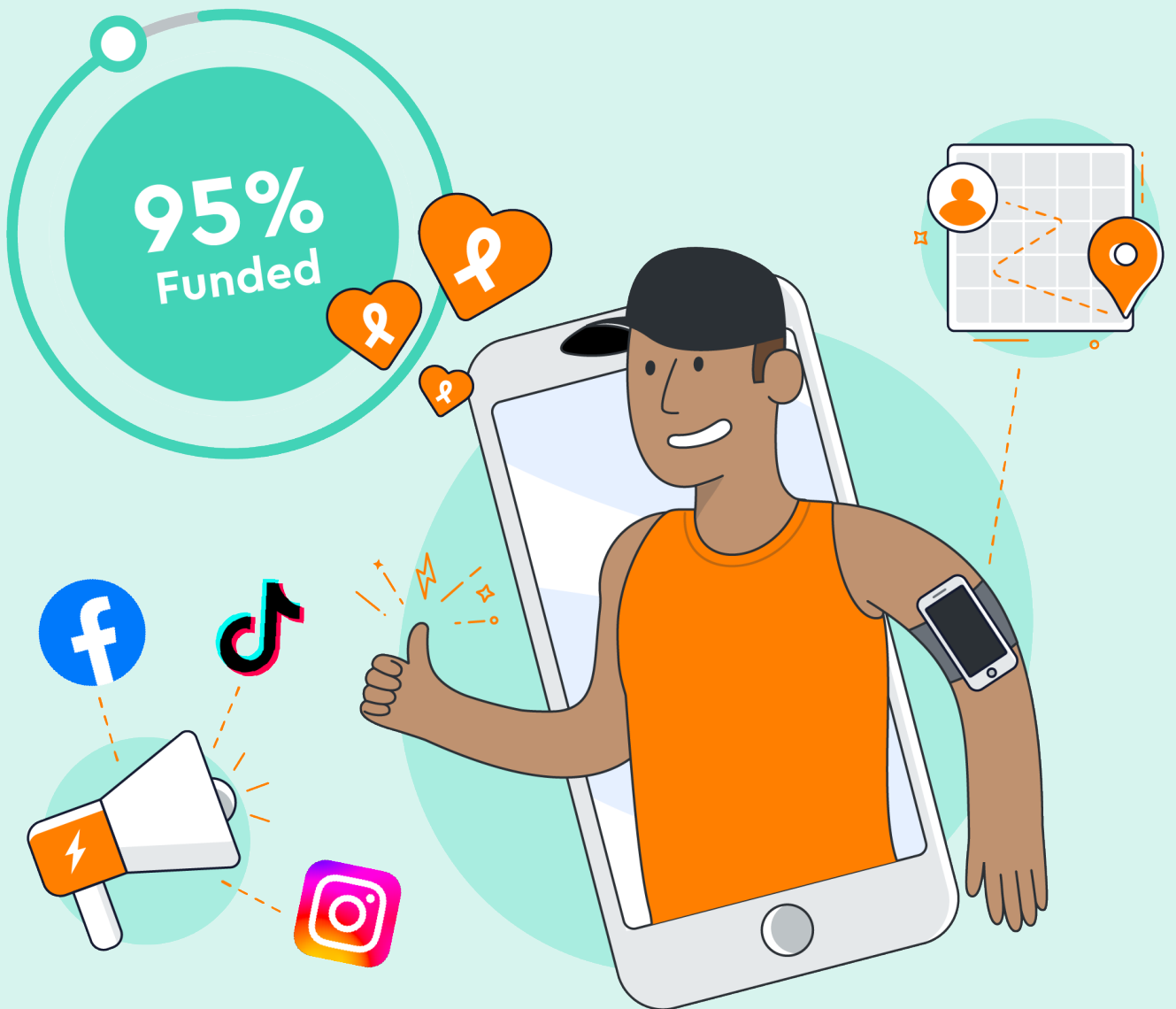
Figure 20: Top tips for maximising fundraising

The second most popular tip was to start raising money as soon as you sign up (44%). This links to the point earlier in this section about how the highest fundraisers have their most successful periods raising money just after they have signed up. Having fundraising integrated and set up as part of the event process can ensure that charity participants are ready to go from day one.

Having a great story about why you're taking part (39%) and a great story about the charity (33%) were the next highest ranked areas. Fundraisers also had three other linked tips – before, during and after the event. Firstly 32% recommended putting lots of effort into fundraising the week before the event, more than a quarter (28%) said to use official apps on the day to keep supporters involved and 31% said to not miss out on fundraising after the event to boost totals.



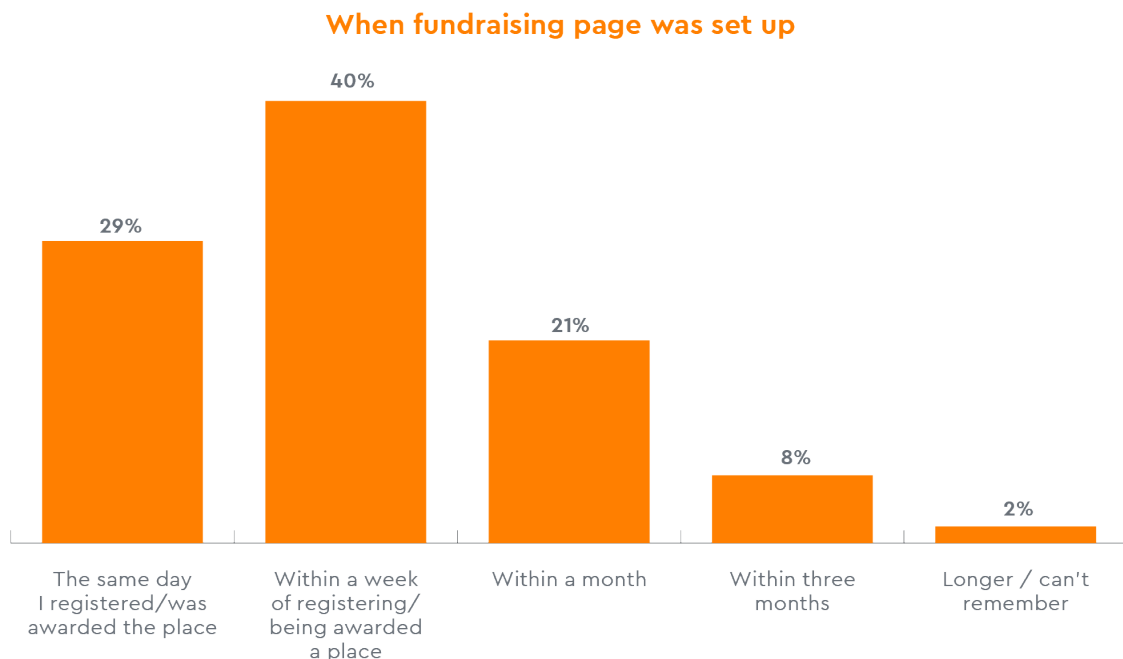
# Driving donations



## Driving donations

This final section of the report looks at how people use fundraising pages, and the way they drive donations to them. The section also looks at the donor's viewpoint – given the challenges of the cost of living crisis, this is an important perspective for charities to consider in how they help their participants achieve their fundraising aims.

The timing for when people sign up for their fundraising pages is shown in Figure 21. Nearly a third of participants (29%) sign up on the same day as they register or were awarded an event place – again showing the value of having fundraising page creation integrated with event registration. A further 40% get their page setup within the week – meaning a total of 69% have done it in just seven days, with a further 21% doing it inside a month. This is good news for charities as the earlier people set up the more time they have to fundraise – and also provides clarity on the challenges around sign ups. This is less about getting people signed up for fundraising, and more on how early they sign up for events themselves. While this is not an issue for the biggest events such as the TCS London Marathon or the AJ Bell Great North Run, it can be more difficult for smaller or charity branded events and should be a focus point for good causes.

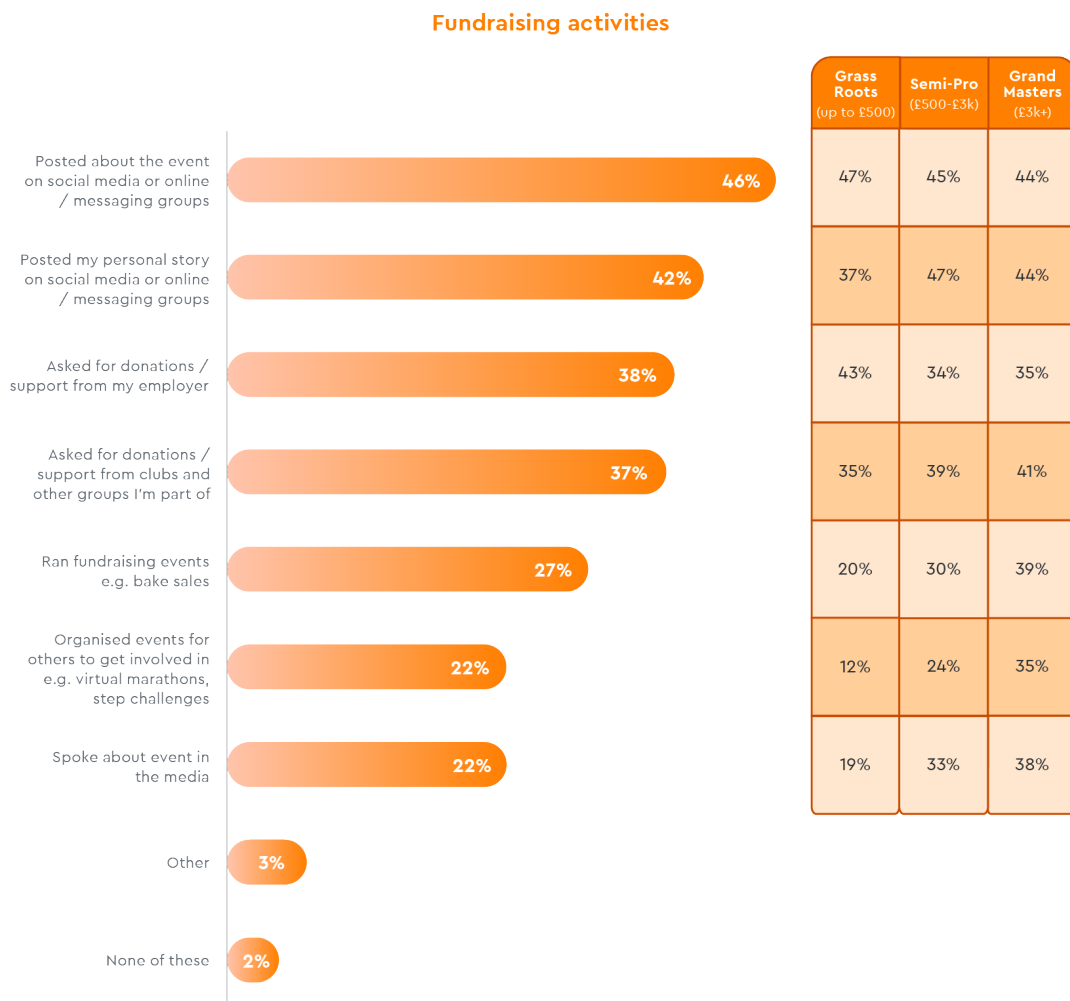


**Figure 21: When participants set up a fundraising page**

The reason why an early start is so important is shown in Figure 22, which details the different activities people do to raise funds when undertaking an event for charity. Unsurprisingly, posting about the event on social media is the most popular with 46% saying they do this, with a further 42% saying they share their personal story online about why they are taking part. These are followed by asking employers for support (38%) and asking at clubs or teams that someone is a member of (37%).

## Driving donations

Interestingly though, the most effective fundraisers, who raise £3,000+, seek more active involvement of others in raising money. They are nearly twice as likely to do side events like bake sales or getting people involved in their training as part of fundraising through activities such as step challenges. They are also more likely to put themselves forward to speak to the media about their fundraising. All of these take time to set up and put in place, so it's important for charities to help participants get signed up as early as possible for events.

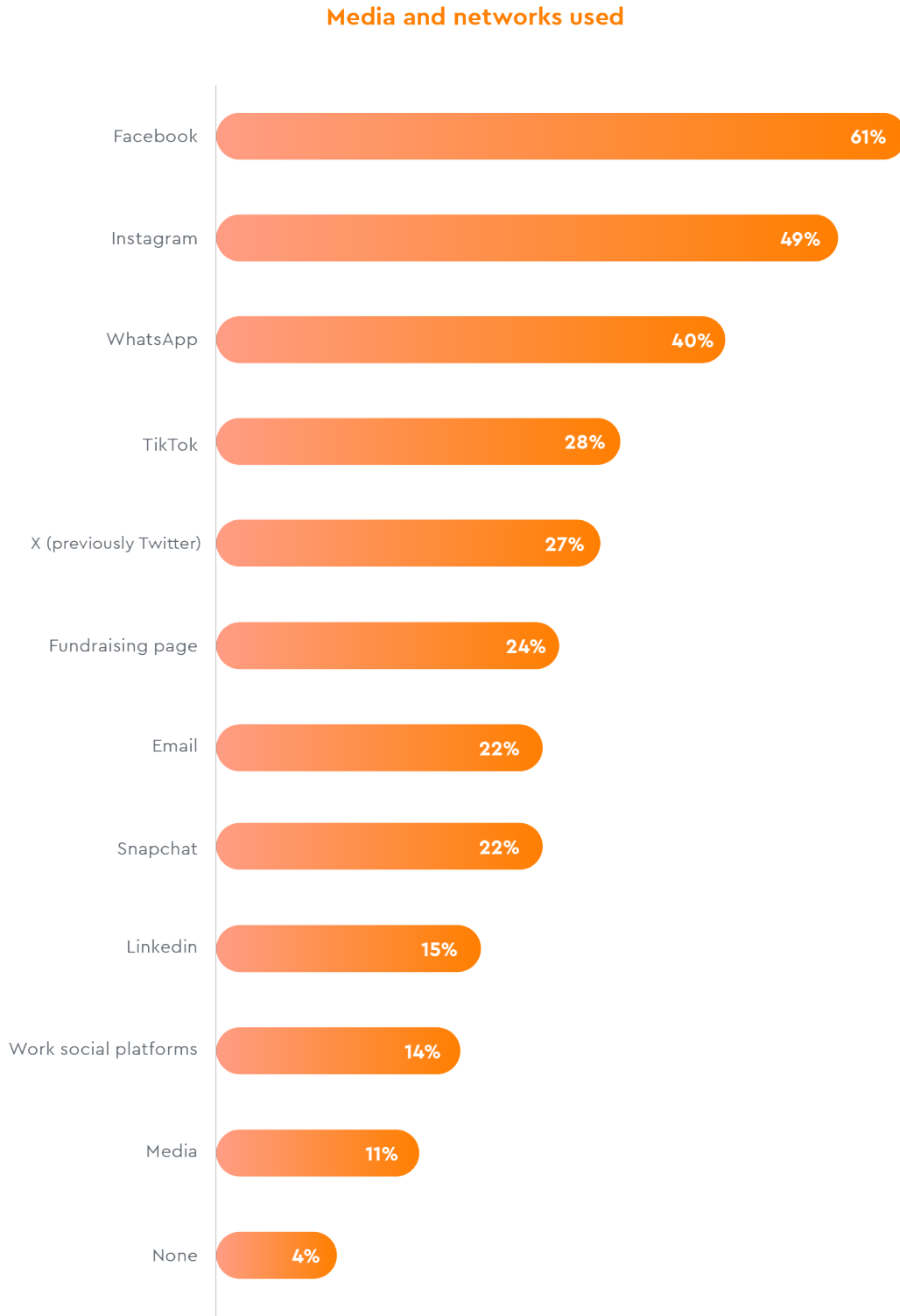


**Figure 22: Fundraising activities to support event participation**

Looking more closely at the online and social media platforms used, Facebook remains the most popular with 61% of event fundraisers posting on it to help raise money (Figure 23). Meta has the top three spots as Instagram is in second place with 49%, followed by WhatsApp with 40%. When looking at age groups - Instagram is the most popular for Gen Z with 61% using this platform.

TikTok comes in fourth spot with 28% – though it's worth charities noting that 47% of the £3,000+ fundraisers use this platform to ask for donations.

## Driving donations



**Figure 23: Online and social media networks used for fundraising**

## Driving donations

Figure 24 shows how often fundraisers use those channels to ask for donations. Nearly two thirds (64%) post two to three times a week or more. Within that a quarter post most days and more than one in ten (12%) post at least every day and sometimes more often. Again there is an interesting contrast between the different levels of effective fundraisers, with a total of 28% of those raising up to £500 posting most or every day. More than double (56%) this number of people raising £3,000+ post a similar amount. While there is much more to successful fundraising than posting online or on social media, it's worth charities considering the advice they provide to participants about the frequency of posting. Encouraging their event fundraisers to be less shy about posting every day could help to drive donations for them. One way of making this easier for participants is to recommend they post on different channels on different days to reach a variety of audiences.

### Frequency of posting (all using social/online)

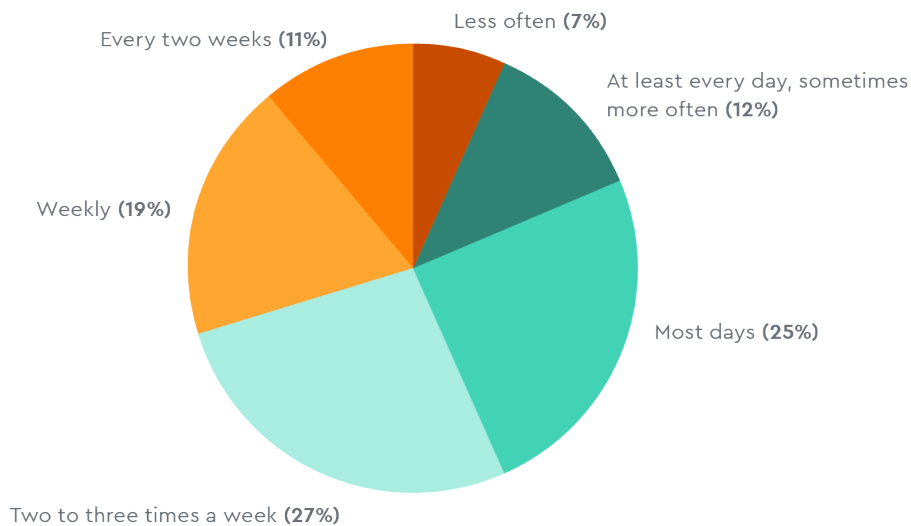


Figure 24: Frequency of online posting by event fundraisers

Figure 25 shows that there is plenty of room for this level of frequency of donation requests, with 54% of the public having been asked to support a charity event participant in the past year. While 7% weren't sure, two fifths of the public (39%) were a firm no on having been asked – meaning a lot of potential donors have not even seen a request to support fundraisers.

## Driving donations

### Asked to make a donation (last year)

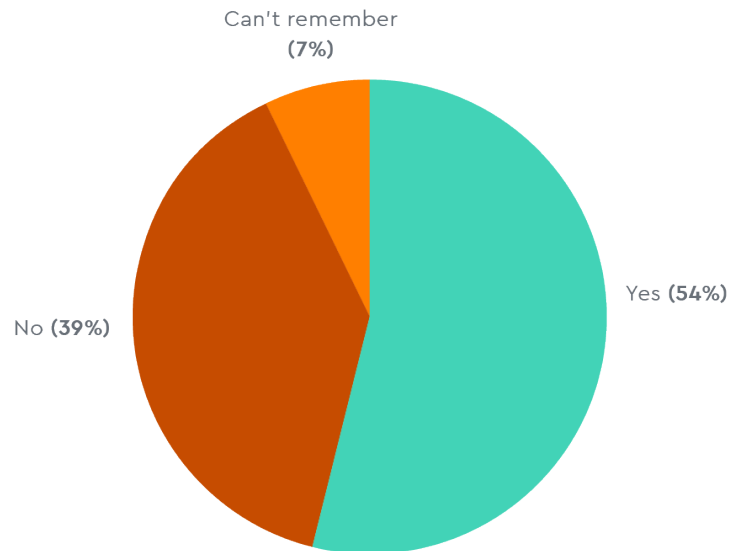


Figure 25: Percentage of the public asked for donations for events in last year

It's easy for event fundraisers to think that their potential donors are getting too many requests from other people and shy away from asking. In fact Figure 26 shows that the vast majority of people (71%) get either one or two to three requests in a year. Just over one in five (22%) get six or more. Again this is important for charities to consider as they plan their fundraising packs to help their participants. It can seem daunting for fundraisers to continually ask for donations, but often it's simply the case that people do not see them or do not get many.

### Number of requests

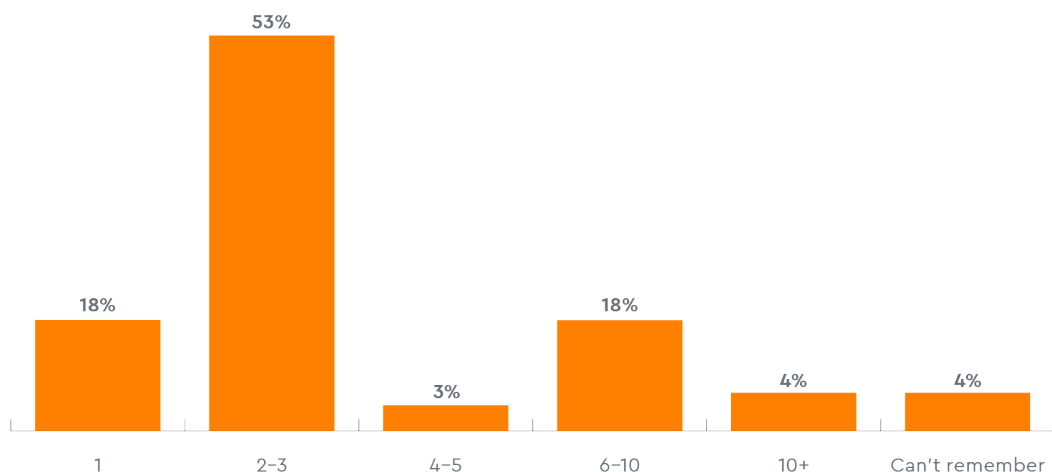
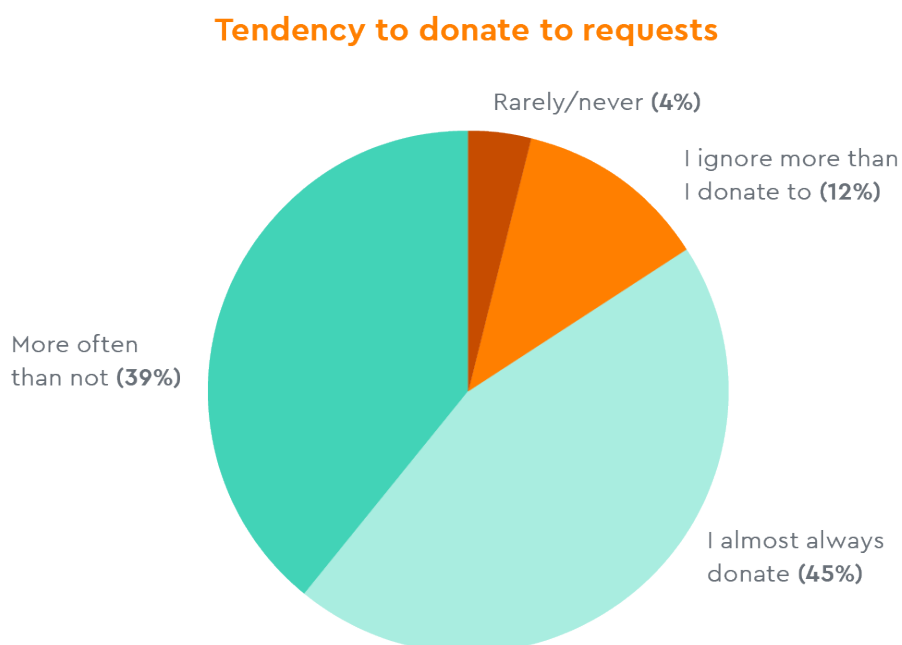


Figure 26: Number of requests for donations from event fundraisers (over a year)

## Driving donations

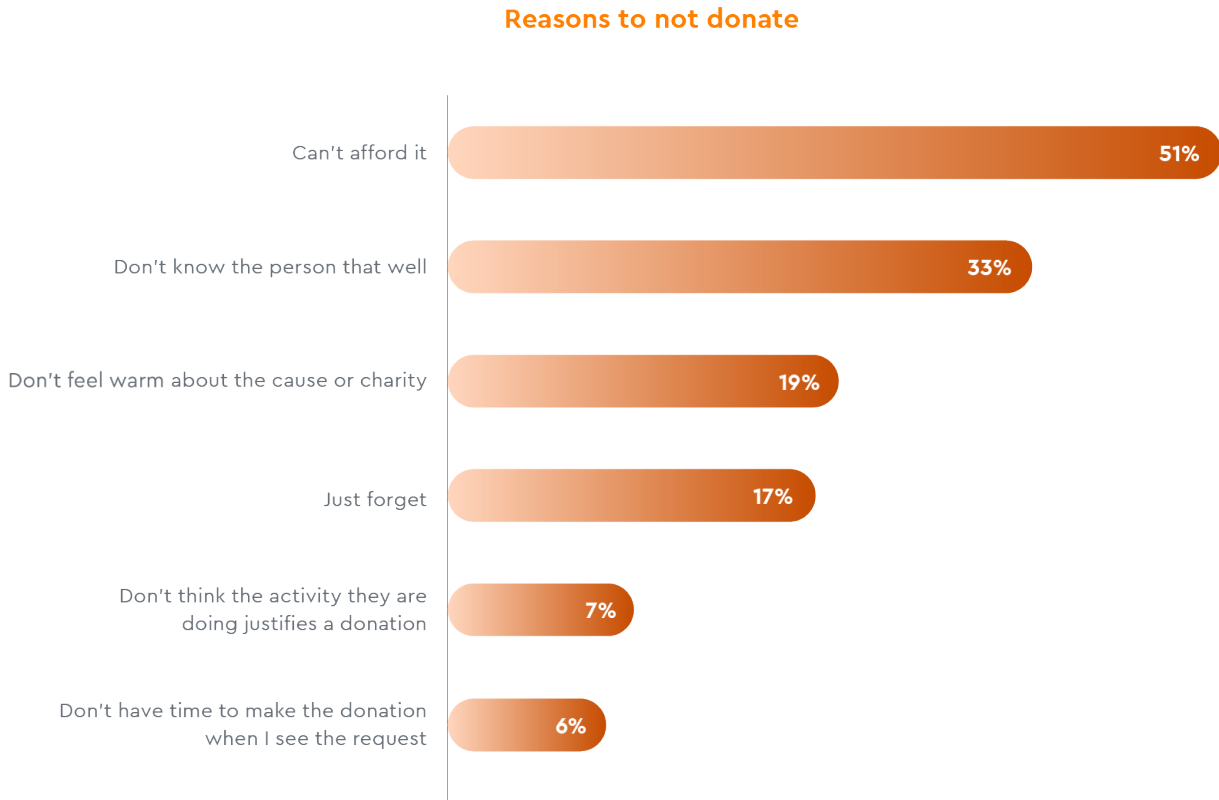
Figure 27 provides even better news on this front with 86% of those receiving requests for donations being happy to give most of the time. Within that 45% of people almost always donate when asked. The public's willingness to donate to event fundraisers is very positive news for charities. It again shows that charities should consider how to encourage participants to ask for donations regularly when they are creating their supporting material



**Figure 27: Likelihood to give when asked to donate to an event fundraiser**

However, there are of course barriers to people donating. And when people do not give, the reason most often cited is not being able to afford to (51%). Figure 28 shows a further 33% say that not knowing the person particularly well is what puts them off. While these reasons are to be expected, it is worth noting that 17% say they forget to donate and a further 6% didn't have time to donate when asked. This adds up to nearly a quarter (23%) of people who may well have donated if asked another time. Again this points towards making sure participants are happy to post their fundraising page on social or other online platforms on a frequent basis. This could help ensure these donations are not lost for causes.

## Driving donations

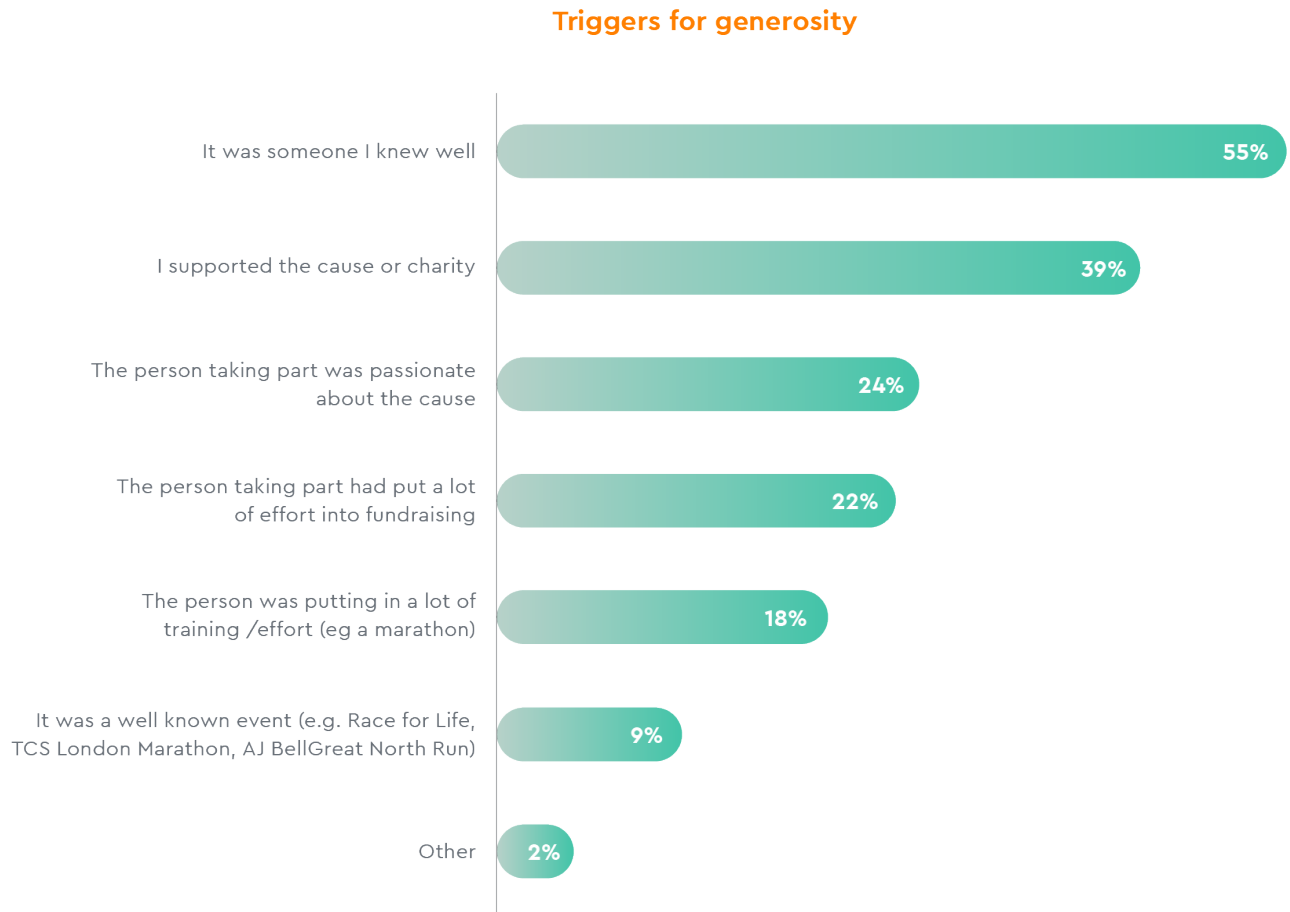


**Figure 28: Reasons people did not donate**

The reasons people were likely to give their largest donation are listed in Figure 29. The most popular is that they knew the person well (55%), followed by the donor themselves supporting the cause or charity (39%). However, there were other less obvious reasons – the passion of the person was also important (24%), the effort someone was putting into fundraising (22%) and the hard work a participant was doing on training for the challenge (18%). This last reason points towards the value of participants posting their training updates regularly on their fundraising page and sharing that with their friends, family and colleagues. Finally one in ten (9%) people gave their most generous donation because of the event itself - the draw of the TCS London Marathon and AJ Bell Great North Run is not just for participants, but for donors too.



## Driving donations



**Figure 29: Reasons for giving largest donation**

# Willing donors await cautious participants



## Willing donors await cautious participants

While the hangover from the pandemic has cleared quickly, the headache of the cost of living continues to present a challenge to charities. However, the detail of this is perhaps not as intuitive as one might expect – the reluctance to give is not from donors, and though there are concerns from fundraisers, it's not overwhelming. The real point of challenge is in how this is putting people off before they even sign up for an event – there is an opportunity here for charities to educate this audience about fundraising as they are promoting events. Mass participation events are on the rise again and the future looks bright for good causes for the year ahead.

These are the seven key takeaways from this edition of the research:

- 1 Late registration?:** 47% of charity participants sign up with less than three months to go to the event. This is a sharp improvement on 65% a year ago, but there is still some distance to go before it hits pre-pandemic rates of around 40%. Charities should consider how they can help participants with the ideas and ability to fundraise in short time scales.
- 2 Master fundraisers:** Event fundraisers fall into three main groups with around one in ten (11%) raising more than £3,000 at events. Though small, this is a crucial group for charities – and not one allied to specific causes with just 28% choosing a charity because they've raised money for it before.
- 3 Get set, go:** The highest fundraisers say that their most successful time for raising money is straight after they have set up their page. For charities, it's important to make sure they are set up on official platforms and provide their participants with the fundraising information to get going straight away.
- 4 Willing donors:** Despite the cost of living crisis, 86% of the public say they almost always donate when they receive a request to support someone doing a charity event. It's important for charities to make sure their participants and potential participants know that fundraising may be easier than they think.
- 5 Lost for causes:** 23% of the public say they do not donate because they either forget or didn't have time to do it when asked. This is a significant opportunity for charities, and encouraging their participants to regularly post their fundraising pages will help to make sure less donations are missed out on.

## Willing donors await cautious participants

6

**The future looks bright:** Looking ahead, 21% of the public are already committed to a charity event in the next year, and another 42% are thinking about it. For charities making sure those considering it understand that donors are willing to support them can help convert more potential participants into fundraisers.

7

**Appy days:** Event apps are growing in importance and 28% of experienced fundraisers recommend using them to drive donations on the day. Making sure your charity and your participants can take donations through event apps is an important part of the fundraising mix.

## About Enthuse



Enthuse is a fundraising, donations and events registration technology provider that has helped thousands of charities raise hundreds of millions. Enthuse's solutions are customised under a cause's own brand and put the organisation in control of the data. This allows charities to build and nurture a loyal supporter base, raise more and ultimately have more impact. Enthuse was founded in 2012 and is headquartered in London, with offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In 2022, Enthuse was named the official online fundraising partner for London Marathon Events and Great Run Company.



**enthuse**

t: +44 (0) 20 3872 2090

e: [info@enthuse.com](mailto:info@enthuse.com)

[enthuse.com](http://enthuse.com)