

STEPtember Organization Toolkit

CPARF — STEPtember 2026

Table of Contents

- [1. Welcome & About STEPtember](#)
- [2. Fundraising Page Set Up](#)
- [3. Donor Outreach Templates](#)
- [4. Social Media Tips & Tricks](#)
- [5. X Marks the Spot: Guide to \\$25K](#)
- [6. Ways to Engage & Incentivize Employees](#)
- [7. Reach 10K Steps at Work](#)
- [8. Keeping the Buzz Alive](#)

1. Welcome & About STEPtember

Welcome!

Hello Team!

Thank you for joining STEPtember as a company and supporting CPARF. Your participation drives meaningful change by helping to build a world that people with disabilities deserve and where inclusion and access are foundational to how we live and work.

Your commitment supports critical research and innovation, while also showing that inclusion benefits everyone, including businesses. Creating accessible environments and welcoming cultures isn't just the right thing to do — it strengthens teams, sparks innovation, and reflects the values of tomorrow's workplace.

We're proud to partner with you. Thank you for stepping up and moving forward with us — together.

With gratitude,

Chris Olver

Executive Director

CPARF

About STEPtember

Every September, thousands of people from over 85 countries step up for people with disabilities by taking on a challenge to step, move, play, ride, or stretch every day. This is a feel-good fundraiser that promotes physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

2. Fundraising Page Set Up

Step 1: Create Your Account

- [Register by visiting the STEPtember website](#)
- Choose your registration type
 - *If you have a registration code, you will enter it on the payment page*
- Enter your information & goals
- Include how many years you have participated in STEPtember

Step 2: Personalize Your Page

- Upload your photo
 - *Make sure you own the copyright for this photo*
- Personalize the language for your page

Note: you can continue to update your page throughout the event by logging into your account

Step 3: Join/Create an Organization (Optional)

- Create your own or search for your organization's name to join
- You can have unlimited members and teams in an organization (each team is limited to 4 members)

Step 4: Create a Team (Optional)

- Create your own team of up to 4 people
- You can also do this after your personal setup is complete

Step 5: Spread the Word!

- Share your page on social media
- Email your network — add individual emails or upload a spreadsheet with your contacts to reach even more people

Make Your Page Shine

Story Sharing

Add your story to your welcome message and upload meaningful photos. The “why” behind your campaign is the key to your fundraising success. Let your network know what's driving your fitness journey and support of CPARF's mission. Making it personal will only gain you more support!

Multimedia Sizing

- Profile Photo: 400x400px JPG/PNG, less than 300KB
- Image Header: 2500x400px image, less than 1MB
- Video Header: 2000x800px, running for 10-15 seconds, final video should be compressed to be under 15MB
- Content Image: 800x800px JPG

Donation Tracking

On your dashboard, you can either view recent transactions or go to “My Donations” to see how much you have raised and everyone who has given to your fundraiser. There is even a “thank” button right there to send a note of appreciation to your supporters!

3. Donor Outreach Templates

The Ask

Subject: Join Me in Supporting Life-Changing Assistive Technology

Dear [RECIPIENT NAME HERE],

This STEPtember, I'm proud to be part of a global movement that's redefining what's possible for people with disabilities. I've committed to taking 10,000 steps a day for 30 days to raise funds and awareness for CPARF, and I'd love your support!

I'm taking on this challenge because [INSERT PERSONAL REASON HERE — e.g., “Every step forward in research and innovation gives families like mine more answers, more options, and more hope, that's why I'm asking you to give.”]. Every step I take supports making life-changing assistive technology accessible and affordable for people with disabilities.

More than one billion people worldwide live with a disability. CPARF funds cutting-edge science and technology to improve treatments, mobility, communication, and overall health and well-being.

My goal is to raise [INSERT FUNDRAISING GOAL], and every donation — big or small — gets us closer to a more inclusive, accessible future. Your gift is tax-deductible and directly supports CPARF's life-changing work.

Please consider donating here: [YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE URL]

Thank you so much for your support — it truly means the world.

Warmly,

[YOUR NAME HERE]

P.S. Did you know your gift could be doubled by your employer? You can check through CPARF's Employee Giving Search tool.

The Thank You

Subject: Because of You, I'm One Step Closer

Dear [RECIPIENT NAME HERE],

Thank you so much for supporting my STEPtember challenge! Your generous donation means the world to me and is helping create real change for people with disabilities.

Thanks to you, CPARF can continue funding cutting-edge research and technology that improves mobility, communication, and quality of life and well-being for people with disabilities.

Because of you, every step I take this month carries even more meaning.

Thank you for believing in a more inclusive future — and for being part of the movement to make it happen.

With heartfelt gratitude,

[YOUR NAME HERE]

P.S. Don't forget to check if your gift could be doubled through your employer's matching gift program.

4. Social Media Tips & Tricks

Help your employees make the most of STEPtember by sharing their efforts online! These tips make it easy to spread the word, boost team spirit, and show your company's commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible world. Remember to use #STEP26 and #CPARF so we can engage with you!

Spread the Word: Support CPARF!

Kick off your STEPtember journey by sharing your “why.” Let your community know you're moving for CPARF to help create a more inclusive and accessible world. Post your fundraising link, talk about your goals, and invite others to support or join you. Every step — and every share — makes a difference!

Infuse With Your Own Story

Why are YOU participating in STEPtember? For someone you love? For yourself? Let your passion spread to your community!

Engage Your Followers

Interact with followers by thanking supporters, liking comments, and responding to questions. Recognize donors and volunteers in dedicated posts to inspire further contributions!

Create Eye-Catching & Engaging Posts

Engage your audience with high-quality, minimally edited images and videos, and include a clear call to action. Use ALL CAPS to highlight key points. On Instagram, add your fundraising link to your profile. Remind your community that every donation, big or small, brings you closer to your goal!

Image Size Matters

Use 1080x1350 px for most platforms (Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, Facebook). Aim for a 1:1 aspect ratio.

Consider the Timing

Different social media platforms see peak engagement and impressions at various times during the week. Try testing out different times to post on different platforms to see the results and try to keep a level of consistency.

How Many Times Should You Post?

Aim for 2-5 posts per week, spaced out to avoid overwhelming your followers.

Make Your Content Accessible

Include image descriptions to ensure it can read by screen readers for people who are blind and low vision. Emojis are great for creating eye-catching content but be sure to limit emojis to three per post for readability.

Mix It Up

Use a mix of static photos, videos, and carousel posts. Try lighter, bite-sized content on Instagram and Facebook Stories.

Find Your Voice

Your posts should sound like YOU. Keep it authentic and true to your voice. When you're writing, think about connecting like you would in a real conversation—be personable and engaging. Remember, there's always a human behind the screen.

Connect with CPARF

Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Email, and YouTube.

5. X Marks the Spot: Guide to \$25K

\$25K Is Closer Than You Think

- 25 people raise \$1,000
- 50 people raise \$500
- 100 people raise \$250
- 200 people raise \$125
- 500 people raise \$50
- 1,000 people raise \$25

Create a Companywide Goal & Celebrate Progress

Set a collective goal of \$25,000 and break it into achievable milestones. Celebrate every \$5K milestone with shout-outs, small prizes, or fun office perks to keep momentum going.

Fuel Intraoffice Competitiveness (in a Good Way!)

A little friendly competition goes a long way. Set up a leaderboard and offer fun incentives like:

- Top Fundraising Team: Lunch with leadership or extra PTO hours
- Most Donors: Team coffee or breakfast
- Best Team Spirit: Award for creativity in naming, theme, or participation

Highlight weekly standings in internal comms and on your campaign page to keep the energy up.

Diversify the Fun

Spice up the campaign with mini-events & prizes:

- Raffles and mini-challenges
- “Pie the boss” or karaoke dares for donation milestones
- Donation-matching hours when leadership pledges to double team contributions

Utilize Matching Gifts

- If your company matches gifts, encourage your team members to take advantage.

Get Leadership Involved

Have executives lead by example:

- Start their own teams
- Offer to match donations for a day
- Do a “challenge” (like wear a silly outfit or take the stairs all day) if the company hits a goal

When leadership steps up, others follow.

Promote Across Platforms

Use your company's intranet, email, and Slack channels to promote the campaign. Empower team captains with email templates, social media graphics, and key messages. Encourage employees to share on LinkedIn and beyond to amplify the impact.

Engage Your Full Network

Invite clients, vendors, and corporate partners to join or support your campaign. Let them know you're fundraising for a powerful cause — accelerating scientific innovation through CPARF.

6. Ways to Engage & Incentivize Employees

You know your team best, so tailor these ideas to what motivates them most! Use this opportunity to get creative, boost morale, and build a stronger sense of community.

Incentive	When to Use It
PTO Hour or Day	Raise \$500 or be top fundraiser of the week
Extra Remote Day	Hit an individual or team goal
Catered Lunch	Reward for top fundraising team
Casual Day / Jeans Day	To motivate your team before a long weekend
Parking Spot for the Month	Random draw for all participants or top fundraiser
Office Makeover	Highest fundraiser in week one
Coffee Subscription / Espresso Machine	Prize for team with most donors
Lunch with the CEO or Leadership	Recognize top individual contributor
First Chance to Name a Team	Reward early bird fundraisers or creative entries
Ice Cream Truck / Ice Cream Social	Mid-campaign morale booster for all who've raised \$100+
“Free at 3:00” or “Sleep 'til 11” Cards	Give out “perk cards” when people hit mini goals
Homework Pass / Project Skip	Trade for reaching donation milestones
In-Office Massage Therapist / Chair Massages	Special treat for a high-performing department
Broadway, Sports, or Concert Tickets	Grand prize for highest total raised
Wellness Time (1-hour break)	Earned for completing weekly step challenges
Bracket-Style Fundraising Tournaments	Especially fun for competitive teams or sales departments
Timed Challenges (e.g., 9–5 Friday Blitz)	Offer flash prizes for most raised in a short window

7. Reach 10K Steps at Work

Taking 10,000 steps daily is a simple and effective way to boost energy, improve mental clarity, and support long-term health. It can help reduce stress, prevent chronic illness, and increase productivity.

Take Walking Meetings

Skip the conference room and take discussions on the move. It promotes creative thinking and boosts your step count.

Use the Stairs

Ditch the elevator when possible — it's a quick and effective way to add steps.

Set Hourly Movement Breaks

Encourage 2–5 minute walks every hour. Short bursts of movement can re-energize your team.

Organize Step Challenges

Friendly competitions with small rewards can spark motivation and camaraderie.

Rethink Your Commute

Encourage parking farther away, getting off public transit one stop early, or biking/walking to work.

Create Walking Routes

Map out indoor or outdoor walking paths around your office. Add signs to make it easy and fun.

Benefits for Your Business

- Increased productivity
- Improved morale and job satisfaction
- Lower healthcare costs
- Stronger team culture
- Reduced absenteeism

Promote It Throughout the Office

- Send weekly reminders or fun fitness facts in team emails
- Offer wearable step trackers or discounts for fitness apps
- Celebrate milestones and highlight team achievements
- Designate “Walking Hours” or “Move Breaks” company-wide
- Provide standing desks or treadmill workstations, if possible

8. Keeping the Buzz Alive

Whether it's your first campaign or your ninth, keeping the energy going for 30 days can feel tricky. These tips will help you and your team stay motivated and hit your organization's goal with pride.

Weekly Engagement Framework

Week 1: Launch & Rally

- Send a kickoff email blast from leadership
- Launch an internal leaderboard in the office
- Encourage team captains to set mini-goals
- Reward the first team to hit \$1,000 or 100,000 steps (coffee gift card, shoutout)

Week 2: Friendly Competition Begins

- Start a bracket challenge or mini-tournament
- Feature top fundraisers or most spirited teams in internal comms
- Drop a surprise incentive: e.g., “First team to raise \$5,000 gets catered lunch!”
- Spotlight 1-2 employee stories in a company-wide email or Slack post

Week 3: Mid-Campaign Push

- Host a mid-month milestone celebration (ice cream break, remote happy hour)
- Introduce a timed challenge (e.g., most raised between 9am–5pm on Thursday)
- Invite leadership to match a portion of what's raised
- Offer a “perk card” for people who hit \$250 (Free at 3:00, Jeans Day, etc.)

Week 4: Final Countdown

- Push your leaderboard: who's winning? Who's close?
- Roll out daily shoutouts and “last chance” contests
- Celebrate your impact: remind everyone what the fundraising supports
- End with a bang — raffle, office party, or “CEO thank you” message

Tips for Sustaining Energy

- Mix up incentives — not just for the highest fundraisers!
- Make it social — post updates to Slack, Teams, or email each week
- Recognize efforts, not just outcomes — show appreciation to everyone participating
- Use visuals — live thermometers, team badges, photo collages
- Make leadership visible — their involvement = validation and momentum

A 30-day campaign doesn't have to feel long. When you create connection and celebration along the way, it becomes something people look forward to.