

THE IVDU DREAM TRIATHLON

Welcome to the IVDU Dream Triathlon! Our athletes are working together for IVDU and we are thrilled for you to be part of our dream team. By joining the triathlon, you are committing to running, biking, and swimming for a wonderful cause! An important aspect of participating in the triathlon is raising the necessary funds. Each athlete must raise a minimum of \$1800. It can feel overwhelming to try to raise money by asking for sponsorships, so we have put together this packet of ideas to help you fundraise. Here are our tips. We hope they help you out!

WHO SHOULD I ASK TO SPONSOR ME?

Anyone you know who knows you can be a potential sponsor: family members, friends, neighbors, your teachers, your supervisor, and co-workers. Remember, you are not asking people to simply donate to an unknown cause. You are asking them to sponsor YOU and YOUR efforts for IVDU.

You can start by asking your family. Everyone in your family is going to be incredibly supportive of this tremendous undertaking. Ask your parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles, and cousins to donate. If they see how committed you are to achieving your goal, they might be inspired to help however they can!

Ask your parents for help. If you have not yet started your professional career, it might be difficult to raise the necessary funds. Ask parents and relatives – who are already going to be supporting you in your training for the triathlon – to help you raise money. Ask them to speak to their friends, send out an email to their contacts, and inform their co-workers of your undertaking. You can also ask parents and older siblings about employee matching programs (see below).

Ask your friends, teachers, neighbors, supervisors, and co-workers. Every dollar counts! Don't think that you need to ask people for large sums of money. Of course, that would be nice, but if people are willing to support you, graciously accept any money they choose to give you.

Reach out to your community affiliations. See if your shul, synagogue, or school can send out a fundraising email to their entire membership list.

Ask about matching programs. Many employers have a charity matching program (the company a donor of yours works for will match dollar-for-dollar the sponsorship that your donor gives you). Please ask your donors to check with their employers or human resources personnel to see whether their company offers matching gift programs.

HOW DO I ASK FOR SPONSORSHIPS? SHOULD I JUST PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL PEOPLE?

That might be the right move; it depends on the person. Use whatever platforms work best for you and the people you are reaching out to. That might be a short text to one person and a friendly phone call to another. Social media, be it Instagram, Whatsapp statuses, or even TikTok (a video of yourself working out, perhaps?), can be a platform to ask for sponsorships from friends and acquaintances. When using social media, don't just ask for sponsorships – ask those you are contacting to continue to spread the word that you are an athlete for IVDU and that they are supporting you in such a great cause!

WHAT DO I SAY WHEN I'M CALLING, POSTING, OR TEXTING?

While it makes sense to use your own words to explain what you are doing, you might find it helpful to explain what IVDU is all about when reaching out to sponsors.

If you are looking for a short explanation of IVDU, you might want to use some language from our triathlon website:

The Marilyn and Sheldon David IVDU Boys and Girls Upper Schools are schools and second homes for their students. Encouraged by warm and caring staff, the students of IVDU learn they can thrive despite ongoing challenges, develop new skills, grow friendships — and be successful in life during and after high school.

If you are trying to explain the triathlon concept, this section from our FAQ might be helpful as well:

IVDU has organized a triathlon with a twist: running, cycling, and swimming in the American Dream Mall! The IVDU triathlon involves a 5k (3.1 miles) run, a timed swim, and a timed stationary bike cycling course.

THAT SEEMS LIKE IT WOULD MAKE A REALLY LONG TEXT MESSAGE. SHOULD I JUST COPY AND PASTE?

We recommend you pull a sentence or two that most speaks to you (and feel free to edit as you go along). Remember, the idea is to explain what IVDU is, tell people why you're joining, and — don't forget! — provide a link to your personal athlete's page for sponsors to click on.

SO BASICALLY, I JUST SAY I'M RUNNING FOR IVDU AND HOPE PEOPLE WANT TO SPONSOR ME?

Ideally you'll do a bit more than that! When reaching out to people, you want to personalize your message and show that you are confident in the cause, persistent in your efforts, and passionate about this triathlon and IVDU! Here's a few ideas on how to do that, from a Team Yachad athlete who had a very successful fundraising period.

“Be personal: Most people are scared to straight up ask. Sending an email with the link is definitely not asking. And even asking in an email is basically not asking. I made sure they knew **I was not just sending a mass email out... I wanted their donation.**

“Be persistent: People assume that if they ignore your email, you won't follow up. They assume wrong. **I was not aggressive but I was persistent.** I believe there is a big difference and it is not semantics. The bottom line is I asked for an answer from the people I reached out to. If it's a no, then that was fine, but I was persistent if I was obviously and blatantly being ignored.

“Be confident. Very often, the person really preferred not to give. That was OK but I asked them to tell me their choice. **I have to have the guts to ask and they have to have the guts to say no.**

“Be passionate: Did I ever feel a little pushy? Well, what one might call pushy another might call persistent or thorough. I feel that I was just doing my due diligence to go through all my contacts one time and get an answer from every single person. If it's no then it's fine. But it's for a tzedakah. Not for my pocket. **And I believe in the cause.”**

That's all we've got. If you have any suggestions you think we should add here, or if you are looking for more help, please feel free to reach out to us: IVDUdream@ou.org

We thank you for joining us as we race to achieve our dreams — and we'll see you at the starting line!

