PLAYGROUNDS-R-US
A DIVISION OF M3 CONTRACTING LTD.



Playground Fundraising Guide

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Let’s Get Started

At Playgrounds-R-Us, we’ve spent decades partnering with schools, municipalities, childcare centres, and community groups across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Northwestern Ontario to create safe, inclusive, and long-lasting play spaces. Along the way, we’ve seen firsthand how communities come together to make incredible things happen — especially when fundraising is approached with creativity, clarity, and excitement.

Looking at the financial side of a playground project can feel overwhelming, but fundraising doesn’t have to be stressful. It can be energizing, community-building, and a powerful way to rally people around a shared vision.

This guide was created to help you confidently begin your playground journey. Inside, you’ll find:

- Steps to help you define your playground plan before fundraising begins
- Tips for choosing the right playground partner
- Ideas for spreading the word and building momentum
- Fundraising strategies and meaningful ways to thank supporters



We’re here to support you every step of the way. Reach out to our team anytime — we love helping communities bring new play spaces to life. call us at 1-800-889-4305 or email at info@pru.ca.

Signing off from the playground,

The Playgrounds-R-Us Team

Establish Your Playground Goal

A clear vision is the foundation of a successful fundraising campaign. Before you begin, take time to outline what you're working toward. Our team can help you define your goals by considering:

1. What type of playground will best serve your school or community?
2. What ages and abilities will use the space?
3. What components or features matter most to your group?
4. What is a realistic budget and timeline?

Planning Tip

Community involvement builds momentum. When people understand the vision, they're more likely to support it.
Kids especially respond to visuals. A simple "dot voting" activity can help gather feedback:

- Give each participant dot stickers
- Display images of potential components
- Participants place dots beside their favourites
- The most-selected options rise to the top

This is a fun, inclusive way to build excitement and gather meaningful input.

Establishing a Budget & Timeline



A clear, well-planned budget is essential throughout your fundraising journey. It helps you understand your project's scope, anticipate costs, and set realistic goals that keep your committee aligned. Your budget should account for:

Site Preparations

Before installation begins, the site may need work such as grading, drainage improvements, borders, or new surfacing. If you're replacing an older playground, include the cost of removing existing equipment and preparing the area for the new build.

Amenities

Enhancements like shade structures, benches, litter bins, pathways, tables, or signage help complete the space. These items add comfort and usability and should be included in your overall cost planning.

Equipment

Play equipment is typically the largest portion of your budget. Consider the types of components your community needs and ensure they are durable, inclusive, and CSA-compliant. This is often where fundraising efforts are focused.

Installation

Professional installation ensures your equipment is assembled safely and correctly. Costs vary depending on the size and complexity of the project. Even if you choose a community-build model, certified oversight is essential.

You'll also want to plan for the costs tied to your fundraising activities, such as event supplies, printing, rentals, or promotional materials. Including these early keeps your budget realistic and prevents surprises.

A clear budget helps define your fundraising goals and outlines what's achievable for your committee. Pair it with a simple timeline to keep the project moving and everyone aligned.

Start with your ideal build date and work backwards, adding key milestones like grant deadlines, fundraising events, approval stages, and school breaks or holidays. The more you map out, the easier it is to stay organized and keep your fundraising efforts on track.

Your Playground Journey

1. Build Your Project Team

Gather a small group of committed parents, educators, administrators, or community members. Set a meeting schedule and create a simple fundraising calendar so everyone knows what's ahead.

2. Visit local Play Spaces

Take a walk through nearby parks and school playgrounds to see what types of equipment work well for the children you serve. This helps spark ideas and clarify your priorities.

3. Connect With Playground Suppliers

Reach out to several companies, ask questions, and compare options. Learning about materials, warranties, and design support will help you feel confident in your decision.

4. Choose Your Playground Partner

Select the company that feels like the best fit. Your partner should act as a guide throughout the entire process, offering expertise and support from planning to installation.

5. Create Your Design

Start shaping your vision. Explore colour palettes, themes, and component options to imagine how your new play space will look and feel for the community.

6. Begin Fundraising

Kick off your fundraising efforts using grants, sponsorships, events, and community outreach. Use available tools and ideas to build momentum and share your story.

7. Secure Required Approvals

Work through school board, municipal, or organizational approval processes. Once everything is signed off, you're ready to move into the build phase.

8. Build Your Playground

Coordinate installation with your playground partner or organize a supervised community-build to help reduce costs. This is where your vision becomes a real, tangible play space.

Choosing Your Playground Manufacturer

Starting a new playground project is exciting, but it can also feel overwhelming when you begin comparing products, materials, and companies. To help you feel confident in your decision, here's a clear checklist of what to look for when selecting the right playground partner.

Materials

- Does the manufacturer use aluminum for their posts, clamps and post caps? Aluminum will not rust or corrode and will preserve the structural integrity of your play structure.
- Does the manufacturer use stainless steel and tamper resistant fasteners? These fasteners cannot be removed with common tools which means addedsecurity and safetyfor your users.
- What kind of durable coating is used for gripping or high wear areas? Adequate coating will make the equipment far more user friendly in extreme temperatures.

Warranty

A reliable warranty is essential. Choose a manufacturer that provides clear, long-term coverage, such as:

- 100-year protection on posts, caps, and clamps
- 15-year coverage on steel and plastic components
- Minimum 3-year warranty on remaining parts

Strong warranties reflect confidence in the product and protect your investment.



Did You Know?

Some manufacturers advertise "lifetime warranties," but the actual coverage can be surprisingly short — sometimes only seven years or less. Make sure to read the warranty details carefully so you know exactly what's included and avoid any unwelcome surprises later on.

Colour & Finishes

Choose a manufacturer that applies strict standards to every colour and finish—from cables and panels to swing chains and deck surfaces. High-quality finishes should resist fading, hold their shine, and stay durable over time. Your playground needs materials built to handle extreme temperatures, tough weather conditions, moisture, and long-term UV exposure so it stays vibrant and reliable for years.



Components

Does the manufacturer provide play features designed with intentional movement? Motion-based elements offer valuable sensory input and help children build balance, spatial awareness, coordination, and both fine and gross motor skills.

Safety & Compliance

Are the products fully certified by IPEMA to meet **CAN/CSA-Z614-20** standards? Simply belonging to IPEMA isn't enough. Make sure the manufacturer can provide a formal letter confirming that every item in your order has been verified as CSA compliant through IPEMA.

Quality Assurance

Is the manufacturer certified to **ISO 9001:2015** ? These certifications demonstrate that the company follows recognized quality- management practices, prioritizes customer satisfaction, maintains strong leadership involvement, uses a structured process-driven approach, and is committed to ongoing improvement.

Environmental Stewardship

Does the manufacturer produce equipment that incorporates a high percentage of recycled materials? Are they certified to **ISO 14001:2015**? This certification demonstrates a commitment to pollution prevention and responsible environmental management practices.

How Can We Help

Our marketing team is here to help strengthen your fundraising strategy and bring your playground story to life. We can:

Collaborate on custom materials such as presentations, posters, and visual aids that highlight the developmental benefits of the play elements in your design.

Amplify your project story through targeted social media posts to help build awareness and attract potential donors within your community.

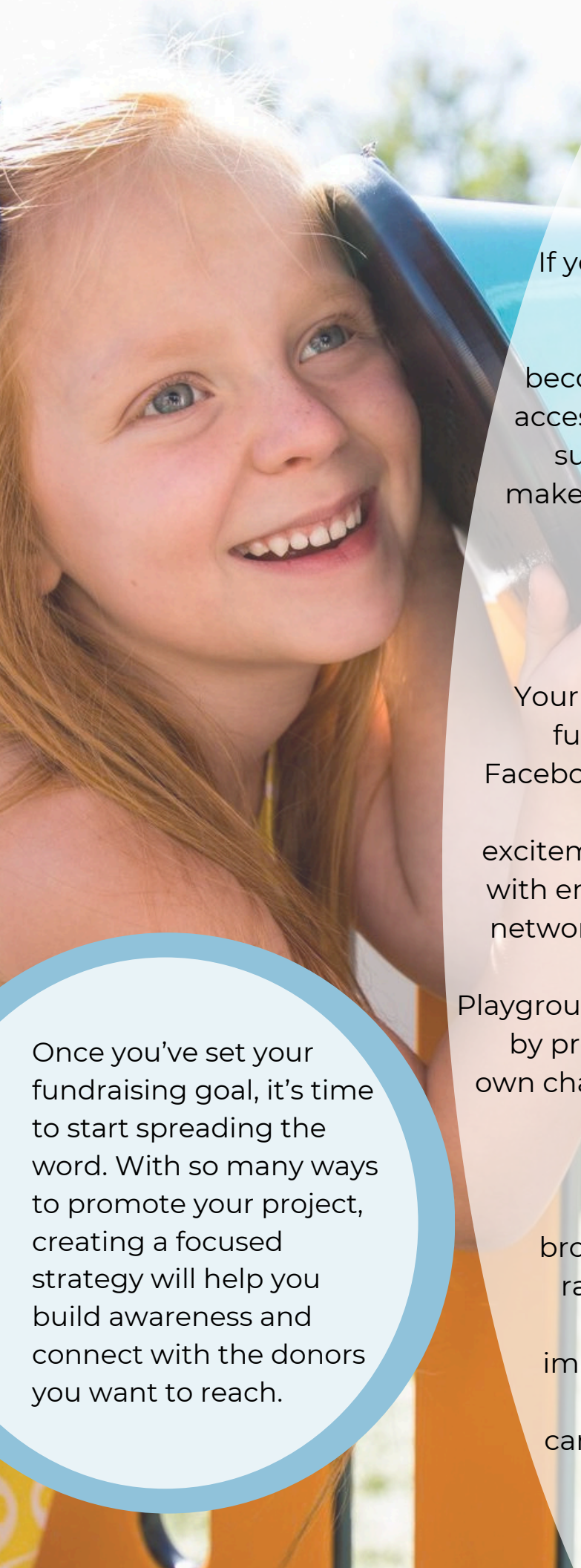
Provide Winnipeg Jets tickets for fundraising initiatives. As season ticket holders, we offer game tickets that can be used for raffles, auctions, or other fundraising activities — a high-value prize that draws strong community interest.

Act as a resource or second set of eyes throughout the application process should you be applying for a grant.



Did You Know?

Playgrounds-R-Us can provide a complimentary large 3D colour rendering of your playground design. It's a powerful visual tool that motivates volunteers, inspires donors, and anchors your fundraising meetings — and we can also print a fundraising thermometer to help your community track progress and stay engaged.



Spread The Word

Once you've set your fundraising goal, it's time to start spreading the word. With so many ways to promote your project, creating a focused strategy will help you build awareness and connect with the donors you want to reach.

Fundraising Website

If you're taking your campaign online, start by setting up a dedicated fundraising page through a platform like CanadaHelps. This becomes your project's home base — a simple, accessible spot where families, neighbours, and supporters can learn about your playground, make donations, follow updates, and see photos or sponsor recognition. It keeps everything organized and makes it easy for your community to get involved

Social Media & Email Outreach

Your online community is one of your strongest fundraising tools. Use your social channels — Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn — to share regular updates, celebrate milestones, and keep excitement growing around your project. Pair this with email outreach to your school or community network to make it easy for supporters to donate, volunteer, or share your campaign. Playgrounds-R-Us can also help amplify your efforts by promoting your fundraising initiatives on our own channels, bringing even more awareness and support to your project.

Traditional Media

Local media can be a powerful way to broaden your reach. Community newspapers, radio stations, and online news outlets often look for positive stories that highlight local impact. Sharing how your new play space will benefit children and families can help your campaign gain wider attention — sometimes at no cost if your story is picked up.

Source: https://bit.ly/3f3ww53

Let’s Get Fundraising

Hosting a fundraising event is a great way to build excitement, bring people together, and generate early momentum for your playground project. A well-planned first event can spark long-term community support and encourage volunteers, families, and local businesses to stay involved as your campaign grows.

Event Inspiration

- Neighbourhood garage sale
- Trivia night
- Community cook-off or chili challenge
- Craft market
- Outdoor fitness class
- Bottle drive
- Bowl-a-thon
- Car wash
- Run, walk, or bike-a-thon
- T-shirt or calendar campaign
- Raffle
- Fashion show
- Pancake breakfast or pizza day
- Live or silent auction
- Special-event parking
- Golf tournament
- Movie night at a local park or school
- Partner with local vendors to donate a portion of sales
- Invite well-known community members to donate their time or expertise
- Add simple revenue boosters like selling warm drinks or snacks at events

Showing Appreciation



Strong donor relationships are key to long-term success. Thoughtful recognition helps supporters feel valued and connected to your project. Consider:

- A handwritten thank-you note with a photo
- A shout-out on social media
- A sponsor page with logos on your fundraising website
- A verbal thank-you at your grand opening or community event
- A short video message from your team expressing gratitude

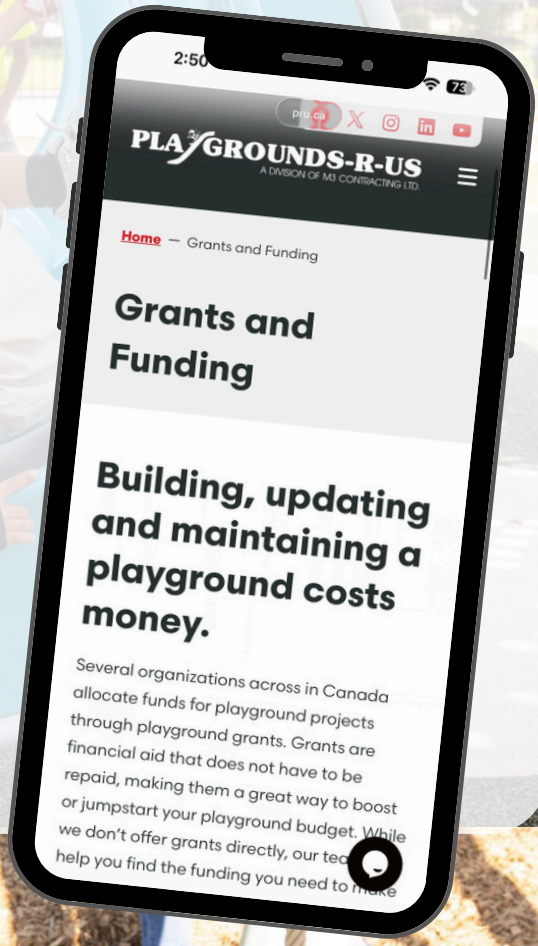
Leaving Their Mark

For major supporters, consider adding recognition directly into the play space. Donor panels, welcome signage, custom benches with engraved logos, or a pathway featuring engraved stones or bricks all offer meaningful ways to honour those who helped bring the project to life. These touches celebrate your community’s generosity and create a lasting connection to the new playground.

Grants & Funding Opportunities

Before applying for any grant, it's important to understand what the funding organization is trying to achieve and how your playground project supports their mission. Taking time to align your goals with theirs will help you shape a stronger, more focused proposal that reflects the values of the funder.

Along with the opportunities listed on our **website**, we encourage you to explore grants available through your municipality — including community foundations — as well as local recreation groups or regional funding programs. Many communities have additional support available that can complement your playground fundraising efforts.







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