



## How To Conduct a Silent Auction

### What is a silent auction?

- Donated goods or services are displayed for participants to browse, bid and purchase for the highest offer.
- DOES NOT require a lottery license.
- May be hosted via Federated Health Charities' (FHC) auction platform. Please contact [federated.health.charities@ontario.ca](mailto:federated.health.charities@ontario.ca) for more details.

### How to conduct a silent auction:

#### Step 1: Plan the logistics

**Format:** Determine whether you will host an online or in-person auction. While virtual auctions are most common, in person auctions may work well when occurring with other events such as Divisional Days or Town Halls.

**Venue:** This can refer to the physical location of an in-person auction or the online bidding platform you use for a virtual auction.

For online auctions, choose an online platform. Popular options include:

- Zeffy (Federated Health Charities' Platform): Your FHC team can help you by hosting your auction on Zeffy. For details of this process, please email [federated.health.charities@ontario.ca](mailto:federated.health.charities@ontario.ca).
- [www.32auctions.com](http://www.32auctions.com): Offers a free and easy-to-use option, guiding you through the setup process.
- [www.GalaBid.com](http://www.GalaBid.com): Allows you to create a customizable online auction site with its own link and QR code.
- [www.Auctria.com](http://www.Auctria.com): Streamlined auction platform that is available for free up to \$10,000 raised.

**Date and time.** Give yourself plenty of time to plan and consider coordinating your auction with another event that will allow for built in advertisement and improved attendance.

**Budget.** Outline any costs that you will incur while planning and running your auction, such as packaging and delivery. Then, determine how any costs will be covered.



## **Step 2: Procure and catalog items**

- The items are the center of your event. Focus on sourcing high-quality and unique items that will attract bidders. Vacation days, work from home days and lunch with your Director/ADM/DM are popular options.
- Source other items strategically: Reach out to local businesses, sponsors, and individual donors. Highlight the tax write-off potential for their donations.
- Create appealing item listings:
  - Write a detailed description, including any restrictions or limitations.
  - Take high-quality photos from multiple angles to showcase the item.
  - For travel packages or vouchers, specify the availability and restrictions.
- Set fair pricing:
  - Establish a minimum bid and bid increments for each item, guided by the fair market value.

## **Step 3: Set up your auction site**

- Once you have your items and platform, build your auction "venue."
- Design your site: Choose a layout, add your logo, and add the high-resolution images of your items.
- Configure settings: Set the exact start and end times for your auction. The end time creates urgency and encourages last-minute bidding.
- Streamline registration: Use your auction software to allow guests to pre-register and save payment details to speed up the checkout process, if possible.

## **Step 4: Promote and market your event**

- Create a multi-channel marketing plan to build excitement and drive registration.
- Utilize your network: Send direct invitations to your email list of volunteers, past donors, and supporters.
- Share teasers of high-ticket or unique items to build hype.
- Include a clear call-to-action for registration and a link to your auction site.

## **Step 5: Engage bidders and manage the auction**

- During the active bidding period, keep participants engaged



and informed.

- Use automated notifications: Alert bidders when they have been outbid to encourage them to re-engage.
- Respond to questions: Have a team member available to answer any questions or troubleshoot technical issues.

### **Step 6: Close the auction and collect payments**

- Automate winner notifications: Your auction platform should automatically notify the winning bidders once the auction closes.
- Implement your payment collection plan (unless you use Zeffy, in which case it's automatic).

### **Step 7: Deliver items and follow up**

- The event isn't over until the items are delivered and you have thanked everyone involved.
- Arrange delivery: Have a clear plan for packaging and shipping items to winners. If you need to, use a reliable delivery service.
- Thank your supporters: Send out thank-you notes to donors, sponsors, and participants, sharing the event's success and impact.