

## Having a Benefit Event? This is Everything You NEED to Know!

A benefit is a great way to cultivate new donors, engage your existing donors, and raise money for your projects in the process. If done right, you can earn money towards an upcoming project without having to spend a lot.

Before you decide to produce a benefit, think about whether or not it is time- and cost-effective for you. Producing a benefit can be just as time consuming as producing a show. You should also make sure that you are raising money for a project far enough in advance. If you are holding a benefit to secure funding for a show that is just a couple of months down the road, you may find yourself in a bind.

Before you send out information about your fundraising campaign, you'll need to follow the steps below:

### Step 1: Inform The Field

If you have decided that you want to do a benefit we need to know before you do anything else. Email Deputy Director Shawn René Graham at [shawnrene@thefield.org](mailto:shawnrene@thefield.org) and Program Associate Natalie Marmol at [natalie@thefield.org](mailto:natalie@thefield.org) with the details of your event, particularly the DATE.

### Step 2: Send Us Your Benefit Materials

We need to see your invitation BEFORE you send it out. Why do we need you to do this? First and foremost, it will benefit you to have a fundraising expert like Shawn René give you feedback on your solicitation language.

We also need to know that you have the correct info for The Field on your materials. There is specific language about your fiscal sponsorship affiliation with The Field. As a Member of The Field's Sponsored Artist Program, this is outlined in [your contract](#) and must be reviewed accordingly. Send your benefit invitation to [shawnrene@thefield.org](mailto:shawnrene@thefield.org), preferably in a Word document, as soon as you have it ready.

Below is an example of the proper wording for a benefit invitation, with important text highlighted:

## YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO XXXX's Annual Benefit

XXXX's next new work is inspired by The Cotton Club, so join us for a 1920's, Harlem-themed soiree. Period dress encouraged. Formal attire required.

**Day, Date, Year, Time**

**General Admission Entrance at The Cotton Club** (include location address)

**General Admission Tickets: \$125** (\$25 dollars of this donation is not tax-deductible as it is the value of food, drink, and the show)

**Tickets include:** Cocktails and hors d'oeuvre's prepared by Jenny's Catering, a sneak preview performance from our next show, The Harlem Renaissance, and music and dancing provided by DJ Blue.

**Purchase tickets by credit card here:** ([link to your public profile page on thefield.org](#))

**Or, you can pay by check. Here's how:**

- Make all checks payable to The Field **only**.
- Write (*your company/project/your name*) in the memo line.
- Mail to (*your address*)

XXX is a sponsored artist with Performance Zone Inc (dba The Field), a not-for-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization serving the performing arts community. Contributions to The Field earmarked for XXX are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information about The Field, or for our national charities registration, contact: The Field, 75 Maiden Lane, Suite 906 New York, NY 10038; Phone: 212-691-6969. A copy of our latest financial report may be obtained from The Field or from the Office of Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

### Step 3: Create A Benefit Spreadsheet (This Is The Most Important Step!)

You must record all the donation details from the benefit event in a spreadsheet. Please make sure to include columns for *Donor First Name, Donor Last Name, Donor Street, Street 2, City, State/Province, Postal code, Amount Paid, Date Received, Benefit Amount (Value of Goods/Services Received), and Deductible Amount*. [Click here to download a Sample Benefit Spreadsheet Template](#).

We need this spreadsheet in order to properly process your donors' tax documents/thank-you letters. Please submit the completed spreadsheet to [natalie@thefield.org](mailto:natalie@thefield.org) as soon as your benefit is over.

### Step 4: Send in Your Spreadsheet and Donation Checks

Again, send your spreadsheet with complete benefit information to [natalie@thefield.org](mailto:natalie@thefield.org). If your spreadsheet is complete, donors will receive acknowledgement letters in the next month. Make sure that all of your donation checks have been entered on your Member Home Page BEFORE you send them to The Field.

*Remember that all benefit donations will be held until we receive your completed spreadsheet. This means that you will not receive any funds until after your benefit is over. Please plan accordingly.*

## MY BENEFIT CHECKLIST

- Email Shawn René at shawnrene@thefield.org to tell her I'm planning a benefit.
- Send in my benefit invitation for review.
- Make necessary edits to invitation after I receive feedback.
- Create benefit spreadsheet with donor information, amount donated, and value of goods received by each donor.
- Submit my completed spreadsheet to Natalie at natalie@thefield.org when my benefit is over.
- Enter in all of my donor checks on the Contributions tab in my Member Home.
- Mail in or drop off my checks to The Field, 75 Maiden Lane, Suite 906, New York, NY 10038.

### Important Things to Remember:

- The Field does not partner with ANY crowd funding sites.
- The Field does not partner with ANY ticketing sites like Eventbrite or Brown Paper Tickets. Your donor's "ticket" will be the donation that they make through The Field. You should have a guest list at your event.
- NO PAYMENTS, either by credit card or check, will be released until we receive your completed donor spreadsheet. No exceptions!

### A Special Note About Auctions

Many benefits receive items that they auction off at their event. If your donor purchases an auction item, that item IS NOT TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.

If you request items from vendors to auction off at your benefit, you can request a letter from The Field recognizing the in-kind donation to the organization that donated the item. To do this, [log into your Member Home](#), click on 'In-Kind Donations' from the Contributions tab, and enter the required info. The Field will send a letter directly to the vendor.