

HOW TO GUIDE

Why host a Student Sleep Out?

A student sleep out is a fundraising event independently hosted by the school on a date and location of their choosing.

It is a fantastic opportunity to provide students with a meaningful experience that will remain with them. This form of fundraising not only allows young people to stand in solidarity with those who are affected by homelessness but also encourages them to expand their perspectives on what it means to be without a home.

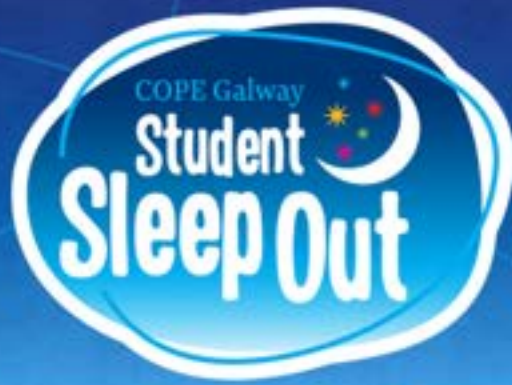
This guide will take you through the considerations required as part of the planning process for a Student Sleep Out. It is intended to make organising the event as smooth and as easy as possible. We encourage you to involve the students in this process where possible, and to afford them with practical experience that will stand to them once this is complete.

The feedback we have received from students who have taken part in a sleep out is that it is a true learning experience, and they have reported newfound support for the work of homelessness charities and greater compassion for the experiences of those who are without a home.

We at COPE Galway stand behind this fundraising event as something that has the potential to positively contribute to the growth and development of the young people who participate.



COPE Galway



Where does your money go?

Your funds help COPE Galway continue our work in supporting those in need of our homelessness, domestic abuse or senior support services.

In 2024, across our services, COPE Galway made a difference for 3,184 people in our community.

We provided assistance to 1,337 people in Galway who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Last year, 236 children spent Christmas in emergency accommodation in Galway.

The funds raised as part of the Student Sleep Out can go towards essential items for those in our services. These may include covering hot meal costs for the Day Centre, providing sleeping bags to clients in need, or covering the price of sports and extracurricular activities for the children in our services.

Hosting a Student Sleep Out contributes to helping COPE Galway realise their vision, where every person in the Galway community is valued, cared for and supported at every stage of life.

Together, we can make a difference. Ní neart go cur le chéile!



COPE Galway

Picking a Venue

Picking a sleep out location requires consideration of a few different elements, you'll need to consider safety, accessibility and permission when picking yours. We recommend that you do not choose a public space for your sleep out to ensure the safety of participants, particularly where there may be minors involved. Below are a few ideas of the different venues you could choose from:

1. School grounds or College Campuses -

These are fantastic for student engagement in spaces they are already familiar with! You may choose to go indoors in a school hall, or outdoors on the green areas of the grounds.

2. Places of worship

If you attend an organised religious or spirituality centre, they may be open to facilitating your sleep out by hosting the group.

3. Community or Youth Centers

It is worth looking into these options in your area, they may be supportive of a youth centered project in aid of a good cause.

4. Private Property

Maybe someone involved in the sleep out will have a large garden capable of holding everyone, or a farming relative may be open to lending a field for the occasion.





How COPE Galway will support your event

Our fundraising team are there to support you with each step of your Sleep Out journey and are delighted to equip you with the knowledge to make the event as easy, impactful and successful as possible! You can expect the following from our end:

Talk to the students:

Ahead of the Sleep Out, members of the COPE Galway team would be delighted to come to your school and speak with the class taking part in this challenge. Students may find it motivating to hear about COPE Galway services, and where the funds raised will go, along with being educated on the social issues that create the need for support services like the ones we provide. Our team will speak with the students on what is expected of them on the night, and how they can keep themselves safe while raising as much funds as possible. Our team would love to be able to attend every Student Sleep Out, sometimes it is not possible. Please let us know when and where and our team will try our best to attend and speak with the students on the night too.

Fundraising Supports:

Starting your fundraising journey can feel a bit overwhelming—what do you say, where do you begin? Don't worry, head over to the Fundraising Hub, and you'll find a plethora of helpful resources: shareable graphics for social media, stats that show the impact of COPE Galway's services, and ready-to-go email templates and message ideas to keep you inspired and on track. If something's missing or you need a little more personalized support, just reach out to the team—we're happy to help you find the perfect approach!

Fundraising Materials:

Our team is delighted to support your fundraising efforts with a range of helpful materials. You may choose an additional fundraising method to go alongside your online page, for example you may wish to organise a bucket collection or use sponsorship cards (or all three!), we're here to assist.

For the Sleep Out itself, we're also happy to provide items such as signage, balloons, and t-shirts to help create a fun and engaging atmosphere on the night.



On the Night



What to bring:

Suitable Clothing and footwear:

Wear warm and comfortable clothing. Depending on whether your event is outdoors or indoors, you may require a waterproof outerlayer. We recommend lining your bag with a waterproof bag (a black bin liner will work). The feet, head and hands are the first to get cold so make sure to wear a hat, some warm socks and gloves, and maybe pack a spare pair of each just in case they get wet. Comfortable and weather appropriate footwear are recommended.

Sleeping Bag and Blanket:

A warm, comfortable sleeping bag is essential (preferably one rated for cold weather).

Tent:

If sleeping outside, your group may wish to bring some tents for coverage from showers. You may also consider a plastic ground sheet to lie on that will prevent you from getting wet.

Torch or Headlight:

Don't forget a source of light! You'll need this to move around and prevent any trips in the dark! You may wish to think about bringing some extra batteries.

Snacks:

Don't forget some snacks to keep energy up. It'll be nice to have something to hand to satisfy those late-night cravings!

Activities:

To make the Sleep Out a meaningful, engaging, and enjoyable experience, here are some activity ideas you might like to include throughout the evening:

- Guest Speakers – You might want to invite community leaders, or maybe some of the participants will want to share personal stories or insights into the issue. This is something that should be discussed ahead of the event.
- Group Talks – Create space for group discussions and reflections on homelessness, encouraging students to think critically and compassionately. Included in the Fundraising Hub are examples of discussion prompts and questions that may inspire deep and meaningful conversations about the issue.
- Games & Quizzes – Light-hearted games or a themed quiz can help break the ice and keep energy levels up.
- Movie Screening – Show a relevant film or documentary that ties into the cause. Some examples of movies on homelessness include Adam & Paul and The Pursuit of Happyness.
- Creative Sign-Making – Provide art supplies so students can design their own signs to use in photos and social media posts, helping to raise awareness.
- Other Fun Activities – Think about music, storytelling, or team challenges to keep spirits high and foster a strong sense of community.



On the Night



Food:

You'll want to consider whether participants will eat before arriving at the event, or whether food will be provided on the night. This needs to be communicated with all taking part ahead of time. If eating as a group on the night, think about whether everyone brings their own food, or if getting some catering in. Check around with local vendors to see if they may sponsor something or provide a good deal for the group. You'll need to choose what works for your group best.

Example Event Schedule:

Time	Activity	Who is responsible
7:00pm	Arrive and report to check- in desk	2 x Teachers at check in desk/ point
8:00pm	Group Discussions	
9:00pm	Guest Speakers	
9:30pm	Food	
10:30pm	Activity	
12:00am	Lights Out	



Sleep Out Safety Checklist

Security

- Is the event location secured and only accessible to participants?
- Have you set up a check-in/check-out station?
- Do you have a complete list of attendees, including names and numbers?

First Aid

- Is there a fully stocked first aid kit on site?
- Are there certified first aid personnel present during the event?
- Do you have emergency contact information for all participants, stored securely?

Weather Preparedness

- Have you checked the weather forecast in the days leading up to the event?
- Is there a backup indoor location available in case of severe weather?
- Have participants been provided with the list of items to bring on the night, including clothing and sleeping gear?

Facilities

- Are clean and accessible toilets available on-site?
- Is there access to safe drinking water?
- Have you ensured accessibility for any participants with physical impairments?

Permissions and Permits

- Have you obtained all necessary permissions for the event location?
- If using a public space, have you secured the required permits from the local Council?

General Safety & Common Sense

- Have you reviewed the venue for potential hazards?
- Is the location one that gives you full peace of mind?
- Are participants briefed on basic safety rules before the event begins?

Play it safe! - While common sense isn't always so common, it's a key ingredient for keeping your Sleep Out safe and fun. If you're ever unsure about the safety of your venue, it's always a good idea to check in with someone from the fundraising team.

Fundraising Tips and Suggestions

Personalise your fundraising page:

The most effective fundraising tool is personal relationships. When creating your fundraising page, be sure to add a picture and share your 'why' for holding a Student Sleep Out.

Share with family and friends:

Whatsapp is a great way to share your fundraising page with people you know. A more personal method of sharing, you may want to consider some factors when choosing who you ask for support, whether they 1) care about you 2) care about your cause and 3) are able to donate.

Get Social!

You may be unaware how many of your social media followers support the work of COPE Galway. By letting people know that you're organizing a Student Sleep Out in aid of COPE Galway, you're providing an opportunity for those who care to donate. Check the fundraising hub for graphics you can use.

Tag it onto your emails.

We've created an email footer that can be added to your email signature, it is available in the fundraising hub. You can link this to your fundraising page!

Be that chatterbox!

Taking part in a Sleep Out is not the easiest way to raise funds for charity, however it is impressive! Get talking to people about your event and you might be surprised how many will respond by wanting to donate. You may even inspire others to fundraise themselves.

Posters

We've included some posters for promoting your event in the fundraising hub. With the QR code to your fundraiser added, these are the perfect opportunity to reach audiences you don't have access to. Consider where you may have noticeboards, think about local business or community centers, and put share your posters with others in the community.

School newsletters

Share the event with parents and guardians of the kids in school by informing them via school newsletters, or other communication channels you may have with parents. Be sure to include a link or QR code to the fundraising page, and some information on alternatives to donate for those who may not be as tech savvy.

Terms and Conditions

What to expect from COPE Galway:

The fundraising team are delighted to be able to help you in any of the following ways:

- Help you develop your ideas
- Provide advice on how you can organise and promote your event.
- Provide resources to help you share your fundraising event with others – e.g. social media post templates, poster templates, email footers, etc.
- Provide you with materials for your event e.g. Balloons, collection buckets, etc
- Provide you with information about COPE Galway's services.
- Informing you of any regulatory obligations you need to be made aware of.
- A social media post on our COPE Galway channels, when possible.
- Attending the Sleep Out, where possible.
- Cheque presentation or recognition photograph after the event, where possible.

Important information:

- COPE Galway does not organise or provide marketing and promotion for third party fundraising events.
- COPE Galway will not provide donor, client, vendor, volunteer, or staff mailing lists or other contact information.
- COPE Galway staff are obligated to follow standards of best practice and internal procedures. We regret when this causes any inconvenience, our staff are trying their best to adhere to standards that ensure transparency and security as well as support fundraising initiatives in our community.

Responsibilities of fundraisers:

COPE Galway requires all fundraisers to engage in fundraising activities on behalf of COPE Galway in a respectful, transparent manner and to comply with all applicable legal requirements. All fundraisers should:

- Always conduct themselves in a trustworthy manner, with integrity and honesty at the centre of interactions to ensure donors are not misled.
- Ensure that their actions enhance the charitable purpose and reputation of COPE Galway.
- Ensure that they have a general knowledge of COPE Galway's services, be able to advise donors where they can find supplementary information and be able to state for which purpose the funds collected will be used.
- Not knowingly spread misinformation, or knowingly mislead donors, nor permit others to do so.
- Not unreasonably intrude on the privacy of those from whom donations are being solicited, nor make unreasonably persistent approaches or exert undue pressure on people to donate to COPE Galway.

- Not exploit any relationship with a donor, volunteer or employee for personal benefit, or misuse their position for personal gain.
- Comply with all legal requirements which relate to their activities and advocate adherence to these within COPE Galway.
- Disclose if they are employees of COPE Galway, or third-party agents.
- Event organisers must obtain all necessary insurance and permit requirements for their event.
- The individual/organisation responsible for the event intended to benefit COPE Galway must agree to indemnify and hold COPE Galway blameless for any and all risk and claims that may arise as a result of the event. COPE Galway is not responsible for any liabilities, liability insurance, losses, debts or expenses arising from the event or event promotions.
- Data protection: Data protection acts cover the use of information, photographs and videos. As the event organiser you are responsible for any personal data generated by photo/video.

How to lodge funds

Thank you so much for raising funds for COPE Galway. There are a variety of ways that you can lodge this money. Please have a look at the information below:

Online:

Go to copegalway.ie/lodgefunds

Online Fundraising page:

Your fundraising page created from the funraisin portal will automatically transfer your funds to COPE Galway once your event is complete. No action required!

Lodging Funds:

Online: Go to copegalway.ie/lodgefunds

Automatic transfer: Your fundraising page created from the funraisin portal will automatically transfer your funds to COPE Galway.

Bank Details:

Bank – Bank of Ireland

Branch – Eyre Square, Galway

Account – COPE Galway CLG

Sort Code – 90-38-16

Number – 39096396

IBAN – IE81BOFI90381639096296

BIC – BOFIE2D

Reference name on the transaction. Send remittance information to donations@copegalway.ie

Collection Buckets:

Should be returned with security tags intact to COPE Galway head office at Calbro House, Tuam Road, Galway, H91 XR97. Our team will conduct a money count and let you know what was collected as quickly as possible.

Phone:

We can take donations over the phone. Give us a call on 091 778750 and a member of the fundraising team will be able to assist you. In the event that someone is not available, you can request a call back and a member of the team will be in touch as soon as possible.



Thank you and Contacts

Didn't find the information you require in this guide?

Have you tried looking through the resources available on your fundraising portal?

If you are still unable to find what you are looking for, we encourage you to reach out to our fundraising team, by emailing fundraising@copegalway.ie or you can call us on 091 778 750. Finally, we at COPE Galway would like to thank you for choosing to support COPE Galway and the work that we carry out in our community with your Student Sleep Out. We could not continue to provide our services to those who need them without the help of members of our community.

