

Woodstock Economic Development Commission

Application for Community Project Grant

Name of Project: Woodstock / River
Loop Trail parkrun

Start Date: Memorial Day / Inaugural Run and then weekly

Description: Bring parkrun, a weekly free 5k event to
Woodstock

Total Project Budget: \$5,000 Grant Request:
\$5,000

Applicant Information:

Name of Applicant/Organization/Business: Geraldine Fowler on behalf of
parkrun

Business Address: 7 Church Street, Woodstock, VT
05091

Telephone Number: (802) 457-
2557

Contact's Email Address:
office@northchapelvt.org

Organization's Website URL: www.northchapelvt.org and
www.parkrun.com

Organization's EIN:

Applicant/Organizational Description: parkrun is a Global initiative which seeks to make the world a healthier and happier place. It does this by organizing and supporting free weekly 5k events all over the world. These events are volunteer led and community focused, with the intent on developing a fun social community event that is inclusive and welcoming to all, regardless of age or ability etc.

parkrun started in Bushy park, West Lodnon with 13 people and 4 volunteers in 2004, and has now grown to encompass >1400 events worldwide in 20 countries, with approx 320,000 people participating or volunteering every week, and has no shown of slowing down. parkrun

USA started in 2012 and now has 28 events across the country after doubling each year for last three years, and there are plenty more events in the pipeline. See “Intro to parkrun” document attached

Budget: Starting up a new event requires a one off cost of \$5000. Beyond that there is no money involved, no budget required.

Project Information:

Project Goals: The aim is to have a parkrun activated in Woodstock (utilizing the new River Loop trail that is planned) and engage members of the community in both participating and volunteering. This will have a wider impact on people’s health and social interaction, helping to make people healthier and happier. Note that in some countries like the UK, parkrun is being prescribed by family doctors for health benefits, while in Ireland the National Health Board partners with parkrun to encourage people to get out and be active.,

Timeline: To start a new parkrun we need three things

- 1) Funding
- 2) Permission for the course
- 3) A core team of volunteers to run the event.

Once those are in place the team works with parkrun USA to get all the paperwork and preparation in place to submit to parkrun HQ for official activation (normally takes 6-7 weeks). We hope to start the event Memorial Day weekend but that will be dependent on getting the elements above in place.

Project Champion: Geraldine Fowler and Dominic Lord

Success criteria: We don’t tend to set specific success criteria or KPIs for events, but success normally looks a functioning sustainable event, drawing new people in on a regular basis to participate. Seeing an event become a part of community life and a place to socialize and connect weekly is what we aim for.

Budget narrative: the 5k start up funds in part goes to fund the hardware needed to have an event every week (laptop for results processing, scanners, timers, signs etc). It also goes to provide the ongoing IT support and infrastructure (website, results etc) for the lifetime of the event, the ongoing support from HQ staff in UK, providing insurance for all the US events (we have public liability insurance of \$5million), and available funds for an event should it wish to purchase additional or replacement equipment

A typical event works like this

- participants just need to register ONCE and they receive a unique barcode number, which they print out and bring to the event
- Typically a pre-run brief is held to welcome everyone and explain the details plus our few basic rules
- Everyone starts at the same time

- As participants cross the finish line, they are timed on a stopwatch and given a token relating to their finish position
- The finish token is scanned with the personal barcode on our scanners
- When the event is finished the data from the timers and scanners are uploaded to a laptop and combined into a set of results that are published on the event's webpage
- Example here <http://www.parkrun.us/delawareandraritanacanal/results/latestresults/>
- Any participant can access every parkrun they've ever done by clicking on their name

Community Value

Parkrun has been shown time and time again to enhance communities by providing a free, inclusive weekly gathering where people can meet and socialize. As it is a run, not a race, there are no winners or prizes and everyone is valued equally. Unlike paid races, parkrun welcomes children >4 years old, parents pushing strollers, people with dogs, and we have no "cut off time" so it doesn't matter how long it takes to complete – so walkers are more than welcome. At parkrun, most participants stay around after they finish to clap and cheer everyone else in while socializing with other participants and volunteers. The post parkrun coffee/breakfast is also an integral part of the event.

Parkrun will also attract tourists to Woodstock – people will travel a long way to try a new parkrun, so you will routinely get visitors from other parkrun countries who will come to parkrun and help contribute to the town's economy. The post parkrun coffee gathering will also help on the economic side.

While parkrun may not attract new RESIDENTS, it will provide an opportunity for new residents to meet members of the wider community and help them to integrate

Existing community support: Geraldine Fowler and Dominic Lord have met with Tom Weschler to discuss utilizing the planned "River Loop Trail" and we have received verbal permission to go ahead with applying for Woodstock, VT to be an official parkrun venue. Geraldine and Dom have spoken to a number of residents and there is much interest in participating and volunteering in this ongoing event. Once funding is secured, the core team will work on building up the volunteer list and promotion.

Adequate funding – yes, should we receive this grantor \$5,000, that would fund the start-up costs needed to become an official parkrun venue



Signature indicates that you have read and agreed to the EDC Community Grant Guidelines 209.

Submitted by: (First and Last Name) _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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parkrun USA: An Introduction

1.20.19



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PARKRUN BASICS

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IMPACT

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GETTING STARTED

4

FAQs AND FURTHER RESOURCES



parkrun basics





Tring parkrun, UK



parkrun

parkrun started in London's Bushy Park in 2004 when Paul Sinton-Hewitt organized a simple meetup for 13 friends.

Now parkrun serves over 200,000 people every week in communities worldwide.

Still simple. Just a few more friends.



Clermont Waterfront parkrun



The Basics

Every parkrun event is a free, timed 5k run/walk held on Saturday mornings.

Each event takes place in the same venue, year-round.

parkrun events focus on community and social support, rather than performance, prizes, or swag.

A parkrun is more like an inclusive group run or walking group than a typical race.

How it works

parkrun combines a **simple front-end** at each individual event with a **robust back-end** shared between all parkrun events.

This makes it possible for local volunteer teams to organize free, safe, weekly events with easy registration, timing and tracking, and insurance.



Fletcher's Cove parkrun



Simple front-end

Courses: using parks and trails eliminates the need for police or road closures.

Equipment: no swag, prizes, bibs, or timing chips keeps equipment to a bare minimum.

Volunteers: drawn from the community of participants.

Tracking: participants register once for a personal parkrun barcode, then “just show up”.

Publicity: consistency and simplicity allows advertising via word-of-mouth and free media.





Robust back-end

Registration: easy one-time registration for a parkrun barcode that can be used at any of 1400 parkrun events worldwide.

Results: data from stopwatches and barcode scanners or phone-based apps are automatically merged with information from the registrant database. Results compiled and emailed to all participants within an hour of the last finisher.

Communications: local teams can stay in touch with their community via event websites, email, social media, and national e-newsletters. parkrun makes it easy for teams to manage this.

Our Values

parkrun USA's aim is to build healthy communities

It's a run (or a walk), not a race. No winners, nobody finishes last (thanks to our tailwalkers).

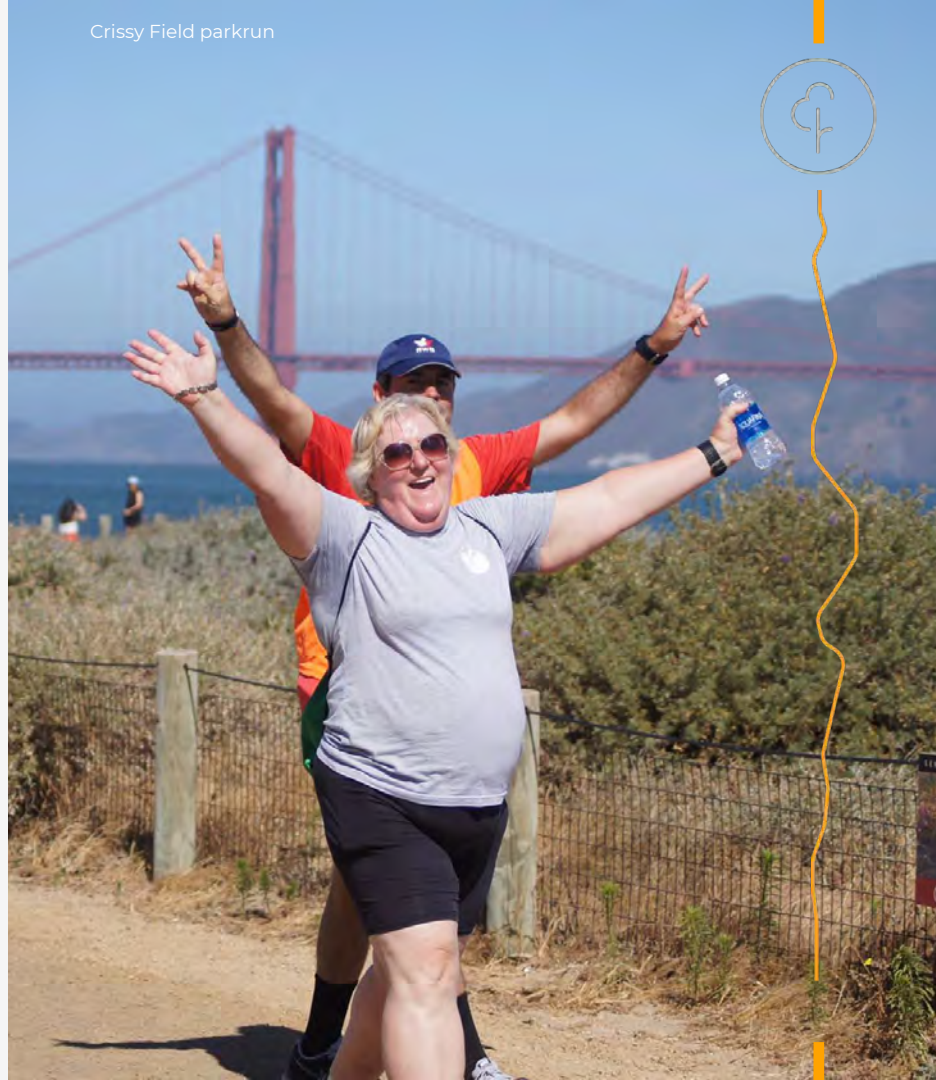
Sustained participation is more important than speed.

We believe that social support promotes healthy habits

We value diversity in age, gender, speed, appearance, ethnicity, and social and economic background.

Volunteering is a form of healthy activity that creates strong communities

Stewardship of public land supports healthy communities





Impact

parkrunner Profile

Abby Ruelas (Renton parkrun, WA)

“When I started coming to parkrun last year I was in a terrible state mentally (and physically). I hated feeling out of control. I needed change.

That first week I couldn't even jog the whole route. I thought I was going to die, but I wanted to do better. parkrun has become a place of camaraderie, a break from my hectic life, and there is never any failure. Just a next time.

I have found a confidence that I didn't know I had. I am not just a mom that has to do for others all the time. I can't believe that in a relatively short amount of time I have shaved 20 minutes off my time. I have never felt stronger and healthier in my life.”



Renton parkrun

parkrunner Profile

Iman Newman (Leakin Park parkrun, Baltimore MD)

Iman discovered parkrun while exploring the trails of Baltimore's Leakin Park with his kids. He showed up the following week and has been a regular since,

An important milestone was when Iman first ran the full 5k. The community was aware of the achievement and cheered him to the finish.

Over time Iman became a regular volunteer, and then a member of the Leakin Park parkrun team. He recently reached the parkrun milestones of 50 runs and 25-times volunteering on the same day, and so his parkrun friends made him a special cake.



parkrunner Profile

Jeffrey Gerald (Heritage Harbor parkrun, Ottawa, IL)

Jeffrey Gerald wasn't a runner until parkrun came to the community where he spends his weekends. When Heritage Harbor, Ottawa (IL) parkrun was gearing up for its first anniversary, he posted a message on the event's Facebook page.

"In my almost 59 years on this planet I never ran or even walked 5k/3.1 miles. Now I do it every Saturday at 9 am...I will be running again tomorrow at 9 am- my 38th parkrun."

Since starting parkrun Jeffrey has lost 50 lbs, halved his time to complete 5k, and enjoyed meeting the wide variety of locals and visitors who he has met at Heritage Harbor parkrun.





parkrun USA aims to create healthy communities throughout the US, by removing barriers to physical activity, and providing social support to remain active.

parkrun USA is doubling in size annually, as new events launch and existing communities expand.

By the end of 2019 we anticipate 50 parkrun events serving 2,500 finishers and led by 500 volunteers every week.

parkrun USA Growth

	2016	2017	2018
Locations	7	15	27
Events	272	539	1073
Finishers	14,039	28,406	49,371
Volunteers	1,923	4,488	9,146



Volunteer Profile

Andrea Zukowski started running at age 49, and was so charmed by the inclusive feel of parkruns she visited on family trips to the UK that she wanted to share it with her community in College Park, MD.

Two years in, College Park parkrun is a thriving community event, with over 10,000 finishers and a pool of 300 volunteers. Andrea and her team have received multiple awards for their efforts.

Andrea: “I have never felt so connected to my community. College Park parkrun is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done.





Volunteer Profile



Dan Forward is a competitive runner who can do a 17-minute 5k when he is so inclined. But at Jamaica Pond parkrun in Boston he is just as likely to be walking a 50-minute 5k as tailwalker, or charming newcomers at his entertaining first-timers briefings.

“A lot of times, the running community is stratified. At parkrun everyone is there together. I was looking at a recent picture where our first finishers were all clapping for somebody coming in long after they were all done. That’s quintessential parkrun to me. It’s a democratic running event that years ago I thought might never never take hold in Boston. I never dared hope that we were all just one single community.”



Mountain Goat Trail parkrun

Volunteer Profile

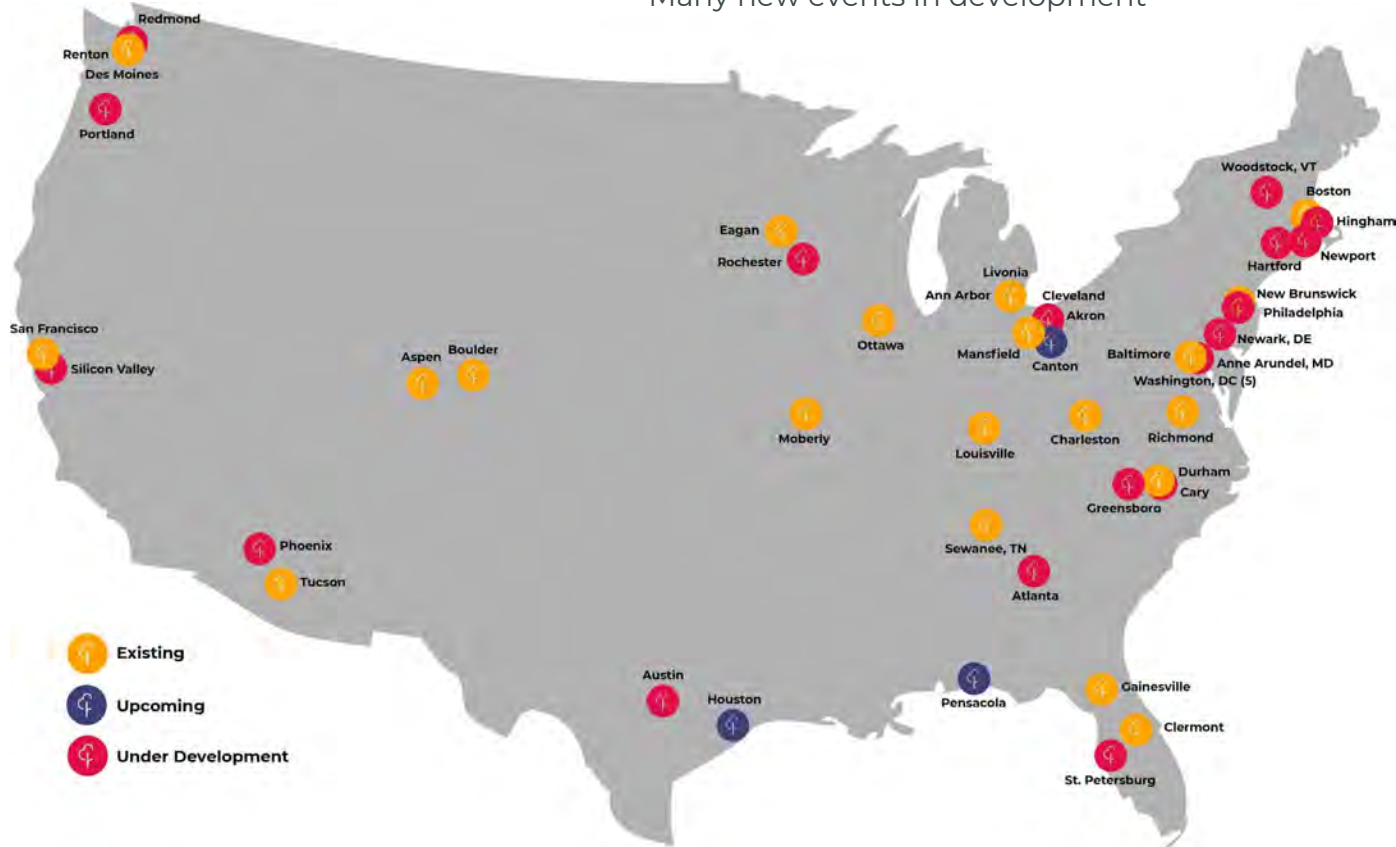
Kristin Sturgill started a parkrun event in tiny Sewanee, TN (pop. 2000) because she wanted to help people in nearby small towns feel more connected to one another, through free, healthy physical activity and volunteering. Mountain Goat Trail parkrun is a small event with a big heart. Kristin has developed new friendships with locals and visitors from afar.

“I never identified as a runner, so to me parkrun was never about running. It was always about building a supportive, accessible, inviting community. I love the celebration of attendance and personal bests over speed. I love the cheering and the post-parkrun coffee. I love the parkrun people.”



Current and future events

- 29 parkrun USA events at beginning of 2019
- Many new events in development



Inspiring parkrunners

Juan Leg (Heritage Harbor parkrun)

One-legged parkrunner Juan Leg (yes, that's his real name) is a regular at this central Illinois parkrun.

One frigid morning he was the only person to show up to run through the snow.

“Life turned for me when I started running. Doctors were saying that I'd be on crutches my whole life. My motivation came from desperately wanting to run with my son. A guy in Chicago offered me a prosthetic leg and didn't take a penny for it.

I love parkrun. It's free, runners become your family. My fastest 5k is 20 minutes, at age 52, with one leg.”



Inspiring parkrunners

Xander Mease (College Park parkrun)

Xander Mease completed his 50th parkrun while still 5 years old, always running with his mom Tara. Xander runs to help manage his cystic fibrosis.

Tara: “Xander loves parkrun for several reasons. There are other people to run with, and sometimes dogs to play with. Since parkrun is a 5k, that means it’s a short run day!

For Xander, parkrun is where running is about other people, rather than cystic fibrosis. There’s always someone to say hi to, someone to cheer for, and someone cheering for us.”



Inspiring parkrunners

Joyce Tucker (Clermont Waterfront parkrun, FL)

Joyce grew up in Wisconsin and loved to cycle, hike, and run. After a horseback riding accident left her paralyzed, she started adapting her life to her new normal.

Though previously a runner, she only started doing 5ks after being paralyzed. Finding accessible courses was difficult. Clermont parkrun's flat trail is perfect.

Joyce enjoys the community atmosphere at parkrun, and engaging with people of all ages. She often volunteers, and enjoys the role of tailwalker, which allows her to slow down and get to know the walkers, sharing in their sense of accomplishment as they reach the finish line.



Clermont Waterfront parkrun



Roosevelt Island parkrun

Stewardship

All parkrun USA events are made possible by partnering with park authorities and landowners.

As year-round users of the trails, we highly value stewardship of parks and watersheds.

parkrun events do not expect exclusive use of trails. We always share the trail with others.

We leave without a trace. A few minutes after the last finisher there is no evidence of the parkrun.

Many parkruns organize clean-up events, adopt trails, or partner with parks on other programs.





Getting Started



Jamaica Pond parkrun

DD/MM/YY

1

VENUE

2

TEAM

3

COMMUNITY

4

FUNDING



Venue

The **5k course** can be on hard or soft surfaces. No road crossings or safety hazards. Written permission required. No fees.

Suitable for **year-round use** in your local climate, including snow, heat, flooding.

Accessible to your community via parking or public transportation. Suitability for strollers and dogs is a plus. Bathrooms a plus, not required.

Configuration can be single-lap, multi-lap, or out-and-back. Many US events use out-and-back trail routes that encourage social interaction.

Post-parkrun **coffee venue** is strongly preferred.



Lillie parkrun, Ann Arbor

Team

The heart of a thriving parkrun event is a diverse team of volunteers.

The **event directors** lead the event year round. This does not prevent them from taking part in the parkrun.

A **core team** includes a group of **run directors** who oversee individual Saturday events.

A larger and ever-changing pool of **volunteers** carry out specific roles such as timekeeping and course marshaling on an individual Saturday.

Diversity in age, gender, speed, background, or ethnicity always strengthens a team..



Charleston, WV parkrun



Jamaica Pond parkrun

Community

Every thriving parkrun event is a community of parkrunners and volunteers.

While some parkrunners have a background in competitive running or organized events, most do not. The community interest matters more.

Building connections with local groups and organizations is a valuable part of developing a new parkrun event. Neighborhood groups, parks programs, health/wellness organizations, fitness groups, senior groups, walking clubs ... and running clubs, too.

Strong community connections are more important than fundraising, and they make fundraising easier.





Funding

All parkrun events are free, forever to participants.

Each new parkrun event is expected to raise \$5,000 in one-time startup funding. The funding covers essential equipment, insurance, and some event support costs. With thousands of finishers per year at a typical parkrun, this is a very low cost.

Fundraising goes hand-in-hand with building community connections.

Ideal supporters are community groups and local organizations that share the goals of the parkrun. Private donations (corporate, personal) are possible, but they are not sponsorships. Only return is gratitude and community impact.



How to get started

First step is to talk with a **parkrun USA ambassador**, to devise a strategy and start building a team.

A successful model followed by many new US parkruns is a **lean startup** approach.

1. Start informal weekly meetups for a run/walk and coffee.
2. Build engagement via social media and email.

This approach is great for testing venues, developing trust with parks authorities, and for building a team, a routine, and a community.

Different versions of this approach work better for different locations.



College Park parkrun. (pre-launch)



FAQ & Further Resources

FAQs - Event Directors



How do I find additional team members?

The best approach is to start simple meetups and see who comes along.

Must I be available every Saturday?

No. We all lead busy lives. The team of Run Directors oversees weekly events. But regular availability is expected. Most EDs become attached to their community and want to be available.

Does the Event Director ever get to run?

Yes! A well-functioning team should allow the ED to run most weeks.

Is there flexibility in the timing or frequency of events?

Yes and no. Start times can vary to suit climate, from 7am - 9am. But all events continue year-round.

I have seen parkrun in the UK, and my town has lots of runners. This is sure to be popular!

No. All US parkruns are starting from scratch in their community. What matters is not the number of runners in the community, but the interest in a social, inclusive running/walking community.

I'm good at organizing events, but I don't like fundraising. What to do?

We understand! parkrun Ambassadors can offer guidance and diverse teams bring together diverse skill sets. Building relationships is the foundation for successful fundraising.

FAQs - Parks Authorities

What is the cost to the park authority?

None. Some parks departments contribute to startup funding, but this is not required.

Are we covered by insurance?

Yes. parkrun USA has nationwide insurance that covers all events for claims up to \$1 million. Through the end of 2018 there have been over 100,000 runs and no major claims.

I am concerned about the impact of holding 50 races per year in the park.

A parkrun is more like a group run or walking club meetup than a typical 5k race. Trails are shared. Typical participation is 40-60/week. Participants leave without a trace in a little over an hour. Many parkruns actively contribute to the upkeep of the park.

Does this impact other park users?

All parkrun events aim to share parks and trails responsibly. We never ask for exclusive use of the trails where we hold our events. We always remind participants to make room for other park users.

My park gets important revenue from event permits. Is free permission for a parkrun beneficial?

It depends. A parkrun event does not bring revenue. But it is a highly cost-effective way of building community and getting diverse segments of the community physically active. If these are important to the parks authority and the community, then parkrun offers excellent value.

Is a permit necessary?

parkrun follows local parks authority rules. If no permit is required, then all that we need for insurance coverage is written permission and acknowledgment that the parkrun event follows local rules.



FAQs - Partners and Donors



Can I use a parkrun event as a fundraiser for my club or charity?

Probably not. parkrun events focus on building healthy communities rather than on fundraising.

Can my club or business be the primary sponsor of a parkrun?

All parkrun events belong to the community of participants, rather than to any individual organization. We welcome close partnerships with running groups or community organizations, but no group can own or be the primary sponsor of a local parkrun event.

How can parkrun benefit my running/walking/fitness/wellness group?

The parkrun team provides free, weekly events with reliable tracking, on a safe course with a supportive community. There is no downside for members of your group.

Is my donation to the parkrun event tax deductible?

Unfortunately not. At present, parkrun USA is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization. It is an all-volunteer non-profit, but donations are not currently tax deductible.

How can my contributions be recognized?

All parkrun events aim to build healthy communities and the main return is seeing those communities grow. Events have many ways of conveying gratitude, but the greatest endorsement is being associated with a point of pride in the community.

Will the parkrun undermine paid running events in our community?

Not necessarily. parkrun offers a basic and socially supportive experience for free. But it greatly expands the pool of people who are comfortable participating in running events.

Further Resources

parkrun.com

Global portal for parkrun events

parkrun USA blog

blog.parkrun.com/us: news and stories from parkrun USA

parkrun wiki

wiki.parkrun.com: Notes on starting new events

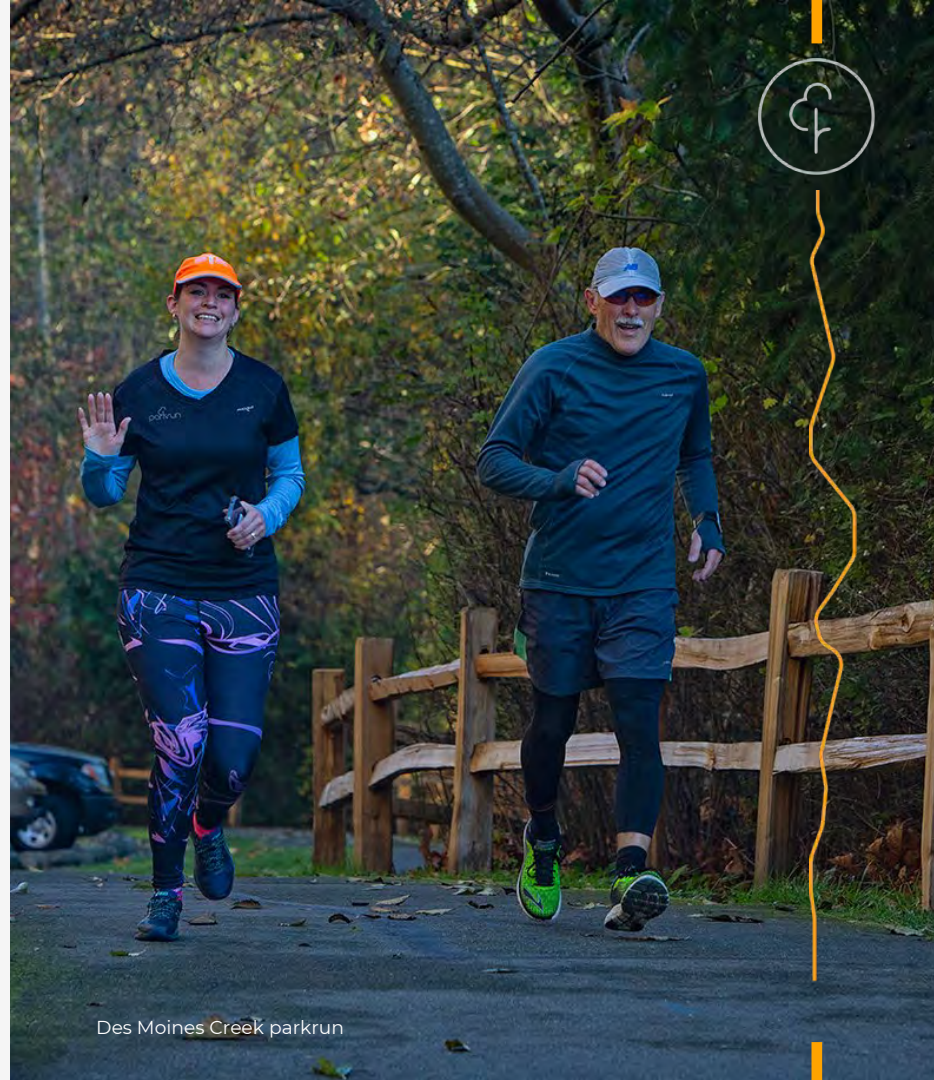
Media

[“Parkrun Lovers ask: Why pay to run a 5k?”](#)

Wall St Journal, 7/10/17

[“How parkrun’s 13 became 5 million and changed weekends forever.”](#) *The Guardian*, 10/1/18

[“The perks of parkrun.”](#) *Women’s Running*, 10/12/18



parkrun USA Ambassadors

parkrun USA is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting healthy communities via free, inclusive physical activity.

parkrun USA Ambassadors support current and new parkrun events, together with communications, operations, research, and partnerships. Most lead parkrun events themselves.

Joyce Adams, Roosevelt Island parkrun

Cathryn Burby, Renton parkrun

Karen Crane, Mansfield OH parkrun

Nate Damro, Eagan parkrun

Andres Falconer, Fletcher's Cove parkrun

Tim Keer, Livonia parkrun

Rory Murphy, Delaware & Raritan Canal parkrun,

Colin Phillips, College Park parkrun

Darrell Stanaford, Anacostia parkrun, parkrun USA Country Manager

Kortney Thoma, Renton parkrun

Daniel Whitehouse, Clermont Waterfront parkrun

Andrea Zukowski, College Park parkrun

Contact us at usa@parkrun.com, or via a message to the parkrun USA social media accounts.







www.parkrun.com