

Capstone Introduction

Katie Kidney

Advisor: Timothy Wood

Coasters For a Cause

For my capstone project, I created a partnership program, along with a proposal document for my small business, that can be used to send to prospective NGO partners. I wanted this document to not only capture the tone of my business, East Coaster Company, but thoroughly explain to NGOs everything they need to know before potentially partnering.

My inspiration to do this started this past June, while our country was in the midst of a racial injustice crisis. I found myself looking for ways to get involved; I read books, talked with friends, donated and posted on social media but I wanted to do more, something that could involve others. Then it dawned on me, maybe I could create coasters that represented Black Lives Matter, sell them, and donate all the proceeds to a BLM non-profit organization.

At first, I was skeptical. This is a sensitive matter and at no point did I want this to come across as me branding or profiting from an issue so touchy and important. I took the time to sit on it, drafted my message various times and had friends of mine look over it, until I finally decided to go through with the project. I searched through BLM hashtags to find designs that could be used on the coasters and reached out to all the artists, explaining my mission and asking for their blessing. The turnout was great, I raised over \$900 and counting for the Know Your Rights Camp organization and was asked to attend a BLM charity event on Sunday, August 9th, to sell my coasters for donations.

This has really inspired me to continue doing work like this, which why is why I wanted to create a useful partnership program that I could send to local NGOs, as a way to help raise money for their organization. The final result of my capstone project is something I am so proud of, it really helped me to take my small business to the next level and cannot wait to put this proposal to good use.



East Coaster
Company

COASTERS FOR A CAUSE

**NGO PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM
2020**

EAST COASTER COMPANY
EASTCOASTER.CO@GMAIL.COM
ETSY.COM/EASTCOASTERCOMAPNY

Prepared by Katie Kidney



Company Overview

I'm Katie, Owner of East Coaster Company, LLC, a New Jersey based retail business that creates personalized, hand crafted coasters, to add a personal touch to any home or office. Each coaster we make tells a different story, portrays special memories, and represents the unique passions and interests of each person who buys them. We sell nation-wide through our Etsy Shop and Instagram account.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to create coasters that are not only a functional item but a unique symbol of self-expression, stories, education, and empowerment. As a socially driven company, we believe in using our resources to support local NGOs in their efforts to combat social and environmental injustices.

Our Story: Why We Are Excited to Partner with NGOs

East Coaster Company's enthusiasm for partnering with NGOs began in June 2020, during the Black Lives Matter movement. Our goal was to use our product and platform to fundraise and donate 100% of proceeds to a BLM organization, while also giving buyers a tangible item to keep for themselves.

We collaborated with talented artists throughout the U.S., who helped create the images that would be displayed on the BLM coasters. In total, we created sixteen beautiful coaster designs for supporters to select from. It was important to us that the artists had complete creative freedom to design the pieces of art that not only represented the BLM movement, but illustrated their unique style and message.

"Being an artist for this amazing project has been a great experience and I'm so grateful that my work was chosen to be included."

- BLM Artist, Christine, CA



Our BLM project turned out better than we could have ever imagined, raising over \$900 in just one month for the *Know Your Rights Camp*, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the liberation and well-being of Black and Brown communities, through education, self-empowerment, and mass mobilization.



Although our monetary donation was a great accomplishment, the real success of this campaign was in the coasters themselves. As they settle into their new homes, they remain symbols of Black Lives Matter, and continue to open up opportunities for discussions and understanding of social injustices.



COASTERS FOR A CAUSE

As our mission statement implies, one of our most important objectives is to support our local NGOs. That is why we developed an exciting partnership opportunity called Coasters for a Cause.

Similar to our Black Lives Matter fundraiser, Coasters for a Cause will provide your organization with personalized coasters, at no cost to your organization, that will convey your NGOs mission.

Below are all the details of what you can expect from us, what we expect from you, and the different partnership options we offer to help support your NGO the best we can.

" What I like about these coasters is that they give everyone a chance to get involved. Not everyone feels comfortable posting or protesting, especially during a pandemic. This was a different approach to help make a bigger impact by helping a BLM organization "

- BLM Supporter,
Daniel, NJ





But first, the benefits

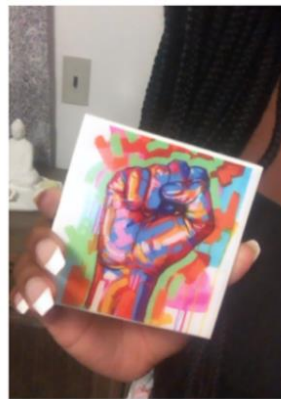
A partnership with East Coaster Company is all about what we can do for your organization. Let us explain some of the advantages you can expect from partnering with us...

1. Personal Connection

These coasters are so much more than your typical coaster; they are a personal connection to your NGO. They are designed to represent your organization and its mission. Once purchased, they are taken into people's homes and places of work, where they are displayed and used by peers, friends, family, and colleagues, making them an excellent way to spread awareness through word-of-mouth, in a non-traditional, fun, and intimate kind of way.

" These beautiful coasters have caught the attention of everyone who has recently visited my home. Having been able to contribute to the "Know Your Rights" movement was very fulfilling for me, especially as a person of color. These coasters will always be a reminder of such a selfless movement ."

- BLM Supporter,
Rose, NJ



2. Fundraising

East Coaster Company is fully dedicated to donating personalized coasters to your organization. Your organization can sell these coasters to raise funds, at no expense to your NGO. Partnering with us gives your organization an opportunity to raise up to \$1,000 toward your cause.

All you have to do is pick which partnership options suits your organization (you will learn about those soon). Then, once the coasters are ready for the spotlight, they can be presented and sold to your community, and your organization will keep all the proceeds raised.

3. Team Building

One of our partnership options includes a team-building event, where together, we will walk your staff through the first few steps of creating your coasters. This can be really fun and offers the opportunity for your staff to bond with one another, while personally crafting the coasters that will be used for your fundraiser.

Objectives and Opportunities

Our core objectives for each of our partnerships is to:

- Increase awareness of your NGOs mission or advocacy.
- Raise up to \$1,000 to support your cause.
- Have your coasters become a symbol of empowerment, education, justice and a constant reminder to never give up on the fight for change.
- Have fun! We want this to be a gratifying and memorable partnership for your NGO.



Partnership Options

Every organization is unique, so your partnership with us should be too.

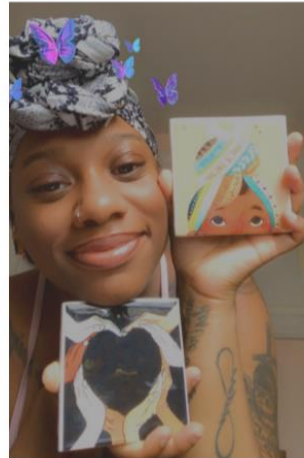
When developing our partnership program, we wanted to leave room for flexibility and provide options to assist you throughout this experience.

Below is a list of the fundamental phases you will experience once you establish a partnership with us. There are options within each phase to better accommodate your organization.

Important We ask that you please carefully review the phases and options prior to our first meeting so that you have an understanding of what options will suit your organization. Thank you!

"The coasters that were made in solidarity with BLM following the death of George Floyd were some of my favorites. I know these are meant to use underneath drinks but I love the art on it so much that I just use them for decoration!"

- BLM Supporter, Candice, NY



Phase 1 – Choosing the Amount of Coasters

We will contribute a maximum of 100 beautifully finished coasters, tailored to your artistic vision. Each coaster cost \$10, giving your organization the chance to raise up to \$1,000.

If 100 coasters feels overwhelming or simply is more than what you are looking, you can choose from one of the selections below:

- 75 Coasters (up to \$750 in donations)
- 60 Coasters (up to \$600 in donations)
- 50 Coasters (up to \$500 in donations)
- 35 Coasters (up to \$350 in donations)

Disclaimer: 35 coasters is the minimum amount we will donate.



Phase 2 – Design

After deciding how many coasters you wish to receive, the next phase is designing your coasters.

For this phase, there are two options:

- **Option 1:** Our artists design your coaster
- **Option 2:** You design your coaster

Option 1:

We understand that not every organization has graphic designers and artists in their staff to help create coaster designs and that's okay, we can help.

We have partnerships with artists who can help your organization design the perfect images for this campaign – at zero cost. Once we have a better understanding of the style and theme you are looking for, we will pair you with one of our artists that we feel would be a great fit for your organization.

You will be in direct contact with the artist that you are paired with, working together to create the perfect coaster designs. You can be involved as much or as little in the design process as you'd like. If you want to be heavily involved, we encourage that. If you prefer to give a little overview of what you are looking for and then let the artist do the rest, we encourage that too.

Benefits include: working with local artists to get amazing graphic art.

Important Information for Option 1:

- We will pair you with only one of our artists that we believe best aligns with your design vision.
- There is a limit of two designs that the artist will create for the coasters.
- Before finalizing the design, our artist will provide you with up to five sketches to review.
- You are allowed only two revisions for each sketch, after the third, all designs are final.
- You will be allowed to keep a JPEG file of each finalized design.
- Sizing: 3.8"x3.8"
- Formatting: JPEG

"I'm an African American-Hispanic. My experience is this country has proven to me, that I am that, before I am a man. In a time when we need it the most, these coasters exemplify togetherness, as well as pride for my heritage."

- BLM Supporter, Josef, NJ





Option 2:

If you decide on Option 2, your organization has complete independence and creative control over the designs. There is no limit to the amount of designs you can submit to us, however, we recommend keeping it a limit of five – as that is just what has worked best for us.

Important Information for Option 2:

- Sizing: each image must be 3.8”x3.8”
- Format: JPEG
- Image Resolution: 1600 x 1200
- Submission: Submit JPEG designs via email once finalized. Make a record of how many coasters you want of each (only if you want more or less of a specific design, otherwise we will just make an even amount of each).

Phase 3 – Partnership Models

To put simply, partnership Model 1 and Model 2 are the options available for the coaster making process. Both are very different, so learn more about each to decide which is best for you.

Model 1: Team Building

Earlier when we discussed benefits, we mentioned team building and Model 1 is what we were referring to. For this Model, two people from our staff will bring all the necessary materials to host an in-house event at your organization or location of choice.

Important Information for Model 1:

- We will supply the coaster materials, but your organization will be responsible for the location and any additional items, such as food, snacks, beverages and so on.
- We will come prepared to make the number of coasters you decided on in Phase 1, however, we can make changes if need be.
- We will only walk you through four out of the six steps to making the coasters. We will then take the coasters back to our facility to finish the process before shipping them back to you. This is because the final stage of crafting can be difficult, messy, and requires a specific temperature to cure.
- Once the coasters are finished, we will ship them to your facility to see the final product of the coasters you helped make.

Model 2: We Got This

Model 2 is simply that instead of making the coasters with your staff on-site, we will do everything from our facility and ship the finished product to you.



Phase 4 – Finalizing and Distribution

In Phase 4, we will either be finalizing your coasters (if you choose Partnership Model 1) or in the middle of creating your coasters (Model 2).

Please note it can take anywhere from 2-4 weeks before distribution takes place.

Once all the coasters are finished and ready to go, we will ship the coasters to your facility directly, at no cost, with USPS Priority Shipping. If you are within 20 a mile radius of our location, we will drop them off personally to avoid high shipping costs and longer handling times.

Phase 5 – Marketing, Buying, and Selling

East Coaster Company can be found on two platforms: Instagram and Etsy. We use Instagram mainly as a platform to showcase our coasters and communicate with our audience. Etsy is where all the buying and selling happens.

If desired, we will do **two** posts a month for only two months on our Instagram channel where we will display your finished coasters, explain your NGO's mission and direct followers to where they can purchase your designs. We will also give them information on other ways they can help (i.e.: direct them to your website for volunteer opportunities and future donating).

We are happy to sell your coasters on our Etsy page, where we can help with the process. However, we will only accept a maximum of 25% of the coasters you ordered (see chart below).

Number of Your Coasters	Amount We Will Sell
100	25
75	19
60	15
50	13
35	9

We will send your organization a check in the mail for the coasters we sold, on a biweekly schedule that will be discussed once our partnership details are in place.

To sell on our Etsy shop, there is no time limit. We will keep them up until everything is sold – or we can return them back to you if you'd like at any point.

"I loved the idea of being able to display the coasters in my home and have conversations about the matter with those who visit. Quite the concept"

- BLM Supporter, Brooke, FL





Other Important Details

Length of Partnership:

Once all the coasters are sold, or you feel satisfied with the amount sold, that will be the conclusion of our Coasters for a Cause partnership.

Therefore, there is no concrete time length. Instead, it all depends on variables such as, where/how you are selling them, your community outreach, personal interests, and so on.

Deliverables/Materials:

We have you covered on all the materials needed to hand craft the coasters for your next fundraiser. We will even pay for the packing materials for any coasters we sell on our Etsy account.

Unfortunately, we cannot provide your NGO with packaging materials to ship your own coasters. This includes, ribbons, thank you cards, tissue paper, bags and boxes.

Our Time:

Being there for your organization is very important to us. We will always be an e-mail or phone call away if you have any questions, comments, concerns or just want to say hello! We will always do our best to get back to you as soon as we can.

"A co-worker of mine had these displayed on her office desk and I thought they were just lovely. When she told me what they stood for and that the money was for a good cause, I had her order my husband and I one. They are just stunning."

- BLM Supporters,
Grace and Frank, NY



Next Steps

If you are interested in a partnership with East Coaster Company, fill out the attached document below and email us. We will respond as soon as possible to set up phone and/or video meeting with you to begin implementing all the phases of our Coasters for a Cause partnership program.



Inquiry form

Please Copy and Paste this section and email responses to: eastcoaster.co@gmail.com

It's okay if any of these answers change or you are unsure of your answer. This information helps us get a general idea of what you are looking for from our partnership.

Name of Organization:

Your Name:

Phone Number:

Amount of Coasters: 100, 75, 60, 50, 35

Design: Option 1 (our artists design your coasters) or Option 2: (you design your coasters)

Partnership Models: Model 1 (team building event) or Model 2 (we got this)

Best Time to Contact:

Anything else you'd like us to know:



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the size and type of coaster you use?

A: We use 4"x4" Ceramic White Tiles lined with a thin cork bottom and glossy, sealed finish.

2. Is there a discount for partnerships on your Etsy shop?

A: Yes, along with your partnership agreement, a discount will be provided for all staff. Just send us an email and we will provide discount code information.

3. Can we alter the price of the coasters?

A: No, all coasters should be sold at \$10/coaster.

4. Can we choose an amount of coasters that are not listed but fit between the minimum and maximum?

A: We prefer to keep it in the format we created. However, we will decide this on a case by case basis.

5. Are the coasters waterproof?

A: Yes

6. Are these dishwasher safe?

A: No, simply because of the cork bottom, we suggest you hand wash the top of the coaster.

7. How do you package these?

A: When shipping our coasters, we protect them with bubble and foam wrap and place them in a box or padded envelope depending on order size.

8. Do you only offer square coasters or do you have options for different shaped coasters?

A: As of now, we only use the 4x4 tile but we have been working on implanting circle tiles next.



Contact Information

Name: Katie Kidney, Owner of East Coaster Company

Email: eastcoaster.co@gmail.com

Phone: 732-485-2683

Instagram: @eastcoastercompany

Etsy: EastCoasterCompany

Business Hours: M-F 10am-6pm



Thank you for taking the time to review our Coasters for a Cause partnership program. We are very excited for our future partnerships and we look forward to hearing from you.

Warm Regards,

East Coaster Company