

THE ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY

POLICY NO:	RLSS003
POLICY:	ETHICAL FUNDRAISING POLICY
ORIGINAL POLICY:	September 2009
LAST REVIEW DATE:	June 2021
REVIEW DATE:	May 2024

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

RLSS as an international charity, registered in the UK, must secure funding support if it is to maximise the capacity of RLSS and its Members to deliver drowning prevention, water safety and lifesaving services, advocacy and lifesaving sport throughout the Commonwealth.

This Ethical Fundraising Policy reflects the desire to ensure that RLSS maximises potential income using our ethical standards of fundraising namely without creating conflict or disharmony across its Members and without risking the integrity, viability, independence and patronage of the charity.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for RLSS to secure and service sponsorship, grants and donations.

2. DEFINITIONS

Ethical means pertaining to or dealing with morals or the principles of morality; pertaining to right and wrong in conduct; being in accordance with the rules or standards for right conduct or practice.

3. SCOPE AND CONTEXT

This policy covers the RLSS Commonwealth Headquarters, RLSS Events, RLSS projects and initiatives and may provide guidance to RLSS Members.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following RLSS policies and key references.

- RLSS014 Risk Management Policy
- RLSS015 Anti-Corruption, Fraud and Bribery Policy
- RLSS019 Financial Procedures Policy (not available publicly)
- RLSS020 Sustainable Assets Pool – Reserves Policy (not available publicly)
- RLSS022 Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- RLSS023 Code of Ethics
- Institute of Fundraising – Acceptance, Refusal and Return: A Practical Guide to Dealing with Donations



4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 RLSS is charged with the responsibility with securing funding to maintain Commonwealth Headquarters, support Commonwealth development initiatives and support Commonwealth events.
- 4.2 RLSS will make application to suitable Foundations and Grant Making Trusts in respect of approved projects.
- 4.3 RLSS will ensure that any sponsorship, grants or donations directly support its Mission, Vision, Scope and Values.
- 4.4 RLSS will ensure that any sponsorship, grants or donations sought are not in conflict or competition with its Members.
- 4.5 RLSS will ensure that any sponsorship, grants or donations sought are sought from organisations which meet our ethical standards for fundraising.
- 4.6 RLSS will, through the Deputy Commonwealth President, Treasurer, Operations Manager and Executive Director collectively, conduct an ethical risk assessment where the origins of the sponsorship, grant or donations do not or may not meet our ethical standards for fundraising.
- 4.7 RLSS will seek and rely on fundraising best practices as promoted by the Fundraising Regulator (UK) and the Institute of Fundraising (UK).
- 4.8 RLSS will seek to verify the bona fides of any sources of income.
- 4.9 Where funding is sought for a specific RLSS event, RLSS will observe any fundraising policies of the host Member in respect of that event.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 General Factors

Sponsorship, grants and donations are often commercially sensitive activities for both the sponsor/donor and the receiving entity. This is particularly so in the initial phases of developing a relationship and then the ensuing negotiations. It is essential that confidentiality is preserved for as long as possible to ensure that each party can establish the relationship and reach agreement free from external interference.

5.2 Procedural Phases.

RLSS Officers and/or staff will liaise with the Board of Trustees and Members to determine which programmes, products and services are viable for sponsorship and donations.

For ease of defining procedures for this policy, the process of soliciting, negotiating and servicing sponsorships and donations is divided into three phases:

- a. Phase One – Solicitation and Marketing*
- b. Phase Two – Active Negotiation*
- c. Phase Three – Agreement*



5.2.1 Phase One - Solicitation and Marketing.

RLSS will be active in the marketplace on a day-to-day basis. This activity will require communication by RLSS to its Members through the normal business processes. These are preliminary activities only and as much flexibility as possible is essential. RLSS may make approaches or potential sponsors and donors may be introduced through third parties, networking, or by a Member. During this phase, and where a project relates to a particular in-country activity, RLSS will keep the relevant Member Executive Director and/or President briefed if negotiations look promising to avoid potential conflict.

5.2.2 Phase Two – Active Negotiation.

This is the phase where the sponsorship/donation is discussed in detail between the parties. Once written proposals are received from potential sponsors or donors, or responses to RLSS proposals are received, the Board of Trustees, in liaison with the Business Development Committee as appropriate should endorse the next steps in the negotiation. These matters would be for example, the term of the agreement, the sponsorship properties offered, the pricing of the properties offered and servicing by RLSS.

5.2.3 Phase Three – The Agreement.

The agreement can be a simple exchange of letters or a formal contract. The process would be:

- a. Final proposal to be approved by the Board of Trustees and agreed by Members where there may be a partnership and/or to avoid any potential conflict,
- b. Agreement executed by the Deputy Commonwealth President or CEO in accordance with the above conditions.

5.3 Fundraising Standards

RLSS will adhere to the following fundraising standards:

- a. Fundraising activities will comply with all relevant laws.
- b. Any communications to the public made while carrying out a fundraising activity shall be truthful and non-deceptive.
- c. All monies raised via fundraising activities will be for the stated purpose of the appeal and will comply with the organisation's stated mission and purpose.
- d. All personal information collected is confidential and is not for sale or to be given away or disclosed to any third party without consent.
- e. Nobody directly or indirectly employed by or volunteering for RLSS shall accept commissions, bonuses or payments for fundraising activities on behalf of the organisation.
- f. No general solicitations shall be undertaken by telephone or door-to-door.
- g. Fundraising activities should not be undertaken if they may be detrimental to the good name or community standing of RLSS.

Financial contributions will only be accepted from companies, organisations and individuals the Board considers ethical.

5.4 Donations

- a. RLSS may accept, refuse or return a donation.
- b. In determining whether to accept, refuse or return a donation, RLSS will consider:
 - i. Any and all potential risks.
 - ii. Any evidence that a donation was made by someone who lacked capacity to make the gift,



- iii. If RLSS has concerns over the impact on RLSS if it accepts (or in some cases retains) a gift. E.g.
 - 1. if RLSS accepts (or retains) a gift made by someone who has capacity but is in vulnerable circumstances, or
 - 2. if the gift is from a source which is associated with scandal.
- iv. If accepting the donation would conflict with the charity's purposes, as highlighted above in section 4.3.
- v. The positive and negative impact to RLSS reputation.
- c. RLSS may refuse a donation, but to do so the trustees need to be satisfied, and able to show, that it is in the best interests of RLSS. In making such a decision, RLSS give careful consideration, based on evidence, of the risks of accepting the donation against its benefit.
- d. Should the RLSS contemplate returning or refusing a donation it will consider submitting a serious incident report to the Charity Commission e.g. where there is, or a risk of, significant harm to the charity's reputation.

6. ACCESS TO POLICY

This policy will be available for viewing by any person on RLSS's website or a copy will be sent upon request.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this Policy, please contact:

The Royal Life Saving Society, Commonwealth Headquarters,
Red Hill House, 227 London Rd,
Worcester WR5 2JG,
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)1789 774229

Fax: +44 (0)1789 773995

Email: commonwealth@rlss.org.uk

Website: <http://www.rlsscommonwealth.org>

Attention: Treasurer

