



Reviewed 2025

Acceptable Donations Policy

1 Reasons for adopting a policy

As a charity, we ought to have a policy on which donations are acceptable to the members, so that we don't get into arguments (or trouble) by taking ad hoc and inconsistent decisions, or by taking decisions that are conflict with policy agreed by members. The policy can be quite short and simple, and should be based on standards commonly available.

*The policy should not be confused with any **legal** or **charitable** requirements, which will always be followed by the Trustees.*

2 What is the policy for?

We will use the following considerations from the Institute of Fundraising: Having a policy and implementation process ensures that the organisation actively manages risks associated with donation acceptance and refusal. It also enables the organisation to express its values and ethos, how those are relevant to its purposes and how certain types of donations may be more likely to inhibit the organisation's pursuit of its purposes. Donations to charities can, and should, **only be rejected in exceptional circumstances**, and having a policy that clearly lays out the organisation's position will ensure that donations are only turned down for proper reasons.

Having a policy will not prevent this issue from arising or people disagreeing with decisions taken, but it demonstrates to stakeholders and the wider public that an organisation is consistent and takes its position and responsibilities seriously.

"Trustees must act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the charity and need always to bear in mind that their prime concern is its interests. They must not let any personal views or prejudices affect their conduct as trustees. They must exercise an appropriate degree of care in administering the charity" (This text is taken from Charity Commission guidance CC3)

Trustees must be able to demonstrate the tangible fact that they have grounds reasonably to believe that acceptance of the donation will itself directly lead to a net decline in the asset base of the charity.

3 Reasons we may use as Trustees to recommend refusal of a donation or of sponsorship

There are good reasons for turning down a donation or sponsorship proposal, and these may include a poor match between the donor’s and the charity’s objectives – but we need to be clear. **The following general definitions therefore constitute the current operating policy of Hands on Heritage:**

- The Trustees may decide that it would be unethical for the charity to accept funding from certain sources, and will determine any individual cases by making a Trustees’ recommendation to Members for their decision – this will usually be done electronically in accordance with the constitutional arrangements – members are of course able to call a General Meeting if they so wish and can demonstrate the required support. We will use as an example the way in which medical charities, say, may be unwilling to accept research funding from the tobacco industry.
- A donor’s *reputation or associations* may be such that accepting funds would undermine confidence in the charity’s independence and adherence to its core values. Trustees and members will make their decision as above.
- There may be a *conflict of interest* between the work of the institution and the activities of the proposed donor. Trustees and members will make their decision as above.

4 Future development

The Trustees will review any potential or actual decisions to refuse sponsorship each year at a scheduled meeting of Trustees, and will use experience to guide any further refinement of this policy.

<i>This policy will be reviewed and approved after any changes by Trustees at their first 2023 meeting and circulated to Members.</i>	
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