

Sponsorship- How to Approach Companies



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The idea of gaining funds from the corporate sector for charitable causes is not new. But the approach has changed and competition for funds has increased significantly. The Movement has successfully attracted funds from the corporate sector for various projects over the years, such as Job Week, Badge resource materials, Jamborees and many other activities and events.

Many Scout Groups have also achieved success in attracting support from local companies to finance camping expeditions, football strips, fun days and lots more!

When investigating the idea of corporate sponsorship, keep in mind that any venture will be a partnership for mutual benefit. There is a certain element of 'give' and 'take' from both sides - ensure the advantages of becoming associated with your Scout Group are not 'undersold'.

There is also the possibility of receiving direct donations or funding from companies. Many companies are open to the idea of giving in kind, perhaps building material, stationery, computers etc. The steps towards investigating both avenues are very similar.

But remember to ensure that the profile of the third party suits that of your Scout Group, there are many issues to consider from their ethical to their environmental standing. The Committee of Council has agreed a policy document, which provides guidance on sponsorship from organisations associated with alcohol, tobacco and other industries.

What are the Benefits of Sponsoring a Scout Group?

Sponsors will want to know 'what's in it for us?' You must be prepared with the relevant answers. All Scout Groups provide a target audience, which the sponsors may expose its products or services to - remember it's not just the Members of the Group but their parents, relatives and supporters that companies may gain access to. The Group can offer a willing taskforce of workers for jobs such as packing shopping bags or distributing leaflets. Groups may wish to allow the sponsor to brand one of their forthcoming fetes, erect a sign outside the H.Q., advertise in the Group magazine or at District level, sponsor a District badge. In the latter case, up to one third of the badge can be used for the sponsor's logo. Think of other suitable and innovative ways to create awareness for your sponsor.

How do you start?

Examine what item your Group intends to fundraise for and look at the potential for sponsorship. Draw up a proposal; make sure it's both professional and presentable. The proposal should include a summary of The Scout Association and its aims, details of the audience they are likely to reach (e.g. census details of your particular Group) and estimated number of supporters in the area. Highlight the advantages of being associated with your Scout Group; remember these will vary in relation to the needs of the sponsor and the nature of the project. Include a budget and time scale guidelines and finally, details of your public relations campaign

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including the publicity that you hope to receive from your local press.

Who do we approach?

Only companies within your Scout District. If you have a company's head office in your locality, please consult with the Fundraising and Marketing Department before you make your approach as we may be in a position to assist your application.

Use your own Group network, many parents and supporters may have direct contacts which you can follow-up. Remember that ASDA employees can generate up to £300 for your group and BT employees up to £500 as part of their organisation's arrangements to support the community and their staff involvement in community projects.

Produce a list of target companies, in the case of building a roof, this should include all major local builders, builders suppliers, local DIY stores etc. Before you approach each company with the proposal, try to find out a little about your potential sponsor, this will enable you to individualise your proposal to suit their needs - in the case of larger companies, a copy of their annual report/accounts will prove informative.

To ensure you send your proposal to the right person, telephone their reception and ask for the name and job title of the relevant person. The personal approach works best, try to organise a short meeting with your 'target', five minutes will be enough to outline your proposal and leave a copy for their perusal. Otherwise, you can always despatch your proposal directly, with a view to organising a meeting at a later date.

Whatever the approach, follow it up after a couple of days. Be prepared to discuss your proposal in detail and negotiate.

Always 'leave the door open' when dealing with third parties, they may not be able to assist now, but will perhaps in the future. It is always a good

idea to remind your contact that your Scout Group still exists, perhaps send them your Group newsletter or a Christmas card!

The project is sponsored!

Congratulations, your hard work has paid off as a third party is on-board. There are numerous factors to consider now, from a legal contract (which can be done through an exchange of letters), to insurance, especially if your Scout Group will undertake an activity on the sponsors' premises.

Follow-up your responsibilities advise your local press of the news or invite them to the presentation of your cheque. Keep your sponsor up-to-date on the development of the joint project. You may consider sending your sponsor photographs that they may use in internal publications a thank you gift or letters from the Group, an invite to your Scout fete or Fun Day. If you have received a large donation, perhaps for building work on your Headquarters, a 'Thank You' plaque on the wall or an invite to the opening of the building may be an idea - the most important thing is to keep in touch. Keep communicating!

Hopefully this fact-sheet has given an overview of sponsorship, a concept that many Groups have benefited from. Scouting adds a great deal to the community, why not allow the community to give something back?

NOTE: If your Group is asked by a national company to appear in their poster, TV campaign or any scheme that will involve national publicity, please contact the Marketing Department who will both negotiate and obtain legal advice on your behalf.

Contacts

Further information can be obtained from the Fundraising and Marketing Department:

Tel: 0845 300 1818