

# ETHICAL FUNDRAISING POLICY

## DONOR CHARTER

The vision for the University of Reading is that the University will be a vibrant, thriving, sustainable, global, and broad-based institution. It will be responsive to, stimulated by, and informing changes in the world around us. As a result, we will also be significantly larger in terms of students, global reach and presence, and revenue.

The ambition, is to enhance our standing as a leader in research and higher education that defines and responds to the needs of individuals and societies, and, by doing so, to be counted among the very best universities in the UK and internationally.

In achieving this ambition, the University of Reading has a responsibility to ensure that the processes of securing and receiving funds to support teaching and research does not compromise our integrity, the trust of our supporters or our commitment to students, staff and the communities we serve.

## VISION AND MISSION FOR FUNDRAISING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF READING

### **Our vision**

To maximise the philanthropic potential of our global community of supporters.

### **Our mission**

To inspire, enable and ask people to support the University of Reading as it addresses some of the world's greatest challenges.

Our alumni, donors, and friends are extremely important to us. With their support the University is able to continue to provide an excellent level of education to students and participate in world leading research. It is essential that all our staff engage with our alumni, donors, and friends with the respect that they so greatly deserve.

This statement of intent underpins our commitment to providing a high quality professional service and the standards our supporters can expect from the University of Reading staff, as well as explaining how our supporters can provide us with feedback so that we may identify ways in which we can continually improve the services we offer.

# RESPONSIBILITIES TO OUR DONORS

## Donor rights

All fundraising solicitations, by or on behalf of, the University of Reading will disclose the University's name and purpose for which the funds are requested. Printed solicitations (however transmitted) will also include its address or other contact information.

## Donor entitlements

All donors and prospective donors are entitled to the following, promptly, upon request:

- The most recent University annual report and financial statements;
- Confirmation of the exempt educational charitable status of The University of Reading;
- A copy of these guidelines;
- Confirmation of whether an individual soliciting funds on behalf of the University is a volunteer, an employee, or a hired fundraiser.

Donors and prospective donors will be treated with respect. If we have been so informed, we will honour their requests to:

- Limit the frequency of solicitations;
- Not to be solicited by telephone or other technology;
- Receive printed material concerning the University.

## Anonymity

The University will be transparent about gifts received, their sources and purposes. In cases where a donor wishes to remain anonymous, such anonymity will be respected for all public purposes. The University may disclose details of any donor where it is required to do so by law, by any governmental or other regulatory authority, or by court order.

## Privacy

The privacy of donors will be respected. Any donor records that are maintained by the University will be held in accordance with the law and as such kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Donors have the right to see their own donor record, and to challenge its accuracy.

## Donor details

We do not sell supporter details on to third parties.

## Reasonable persuasion

The University will not put individuals under undue pressure to give, although in carrying out fundraising activity in accordance with this policy it may use reasonable persuasion to encourage prospective donors or legators to give.

## Third parties

If the University is working with an independent third party organisation or individual as a 'professional fundraiser' to solicit philanthropic gifts on its behalf, the arrangement will be subject to the relevant legal requirements and a 'written agreement'. Before soliciting donations a relevant disclosure or solicitation statement must be made available to all prospective donors. Third party fundraisers will be required to operate in accordance with this policy.

Third party fundraisers will not be paid by commission other than in exceptional circumstances and where the conditions are set out in the Institute of Fundraising Code of Practice have been met.

## **Legal advice**

Donors are encouraged to seek independent legal and/or financial advice if the University has any reason to believe that the proposed gift might significantly affect the donor's financial position, taxable income, or relationship with other family members. The University is unable to and will not give legal or financial advice.

## **Data protection**

The University of Reading is committed to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The University needs to process certain personal data about staff and students in order to fulfil its purpose and to meet its legal obligations to funding bodies and the government. The University will process such information according to the Data Protection Principles that are set out in the DPA.

To ensure that all staff, students, and others who process personal data on behalf of the University are doing so in accordance with these principles at all times, the University has developed a Data Protection policy together with a series of detailed guidelines, the Data Protection Policy Guidelines.

For more information please visit [www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps).

For more information on the University's Privacy Notices please visit: <https://www.reading.ac.uk/AlumniAndSupporters/privacy-notice.aspx>.

## **Reputation**

The legal and reputational rights of potential donors will always be considered as part of the due diligence process applied to potential gifts to the University of Reading. A clear distinction will be drawn between what is rumour or speculation, and what is confirmed fact or legal finding. However, potential donors must be aware that the University has the right to consider any potential reputational risks that may result from the current or past public perception of said donor. The University ultimately has the absolute right to determine a potential gift as unacceptable according to this consideration and to refuse or return it.

## **Copyright or intellectual property issues**

Where donors wish to place conditions on gifts, for example relating to copyright or intellectual property issues, they must be understood clearly, and it must be ensured that the conditions are appropriate and that the University can comply with any associated requirements. In some circumstances, we may not be able to accept a gift.

## **Conditions on a gift**

Where a donor offers to make a donation with conditions attached, the University reserves the right to make the final decision on acceptance or refusal of the gift. Any gift with attached conditions that contravene the University's vision and strategic aims or which the University cannot otherwise meet will not be accepted.

## **Additional costs**

Any additional costs associated with the acceptance of a gift need to be clearly identified and agreed with the donor. The University reserves the right to not accept a gift if the additional costs to the University outweigh the potential benefit of the gift.

## **Gift administration document**

For a major gift to be accepted by the University, the donor may be required to sign a document which sets out the administration of the gift. A copy will be held by both the University and the donor. This document should detail how the gift will be used and the payment schedule.

## **The University's right over the gift**

The University has the right to use the gift in the way stipulated by the document signed at the time the gift is made. If necessary, due to programme, organisational, legal or regulatory changes, alternative uses of restricted/designated philanthropic donations will be discussed with the donor or donor's legal designate(s). If the donor is deceased or legally incompetent and the University is unable to contact a

legal designate, the donation will be used in a manner that is as consistent as possible with the donor's original intent. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the University's Fundraising Ethics Committee.

The University has the right to review and reconsider any previous decisions made by the Fundraising Ethics Committee upon the availability of new information concerning the Donor or the Gift.

### **Vulnerable donors**

Fundraisers must take all reasonable steps to treat a donor fairly, enabling them to make an informed decision about any donation. This must include taking into account the needs of any potential donor who may be in a vulnerable circumstance or require additional care and support to make an informed decision.

If a fundraiser believes the person they are working with to be in a vulnerable circumstance or may require additional care and support to make an informed decision, they should inform their line manager who will then follow up with the appropriate body of the University to make a decision on whether this person should or should not be solicited.

### **Stewardship and reporting**

Donors can expect to be thanked and recognised for their gift. Where appropriate, donors will be offered opportunities for continuing engagement with the activities they have funded. However, donors will not receive any preferential treatment in respect of the University's academic activities or business affairs. In particular, no donation shall lead to any departure from standard policies and procedures in respect of the recruitment and admission of students, the appointment or promotion of staff, procurement or governance and management (including the governance and management of any activity or facility funded by a donation).

The University will provide all donors with a general report on their contribution to the institution's goals. It will also comply with any specified reporting requirements in a timely and honest manner.

### **Complaints**

The University will acknowledge complaints by a donor or prospective donor about any matter that is addressed in this document within 5 working days, and will aim to resolve a complaint within 21 working days. A designated member of the Alumni and Supporter Engagement Office will consider and attempt to satisfy the complainant's concerns in the first instance. A complainant who remains dissatisfied will be informed that s/he may appeal in writing to the Secretary of the University of Reading, and will be advised of the disposition of the appeal.

### **Contact details**

Telephone: +44 (0)118 378 8006

Postal address:

Director  
Alumni and Supporter Engagement Office  
L11 London Road Campus  
4 Redlands Road  
READING  
RG1 5EX  
United Kingdom

Email: [alumni@reading.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@reading.ac.uk)

## **OUR LEGAL STATUS**

The University of Reading is an independent corporation with charitable status established by Royal Charter granted in 1926. Its objects, powers and framework of governance are defined in the Charter and supporting Ordinances. It is an exempt charity (reference x 8145).

Exempt charities are organisations whose purposes are charitable but which are accountable to a body other than the Charity Commission. The University of Reading is accountable to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as the Principle Regulator under the Charities Act and given the comprehensive monitoring and audit processes already in place is exempt from registration with the Charity Commission.

## PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

### **The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Principles of Practice – Fundraising standards in educational institutions**

We The University of Reading subscribes to CASE's *Principles of Practice – Fundraising standards in educational institutions*, published in July 2015. The *Principles of Practise – Fundraising standards in educational institutions* are consistent with the detailed 'Code of Fundraising Practice' produced by the Institute of Fundraising and used as the basis of adjunctions by the Fundraising Standards Board.

These industry standards have been adapted and incorporated into our Ethical Fundraising Policy.

The CASE principles of best practice in relations to fundraising standards are:

#### **Institutional Policies and Guidelines**

1. The institution will only accept donations that comply with its own published ethical policies for the acceptance and refusal of philanthropic donations and that are in the best interests of the institution. If a donation is turned down, a permanent record will be kept of the reasons for that decision.
2. The institution will publish a *Donors' Charter* or similar setting out in summary form their intentions in respect of their relationship with donors and supporters.
3. The institution will have a clear policy for handling any complaints from donors or prospective donors. Any complaint will be treated seriously and with respect and the complainant will receive a response within a reasonable time frame. Where the complaint is found to be valid, appropriate measures will be taken to address the concerns and issues raised and to prevent similar issues arising in the future.
4. The institution will have a clear policy on donor recognition. Associated schemes and practises for donor recognition will be proportionate to the significance of the gift and will comply with both prevailing charity and tax law.

#### **The Donor**

5. Donors will be provided with accurate information about the institution and the purpose for which their philanthropic funds are being solicited.
6. Any philanthropic funds raised will be used for the purpose for which they were solicited. Institutions will inform donors in a timely manner should the activity they are funding be changed in a significant manner or experience problems that could prevent the agreed outcomes being achieved.
7. Where an agreement between the institution and the donor exists funds can only be repurposed with the explicit prior permission of the donor or as charity law allows, but where there is no individual agreement the institution will obtain a general permission to repurpose funds.
8. All key conditions relating to major donations will be contained in a signed Gift Agreement or exchange of correspondence with which both parties will comply.
9. The institution may use reasonable persuasion to encourage prospective donors or legators, but it will not put individuals under pressure to give.
10. Fundraising for legacies will be carried out with due regard to the potential legator's freedom to provide for his/her family and other and will take account of the needs and situation of vulnerable individuals where appropriate. Fundraisers will make it clear that they cannot give financial and legal advice on drawing up wills.
11. The institution will provide all donors with appropriate general reports on their contribution to the institution's goals e.g. an annual Benefactor's Review for regular givers and other donors. It

will also comply with any specified reporting requirements that are a condition of a specific donation, as set out in a gift agreement, in a timely and honest manner.

12. Information about prospects and donors will be kept secure and in compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998).
13. Donors will be informed, through appropriate means (such as web sites, donation forms, and individual discussions) and prior to making a donations, about the institutions policy on publicising donor names and on its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) to reveal, in certain circumstances, the identity of donors who would otherwise have remained anonymous.

## **Fundraisers and Volunteers**

14. The institution will ensure that all those who solicit gifts on its behalf (including volunteers and students) are fully briefed as to the standards of practice and behaviour that the institution expects. Compliance with these principles and any institution specific rules will be monitored on an on-going basis by senior management.
15. The institution and all fundraises will respect the clearly expressed preferences of donors and prospects about the method and timing of fundraising approaches and will ensure that those preferences are appropriately recorded and disseminated across the institution.
16. If the individual is working with an independent third party organisation or individual as a 'professional fundraiser' to solicit philanthropic gifts on its behalf, the arrangement will be subject to the relevant legal requirements and a 'written agreement'. Before soliciting donations a relevant disclosure or solicitation statement must be made available to all prospective donors.
17. Third party fundraisers will not be paid by commission other than in exceptional circumstances and where the conditions set out in the IoF Code of Practice have been met.
18. If the institution uses volunteers or students on its behalf to cultivate and/or solicit gifts from prospective donors then the organisation will comply with its consequent legal duties and the donor will be made aware of the nature of that relationship.

# **GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY**

## **Types of gift we accept and any exceptions**

You The University will accept gifts that:

- Aim to support the University's objects as set out in its charter, namely "for the public benefit to advance education, learning and research through the provision, support and maintenance of a University".
- Aim to support the University's overall vision and strategic aims.
- Fit within our institutional values.
- Support our financial needs as a legitimate component of our income.

The University will not accept gifts that:

- Derive in part or in whole from activity that is illegal.
- Conflict with the core higher education values of impartial, independent research, scholarship and teaching.
- Do not support the University's objects, overall vision and strategic aims.
- Conflict with the University's principles of academic freedom and equality as set out in the Charter.
- Could damage the University's reputation or deter other donors.

- Could cause any damage, including financial, to the University.

### **Policy review and updating schedule**

This Gift Acceptance Policy shall be reviewed annually to determine if amendments are necessary to address changes or new situations.

# **THE COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION (CASE) EUROPE'S ETHICAL PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS**

The University of Reading subscribes to CASE Europe's [Ethical Principles Behind the Acceptance of Gifts](#). These industry standard principles have been adapted and incorporated into our Ethical Fundraising Policy.

CASE Europe's [Ethical Principles Behind the Acceptance of Gifts](#) are as follows:

The development of philanthropy as a vital income stream needs to be guided by clear policies and procedures with regard to the criteria that determine whether any particular gift or donor should be accepted. As independent institutions, it is right that each university makes its own decisions in this area in the light of its own circumstances.

With the growth in the scale of, importance of, and public interest in philanthropy across the UK university sector in recent years, CASE Europe, the Ross Group and the 1994 Group of Development Directors came together to review practice in gift acceptance. As a result, a set of core principles were identified which all universities might helpfully consider as they develop, or fine tune, criteria and processes to reflect their particular structures and priorities.

The 10 principles are:

1. Universities should seek philanthropic support which is aligned with their values, strategic goals and financial needs, as a legitimate, sustained and vital component of their income.
2. Ethical guidelines for the acceptance of such gifts in an institution should be available in the public domain.
3. Impartial, independent research, scholarship and teaching are the basis for the furtherance of knowledge. Universities should not accept philanthropic gifts if this is not clearly understood and accepted by all parties.
4. Universities are charitable bodies and must observe the requirements of charity law and other relevant legislation in relation to the receipt and expenditure of funds. Ultimate responsibility regarding the acceptance and refusal of donations rests with the governing body of each university.
5. Where the authority for the acceptance of donations is delegated to the Vice-Chancellor and other senior academics or officers, that authority should be explicit and the responsibility of those accepting gifts to implement the institution's detailed ethical policies and procedures on donations must be clearly understood and consistently applied.
6. Universities should take all reasonable steps to ensure that they are aware of the source of funding for each gift, and have processes in place to satisfy themselves the funds do not derive from activity that was or is illegal, or runs counter to the core values of impartial, independent research, scholarship and teaching.
7. Discussions with potential donors that are likely to give rise to significant public interest, or which raise complex questions with regard to acceptability, should be considered at the earliest

stage possible by the appropriate decision makers who should be fully informed of the purpose and the background to the donation and the source of funds.

8. The legal and reputational rights of potential donors should also be considered as part of any due diligence undertaken in assessing the acceptability of a proposed donation. In this regard, a clear distinction should be drawn between rumour or speculation and matters of confirmed fact or legal finding, whilst also accepting that institutions may wish to consider the reputational risks that could be incurred through public perception of any particular donor.
9. Donors must accept and, for significant gifts (as determined by individual institutions), sign appropriate gift agreements to confirm that the management and governance of programmes funded through benefaction rest solely with the university. Individual institutions typically choose, without undermining this core principle, to offer donors opportunities for continuing engagement with the activities they have funded. Universities should employ their standard procedures relating to recruitment, admissions, hiring, promotion, procurement, management and governance for all research, teaching, outreach, capital development, or student scholarship programmes funded by gifts.
10. Universities should have procedures in place for reviewing and reconsidering previous decisions taken in good faith relating to the acceptance of particular gifts if subsequent events or the subsequent availability of additional information require it. The response to such circumstances should be transparent and proportionate to the particular circumstances that have arisen.

## THE FUNDRAISING ETHICS COMMITTEE

**The University considers its relationship with alumni to be a lifelong one and we will look to retain your personal details until you tell us to remove them from our records.**

If The Fundraising Ethics Committee (FEC) is a body established to make final decisions over gifts, whether potential or realised, to the University.

The Fundraising Ethics Committee comprises of the following members:

- Chair of the Committee: A member of the University Executive Board. Unless stated otherwise this will be Professor Robert Van De Noort, Vice-Chancellor
- An ethics specialist
- CEO of Reading University Students Union (RUSU)
- A lay member, for example the Chair of the Annual Fund
- A Dean, for example a Research Dean or a Teaching and Learning Dean
- An Academic, for example a Head of School of the University of Reading

In attendance should be:

- The Director of the Alumni and Supporter Engagement Office
- The Director of the Henley Business School Development and Alumni Relations Office

Its terms of reference are as follows:

1. To ensure that the University operates effective, systematic and proportionate systems for research into donations offered to – or potentially solicited by – the University.
2. For each case brought to the Committee in accordance with the Gift Acceptance Policy:
  - a. To consider any strategic, financial, legal, ethical and reputational issues associated with the gift or proposed gift;
  - b. To determine whether the gift in question may be accepted or, proposed gift solicited.



3. If subsequent events (including the availability of new information) so require, the University may, at the discretion of the Fundraising Ethics Committee, review and reconsider previous decisions to solicit or accept particular donations. The response to such circumstances shall be transparent and proportionate.