

Information about preparing a sponsorship proposal.

Sponsorship links a club with a sponsor in a mutually beneficial relationship and it is not just about money. A good sponsor can add considerable value by, for example, becoming the club's primary promoter. In the longer term, this may be of more value than the sponsorship initially received.

It can be useful to think of sponsorship in this way "Don't ask what your sponsor can do for you, ask what you can do for your sponsor". Remember that donations are different to sponsorships. Businesses or individuals do not expect any commercial advantage in return for their donations.

To get your club going in the right direction, here are a few guidelines to follow when thinking about your club and looking for new sponsors.

Appointing a sponsorship coordinator

The club should consider appointing a dedicated fundraising person or establishing a fundraising committee. Their role is to:

- Decide which of the clubs' projects or activities need additional funding.
- Develop a fundraising plan.
- Identify potential sources of funds, for example, sponsorship or grants.
- Write the sponsorship proposal.
- Ensure the funds raised are used for the designated purpose.
- Maintain relationships with donors, grant agencies and sponsors.

Preparation

Before embarking on a sponsorship drive, the club should identify:

- The type of support, for example, cash, or in-kind services.
- The types of business that could provide appropriate support.
- The benefits offered to sponsors.
- If members of the club have links with any potential sponsors.

The Proposal

The proposal is an offer to do business. It is extremely important that it is a well-presented and concise business document that contains enough information for a company to understand what they are being offered. Be aware that you are not the only club out there looking for sponsors so make sure your sponsorship proposal stands out from the rest.

Tailor the proposal to the individual needs of the company being approached. Do your homework. Find out as much as you can about the business you are approaching, for example, its desired image, products and services, its corporate objective. Writing proposals, contacting companies, and making your approach can be time-consuming. It is important to decide how much tailoring of the proposal will take place to meet the specific requirements of potential sponsors.

Below are examples of typical contents for sponsorship proposals.

- **A cover letter.**
 - Address the proposal to the most appropriate person in the sponsor's organisation.
- **Overview.**
 - Provide an outline of the project and/or the club.
 - What are you asking sponsorship for?
 - What and where does it happen?
 - Relevant statistical information in sponsorship proposals can help the assessor get a picture of the club or event and identify cost benefits.
 - Market demographics define your membership, public audience. Identify niche markets the club can deliver to, as this makes it easy for a product or company to be matched to a particular audience.
- **Objectives.**
 - Outline the objectives of the project and/or club. These will be in your strategic plan.
- **The investment.**
 - Outline the funding amount or in-kind support being sought. What is it going to cost the sponsor and for how long, what is the period of the agreement?
- **Sponsorship Benefits.**
 - This is a critical component. Look to include benefits such as naming rights, promotion strategies, signage, media, brand awareness opportunities, articles in newsletters or websites etc. for 99% of companies, media exposure is an important

part of sponsorship. Wherever possible outline how you can get TV, newspaper, social media (Facebook/Instagram) coverage, as well as community access in the proposal.

- **Target Market.**
 - Outline who the project is aimed at or providing a membership profile. Identify how it matches the target market of the proposed sponsor or how it could benefit them. A successful outcome is more likely if you tailor the proposal to a specific sponsor.
- **Exclusivity.**
 - Detail other sponsor and/or supporters of the project and the club. Make sure sponsors are not in competition with each other.
- **Servicing the sponsor's needs.**
 - Outline how you will cater to their needs. Identify a designated employee or volunteer to be the contact for the sponsor.
- **Evaluation Strategy.**
 - Outline how you plan to evaluate and measure the success of the agreement.
- **Conclusion.**
 - Summarise the proposal, identify a follow-up procedure, and supply contact details.