

Activity Alliance Ethical funding policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the principles and procedures governing the acceptance, evaluation, and potential rejection of donations and funding offers to Activity Alliance. It is designed to uphold the integrity, reputation, and independence of our organisation, while ensuring alignment with our mission and values. The policy aims to provide assurance to our stakeholders - including disabled people, partner organisations, funders, and the wider public - that funding decisions are made ethically, transparently, and in a manner that protects our long - term credibility and impact.

We recognise that accepting funding from certain sources may, despite financial benefits, carry reputational, ethical, or operational risks that could undermine our charitable objectives. This policy provides a framework for identifying and mitigating such risks.

Activity Alliance complies with all relevant legislation including money laundering rules, the Bribery Act and Charity Commission guidance, including terrorism and political activity.

2. Alignment

- We will only accept funding from sources whose values, vision and mission support and align with ours, demonstrate a genuine commitment to inclusion and do not contradict but instead help to further our organisational goals.
- Further considerations that will guide us through the decision-making process on acceptance or decline of funding are detailed in this policy.

3. Activity Alliance commitment

We commit to the following principles in all our fundraising and funding-related activity:

a. Transparency and accountability

- We will disclose sources of funding and identify any potential conflicts of interest.
- We will report on the use of funds and their impact in our annual Impact Report and financial statements.
- If staff, or trustees have concerns that potential or accepted funding may breach the standards in this policy, they are encouraged to raise them through Activity Alliance's Whistleblowing Policy. This ensures concerns can be reported safely, confidentially, and without fear of reprisal, and that they will be investigated appropriately.
- External stakeholders, including members, funders, partners, and beneficiaries, may raise concerns about our fundraising or funding relationships through our Complaints Policy. This ensures all concerns are handled fairly, transparently, and in line with our values.

b. Due diligence and risk management

- We will conduct appropriate due diligence on potential donors and funding partners

- This will include a structured review process considering the donor's and funding partners' track record, public reputation, alignment of their ESG policies to ours, financial history, legal compliance, and alignment with our organisational values. Specifically, we will:
 - evaluate whether the organisation demonstrates a commitment to the rights, inclusion, and wellbeing of disabled people.
 - review public statements, campaigns, products, and services for alignment with the social model of disability and inclusive practice.
 - screen for past or ongoing legal or ethical concerns, including discrimination cases, inaccessible service provision, or negative portrayals of disabled people
 - check for involvement in high-risk industries excluded under our Ethical Considerations (e.g., tobacco, gambling, arms).
 - consult relevant stakeholders, including staff or partners with lived experience of disability, where concerns or uncertainty arise.

Responsibility for due diligence rests with the Leadership team, with support from relevant members of staff as needed. Final decisions on ethically complex or high-risk cases will be escalated to the Board or an appropriate Board subcommittee for review.

c. Independence

Acceptance of funding will not grant donors influence over:

- Our strategy, operations, governance, or programme delivery.
- Any decisions affecting our beneficiaries, staff, or partners.

d. Diversity of funding

- We will actively seek to diversify income sources to reduce financial risk and dependence.
- Our funding portfolio will include support from individuals, companies, trusts, foundations, and statutory bodies, provided they meet our ethical criteria.

e. Recognition and privacy

- We will acknowledge donors appropriately and in line with our values.
- Donor recognition will not compromise our independence or imply endorsement of any company, product, or service.
- We will protect donor data in accordance with GDPR and other relevant privacy legislation.

f. Ethical considerations (Appendix 1) and compliance

- We will use our Ethical considerations, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy, and social justice principles (Appendix 2) to guide us in accepting or refusing of funding.
- We will adhere to:
 - The Chartered Institute of Fundraising's Code of Fundraising Practice.
 - All relevant UK laws and regulations governing fundraising and charitable finance.
- All staff and trustees involved in fundraising will receive appropriate guidance and training on ethical fundraising practices.

4. Handling ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest

Where ethical concerns or conflicts of interest arise:

- They will be addressed transparently through consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the Board.

- Decisions will be guided by this policy, our values, and a commitment to open dialogue and consensus where possible.

5. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board or a delegated subcommittee to ensure it remains current and reflective of best practice.
- Amendments will be made in consultation with relevant stakeholders and with reference to changes in the external environment, legal requirements, or our organisational strategy.

6. Appendix 1

Ethical considerations include:

- Human rights and labour standards: donors or sponsors must have zero involvement in human rights abuses or unethical labour practices including modern slavery, child labour or unsafe working conditions.
- Equality, diversity and disability rights: donors or sponsors must fully respect the Equality Act 2010. Funding will be refused from organisations that discriminate against any protected characteristic or that undermine the rights, dignity and lived experience of disabled people. This includes ignoring legal obligations under the Act, or using patronising or harmful portrayals in marketing.
- Environmental sustainability: partners must show meaningful progress on environmental responsibility, comply with climate-related regulations and avoid practices that cause significant harm to ecosystems.
- Integrity and transparency: all donations must be free from coercion, bribery or corruption. We will not partner with organisations convicted of corporate misconduct or financial crime, and every funding relationship will be openly documented and honestly represented.
- Corporate ethics and responsible branding: we will not work with companies whose public image, branding or marketing relies on exclusionary, exploitative or stigmatising narratives. Organisations that objectify individuals or perpetuate harmful stereotypes will be excluded.
- Product safety and public health: we do not accept funding from industries linked to serious public health harms including tobacco, alcohol or gambling as well as involved in production and selling of arms. We will also carefully vet relationships with manufacturers of high-caffeine or performance-enhancing drinks.

7. Appendix 2

Social justice principles:

A set of values that guide funding decisions to:

- Promote equity, fairness, and human rights.
- Prioritise the inclusion and empowerment of people who experience systemic discrimination or disadvantage.
- Ensure that funding does not contribute to injustice, exclusion, or oppression.
- Actively challenge structures that reinforce inequality and seek to transform them.

Date last reviewed: Sept 2025

Date next review: Sept 2026