

Ethical Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy

Table of Contents

Revision History.....	1
Table of Contents.....	1
1. Introduction.....	2
2. Outhouse Values & Charitable Purpose.....	2
3. Compliance Framework.....	3
4. Ethical Fundraising Principles.....	3
5. Gift Acceptance Criteria.....	4
5.1 Donations Acceptance Limitations.....	4
5.2 Gifts In-Kind / Donated Goods and Services.....	6
6. Due Diligence.....	7
7. Corporate Partnerships & Sponsorships.....	8
8. Vulnerable Donors.....	9
9. Transparency & Accountability.....	9
10. Gift Refusal Protocol.....	9

1. Introduction

Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre is committed to ensuring that all fundraising activities are carried out ethically, responsibly, and in alignment with the organisation's mission and values.

This policy applies to all board members, staff, volunteers, and contracted third parties involved in fundraising or gift acceptance activities.

2. Outhouse Values & Charitable Purpose

Fundraising and gift acceptance decisions will be guided by the core values of Outhouse:

1. **Trust** - We prioritise transparency, honesty, and reliability, fostering authentic relationships within our LGBTQ+ community and with our allies. Everyone is heard, valued, and safe.
2. **Respect** - We value the diverse experiences of all individuals, treating everyone with dignity, kindness, and consideration.
3. **Joy** - We foster belonging and pride, empowering LGBTQ+ individuals to express themselves and find fulfilment.
4. **Inclusivity** - We create a safe and welcoming environment for all LGBTQ+ people and allies, working to eliminate discrimination and marginalisation.
5. **Impact** - We are committed to creating meaningful and measurable change by empowering LGBTQ+ communities and advancing equity and justice.

The charity is governed by a [Constitution](#) which outlines the charitable purpose. The main objects for which Outhouse is established are:

- To establish, operate and provide or secure the establishment, operation and provision of a community and resource centre to promote social inclusion of members of the LGBTQ+ people and those who identify with or support such people;
- To provide information, programmes and services on a non-directional basis concerning physical or mental health and well-being, personal development or disadvantaged and marginalised groups and other services sought or required by the LGBTQ+ community;
- To provide for the relief of poverty or economic hardship for marginalised sections of the community by providing venues for meetings of groups, individuals, facilitators and counsellors and by providing beverages and snacks to disadvantaged members of the community, in each case, without a requirement to generate a financial return for the Company;

- To advance cultural and heritage events, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, lectures, courses and conferences and other facilities on issues relating to sexuality, sexual orientation, identity and gender expression or the LGBTQ+ community; and
- To advance the well-being of the community at large by promoting public understanding and awareness of the rights of and issues affecting LGBTQ+ people through the provision of education and information services about LGBTQ+ people for the general public from the aforementioned centre.

3. Compliance Framework

Outhouse adheres to [The Charities Regulator's Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising \(2017\)](#) and the [Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising](#). These frameworks inform the standards and procedures outlined in this policy.

4. Ethical Fundraising Principles

All fundraising activities must adhere to the following principles:

- Fundraising activities carried out by Outhouse must comply with all relevant laws and the guidelines issued by the Charities Regulator.
- Any communications to the public made in the course of carrying out a fundraising activity shall be truthful and non-deceptive.
- All monies raised via fundraising activities will comply with the organisation's stated mission and purpose.
- Donors and prospective donors have the right to be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organisation, or hired third-party agents.
- Each appeal, or request for funds, shall carry a statement that the donor's donation may be used to support all areas of work undertaken by Outhouse and may not specifically be used to fund the area of work highlighted in the appeal messaging.

- All personal information collected by Outhouse is confidential and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018. Your data is not for sale, nor will it be given away or disclosed to any third party without consent or as provided for by our privacy policy or by law.
- Nobody directly or indirectly employed by or volunteering for Outhouse shall accept commissions, bonuses, or payments for fundraising activities on behalf of the organisation outside of contractual salaries for fundraising staff.
- Fundraising activities should not be undertaken if, in the view of the Board, they may be detrimental to the good name or community standing of Outhouse.

5. Gift Acceptance Criteria

Outhouse relies on donations to achieve its mission. The organisation will accept gifts only if they support our values and charitable purposes and will exercise due diligence in assessing all donations.

5.1 Donations Acceptance Limitations

Donations will **not** be accepted if they:

- Contain unreasonable conditions.
- Are inconsistent with Outhouse's vision, mission, or charitable purposes, or are deemed too difficult to administer.
- Come from donors whose reputation is such that an association would conflict with Outhouse's mission, values, or affect its reputation or community standing negatively.
- Are too restrictive in purpose or not in the organisation's best interest.
- Are cash donations over €25,000 without satisfactory assurance of the source of funds.

Outhouse recognises that ethical considerations relating to donors, industries, and sources of funding can be complex, contextual, and subject to change over

time. Rather than applying blanket exclusions to specific sectors, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis using a balanced assessment informed by *Outhouse's Values (Section 2)* and *Ethical Fundraising Principles (Section 4)*. This assessment may include, but is not limited to, consideration of:

- Alignment with Outhouse's mission, values, and charitable purpose.
- Potential reputational, ethical, or community impact.
- The source and nature of the funds.
- Whether acceptance could undermine trust, inclusivity, or public benefit.
- The proportionality of any potential harm relative to the benefit of accepting the donation.

Some industries, sectors, and/or activities (for example, the arms trade) may present a higher likelihood of ethical or reputational concern and will therefore require particularly careful scrutiny. Such examples are referenced solely to illustrate the nature of ethical incompatibility that may arise and should not be interpreted as implying that such sources of funding would be appropriate or actively considered.

This policy is intended to strengthen impartial decision-making, clarify accountability, and reflect the ethical nuance required in a rapidly changing external environment. By rooting decisions in Outhouse's Values and Ethical Fundraising Principles rather than fixed sector bans, the policy supports consistent, transparent, and defensible decision-making while preserving operational flexibility.

In line with this policy, the standard approval process for donations and partnerships will be followed in accordance with the thresholds and criteria set out in Section 6 (Due Diligence) below. Where timelines are particularly tight, including in the context of Pride or other time-sensitive partnerships, a pragmatic approach may be taken. In such circumstances, the Chair of the Fundraising and Marketing Committee and the Chair of the Board may be consulted to enable a decision to be made within the required timeframe. This approach does not replace or bypass the formal escalation and approval structures set out in this policy. Any such decisions will be documented retrospectively and reviewed in line with standard governance processes.

By default, donations and gifts in-kind will be allocated to the area of greatest need, as determined by the Board through the Executive. Designation of donations and/or gifts for a specific purpose is not accepted unless expressly approved and accepted by the organisation. Donors wishing to designate a gift should contact the *Fundraising, Marketing, and Communications Manager (FMCM)* to discuss the request, which will be considered in line with Outhouse's mission, values, and operational priorities. All gifts without an agreed specific designation will be applied to the area of greatest need.

All donations designated for specific purposes will be recorded and tracked to ensure donor wishes are respected.

Donations will be acknowledged promptly via email or letter.

5.2 Gifts In-Kind / Donated Goods and Services

- Non-monetary gifts (such as equipment, supplies, professional services, furniture, artwork, etc.) may be accepted.
- Management will review all gifts in-kind to ensure they do not create financial or operational obligations disproportionate to their benefit.
- All gifts in-kind will be recorded in financial statements at fair market value, as declared by the donor or, where appropriate, assessed independently by Outhouse to ensure accurate and consistent reporting. Evidence to support the assessment shall be retained for audit and verification purposes.
- The process for accepting gifts in-kind and/or donated goods and services will align with the [Statement of Recommended Practice \(SORP\) for Charities](#).

6. Due Diligence

Initial screening of all donations will be conducted by the *FMCM* or their designee. Donations will be escalated for further review where financial, ethical, or reputational risks are identified.

A donation must be escalated if any of the following apply:

- Potential ethical, reputational, or legal concerns.
- Significant conditions or restrictions are attached to the gift.
- Concerns about the donor's reputation or alignment with Outhouse's values.
- Concerns about the source of funds.
- The donation amount is €25,000 or higher.

Decision-making thresholds:

- **Up to €24,999:** Approval may be granted by the *FMCM*, unless substantial risk factors are present. In the absence of the *FMCM*, approval may be granted by the *CEO or designee*.
- **€25,000 - €70,000:** Escalation to the CEO for review and approval.
- **€70,001–€100,000:** Referred to the Chair of the Fundraising and Marketing Committee.
- **€100,001 and above, or high-risk donations as determined by any reviewer in the chain:** Referred to the Board.
- Renewals or extensions of existing grants, partnerships, or donations that have progressed through the due diligence process previously, where there is no material change in the risk profile of accepting the gift, can be approved by the CEO, regardless of the value.

All decisions, including any escalations or refusals, will be documented and shared with the Fundraising and Marketing Committee at the next scheduled meeting of the Fundraising and Marketing Committee, as listed on the calendar.

7. Corporate Partnerships & Sponsorships

Outhouse welcomes corporate partnerships and sponsorships that support our mission and values and provide clear benefits to the organisation and the LGBTQ+ community.

Corporate partnerships must:

- Align with Outhouse's mission, values, and charitable purposes.
- Present no significant reputational risk to the organisation.
- Not influence Outhouse's independence, programming, or advocacy positions.
- Ensure that any benefit or visibility offered to the partner is reasonable, proportionate, and incidental to the public benefit delivered through Outhouse's charitable purpose. In line with Charities Regulator guidance, Outhouse will consider whether any private benefit to the partner is necessary to secure support and does not outweigh the public benefit of the work supported.
 - In practice, this means that corporate partners may receive recognition or visibility, but only to the extent necessary to secure their support, and such visibility must never overshadow or distort the public benefit of Outhouse's work.

Proposed partnerships will be reviewed by the *FMCM* to ensure suitability and alignment. In the absence of the *FMCM*, this review may be undertaken by the *CEO or designee*.

Higher-risk or higher-value partnerships, or those that may raise ethical considerations, will be reviewed according to the criteria outlined in Section 6 (Due Diligence) and brought to the Chair of the Fundraising and Marketing Committee and, where necessary, to the Board.

Written agreements are required for all corporate partnerships. Reporting structures and obligations will be agreed on a case-by-case basis with the corporate partner.

In all cases, any corporate partnership that includes naming rights associated with any event or activity shall be brought to the Board for review and consideration.

8. Vulnerable Donors

Fundraising staff and volunteers must adhere to Charities Regulator guidance to protect vulnerable donors and avoid aggressive or manipulative solicitation practices.

9. Transparency & Accountability

- Outhouse reports on the use of funds in its Annual Financial Statements and Impact Report.
- Feedback and complaints regarding fundraising are managed according to the organisation's [Feedback, Compliments, and Complaints Policy](#).
- Monitoring and compliance responsibilities are assigned to the *FMCM* or their designee.
- Conflicts of interest will be managed practically, with staff and/or board members declaring potential conflicts when involved in donation or partnership decisions.

10. Gift Refusal Protocol

The *FMCM*, or their designee, will communicate donation refusals.

Refusals will be documented internally and shared with the Fundraising and Marketing Committee, and with the Board where deemed significant.

Where a donation has already been accepted, Outhouse recognises that returning a donation is an exceptional step and will only be considered where it is lawful, appropriate, and in the best interests of the organisation. Any decision to retain or return a donation will be taken with due care and will be clearly documented, setting out the rationale for the decision.

In practice, a donation may only be returned in limited circumstances, including where:

- the terms and conditions of the gift explicitly provide for its return in defined circumstances;
- the law or regulatory guidance requires or permits the return of the donation;
- credible evidence indicates that the donor lacked the capacity to make the donation at the time it was given, rendering the donation invalid; or
- exceptional circumstances arise in which retaining the donation would result in material reputational harm, create a significant moral or ethical hazard, or fundamentally conflict with Outhouse's mission, values, or charitable purpose.

Where concerns arise relating to donor vulnerability, capacity, or the circumstances under which a donation was made, Outhouse will assess the situation carefully in line with Charities Regulator guidance and the Ethical Fundraising Principles set out in this policy. If evidence is received that a donor lacked capacity at the time of donating, the donation will normally be returned. In other situations, including where a donor had capacity but may have been in a vulnerable circumstance, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the best interests of Outhouse, its beneficiaries, and the wishes and needs of the donor.

Where a donation is returned, Outhouse may deduct reasonable administrative costs incurred in processing the donation and its return, where permitted by law and relevant guidance. Any returned donation, including the reason for return and any deductions applied, will be recorded in accordance with Outhouse's financial and governance procedures.