



Ethical Fundraising Policy

Purpose

Trellis relies on the generosity of individuals, trusts, foundations, businesses and statutory partners to achieve our vision of enabling more people to benefit from therapeutic gardening.

This policy sets out the principles that guide how we raise funds and how we decide whether to accept financial support. It aims to ensure our fundraising is lawful, transparent and consistent with our charitable purposes and values.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Trustees
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Anyone fundraising on behalf of Trellis

Our principles

Trellis will ensure that fundraising:

- supports our charitable purposes and mission;
- protects the independence and reputation of Trellis;
- is open, honest and transparent;
- treats all supporters with dignity and respect;
- complies with relevant legislation and regulation;
- reflects our organisational values of inclusion, integrity and collaboration.

Our commitments

When raising funds Trellis will:

- comply with Scottish charity law and guidance issued by OSCR;
- follow the Code of Fundraising Practice;
- comply with UK GDPR and data protection legislation;
- be truthful about our work, impact and funding needs;
- use donations only for their intended purpose;
- respect supporters' communication preferences;
- never apply undue pressure to give;
- respond promptly to complaints or concerns.

Working with supporters

We value every supporter and will:

- provide clear information about our work and finances;
- acknowledge gifts appropriately;
- protect personal information;
- communicate respectfully;
- recognise where someone may be in vulnerable circumstances and act appropriately.



Corporate partnerships and donations

We welcome partnerships that help advance our charitable aims. Before accepting significant donations or entering into partnerships we will consider whether accepting the support could:

- conflict with Trellis' charitable purposes;
- compromise our independence;
- create unacceptable reputational risk;
- undermine the confidence of beneficiaries, supporters or partners;
- expose Trellis to legal or financial risk.

We recognise that not every situation will be straightforward. Decisions will therefore be based on the circumstances of each case rather than applying rigid rules.

Decision making

Where a donation or partnership presents ethical, legal or reputational considerations, Trellis will undertake proportionate due diligence.

Depending on the level of risk, decisions may be made by:

- the Chief Executive;
- the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair;
- the Board of Trustees where the matter is novel, significant or potentially contentious.

The reasons for significant decisions will be recorded.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed.

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring fundraising activity is carried out in accordance with this policy.

All staff and volunteers involved in fundraising are expected to understand and follow these principles.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if legislation, regulation or organisational circumstances change.

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Created by:	Fiona Thackeray, CEO
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Donation Acceptance Framework

Purpose

This framework supports staff and trustees in making proportionate, consistent and transparent decisions about accepting donations, sponsorships and partnerships. It should be used where a gift or partnership raises ethical, legal or reputational considerations.

The aim is not to eliminate all risk, but to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of Trellis, our beneficiaries and our charitable purposes.

Guiding Principle

Trellis will normally accept donations that support our charitable purposes unless there is a compelling reason why accepting the gift would not be in the charity's best interests.

Decision Framework

Before accepting a significant or potentially sensitive donation or partnership, consider the following questions:

1. Is the donation lawful?

- Is the source of the funds legal?
- Can Trellis lawfully accept the donation?
- Are there any concerns regarding fraud, money laundering or other criminal activity?

If NO or uncertain: Seek further advice before proceeding.

2. Does the donation support Trellis' charitable purposes?

- Does accepting the donation align with our mission and values?
- Will the donor respect Trellis' independence and decision-making?
- Are any conditions attached to the gift acceptable and achievable?

If NO: The donation should normally be declined.

3. Could accepting the donation create significant reputational risk?

Consider whether accepting the donation could reasonably:

- undermine public trust in Trellis;
- damage relationships with beneficiaries, supporters, funders or partners;
- conflict with our values or charitable purposes; or
- create wider ethical concerns.

Not every reputational risk means a donation should be refused. The likely impact, available evidence and potential benefits should all be considered proportionately.



4. Is accepting the donation in the best interests of Trellis?

Consider:

- the potential benefit the donation will bring to beneficiaries;
 - any legal, financial or operational risks;
 - whether risks can be managed appropriately;
 - whether declining the donation would better protect the charity's long-term reputation and independence.
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Decision Making

Level of decision	Examples
Routine donations	Accepted through normal delegated authority.
Significant or unusual donations	Reviewed by the Chief Executive, with due diligence undertaken where appropriate.
Contentious or high-risk donations or partnerships	Referred to the Chair and Board of Trustees for a decision.

Where significant ethical considerations arise, the reasons for the decision should be recorded.

Our Approach

Trellis recognises that every situation is different. We will consider each donation on its individual merits rather than applying blanket exclusions.

Our decisions will always seek to balance:

- delivering maximum benefit for the people and communities we support;
- maintaining public trust and confidence;
- protecting the independence and reputation of Trellis; and
- acting in accordance with our charitable purposes, values and legal responsibilities.