

Sponsorship

When you are organising a community project or event, as a non-profit organisation it is likely that you will need assistance from outside funders and sponsors to make it happen. Being successful in obtaining sponsors is all about creating a relationship with the organisation you are asking for sponsorship from, and letting them know how they can benefit from the sponsorship arrangement.

SPONSORSHIP LETTERS

Before you start

- Decide who you are going to approach – it can be a good idea to approach organisations with similar interests or those who are in your local community and are likely to want to support a local project or event.
- Decide what you will give your sponsors in return for their support. For example – will they be mentioned as sponsors in your newsletters, press releases, flyers, & website etc? Will they be given free tickets or entries to your event? Will they be allowed to have a presence (sponsor tent etc) at your event? Will they have signage acknowledging them as a sponsor at your new community facility? *
- Decide what levels of sponsorship you are seeking – major sponsors usually give support in significant cash contributions, lower level sponsors may provide products or services worth smaller amounts.
- It can be a good idea to call potential sponsors first before sending a letter – that way you can establish a relationship in person and you can address your letter personally using a real name.

* *It may not be a good idea to promise a mention in the media to all sponsors - no paper is going to list all sponsors.*

Writing your letter

- If you have already spoken to the organisation, address your letter with the appropriate person's name, and start the letter with "as per our phone conversation on ..." – that way they will know that it is not just another cold-calling unknown organisation.
- Get right to the point – ask for the sponsorship in the first paragraph.
- Be positive about your organisation – potential sponsors don't want to hear that you are desperate for money, they want to associate themselves with successful organisations and projects.
- Remember that sponsorship should be presented as a great opportunity for a company – emphasise what great exposure or other benefits they are going to get from supporting you.
- Give specific details about your event or project – what, where, when, who etc.
- Provide a list of sponsorship options that they can consider (on a separate sheet can be helpful).
- Let them know what the next step will be – when you will be following up with a phone call etc.
- Make sure you sign off from one person only – not a "committee", as they will want to know specifically who to contact if they want to get in touch for more information. Make sure you leave your contact details as well!

Suggested letter format

Paragraph 1 A brief description of your organisation and your project or event, plus the sponsorship you are asking for.

Paragraph 2 More in depth detail about your organisation, examples of past successes or projects etc.

Paragraph 3 The levels of sponsorship you can offer.

Paragraph 4 Repeat what you are asking from them.

Paragraph 5 Thank them for their time, state how they can get in contact with you, and when you'll be in touch to discuss the letter.

FULFILLING YOUR SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT

What happens after your event? It is important that you ensure that you deliver what you have promised your sponsor(s) when you negotiated the sponsorship contract. For example if you promised that photos for the media would be taken in front of the sponsor signage/ advertising at your event - make sure that this has been done and that the media know to use these images.

SPONSORSHIP MEETINGS

When meeting potential sponsors face to face it is a good idea to consider the following points:

- Make sure the person(s) attending from your organisation are "decision-makers" – you don't want to lose any positive momentum from the meeting if the person attending has to relay information back to the committee and then come back to the sponsor with a decision.
- Send them details of what sponsorship packages you are offering beforehand so they have something to mull over and you are not going in "cold".
- Be prepared – they are likely to want to know who else is involved, who else has been approached to sponsor, and if any previous sponsors (for events) are renewing their support.
- Bring relevant material with you – e.g. if you are offering advertising space in your brochure or newsletter, bring a sample of these along.
- Don't be afraid to get straight to the point and ask for what you want, and also to negotiate. They may come back with an offer that differs from what you originally proposed – you need to be able to think on your feet and decide how you can both work together to get what you want.
- Finish the meeting by stating what will happen next – will you be sending them a contract, will you be phoning to follow up or do you need more information from them?
- Be gracious and thankful!

See the links box at the bottom of the page for a link to a sponsorship contract template.

Information prepared by



LINKS / WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.exult.co.nz
www.better-fundraising-ideas.com
www.agreementtemplate.org (sponsorship agreement template)

*For more information or help you can also contact your local Community Development Planner at Venture Southland:
143 Spey Street, Invercargill
Ph: 03 211 1400
enquiry@venturesouthland.co.nz
www.southlandnz.com*