

Sponsorship

Supporting clubs and societies with sponsorship

With a growing onus on clubs and societies to be self-sustaining coupled with a growing interest in reaching the student market there are more and more sponsorship opportunities for student clubs and societies opening up. Whilst this has great potential benefit there are also key issues to consider in managing this process.

Introduction

External organisations sponsoring clubs and societies has been a growing trend over the last few years. While this is to be welcomed in bringing much needed funds into student opportunity provision there are also important considerations that come with external sponsorship.

Managing external sponsorship requests and contracts is now an ever more challenging operation. This includes managing conflicts of interest with union commercial activities, ethical considerations, contractual requirements to name but a few.

This guide aims to shine the light on a number of unions who have approached the issue of sponsorship in a variety of different ways.

There is no right or wrong way to manage sponsorship activity. Finding a level of control that you feel comfortable with and that is approved by the executive team and board of Trustees is imperative.

Developing external sponsorship

If you don't already have a programme of sponsorship or you are looking to support your clubs and societies to deliver sponsorship the guidance below will give you some hints and tips.

Firstly you need to look at the internal environment that you're operating in. Look into:

- What commercial considerations do you have to think about? Does your students' union operate a bar? Would they want competition through external advertising
- Are there any companies for ethical reasons you wouldn't work with? Check past union policy to see if you have a ban on advertising any particular organisations
- What views do your officer team have? What does your societies council or sports federation think? Consider what internal consultation you need to do.

Once you've scoped out your position internally there are some additional things you should consider:

- What relationships with external organisations already exist? If you've got big graduate recruiters based near you it's likely someone within the institution will already have a relationship with the organisation. How can you utilise their connections.
- Think about who would be interested in sponsoring your clubs and societies? Look at who currently advertises at your freshers fairs, has student deals on and/or would want business from students. These will be good places to start.

Once you've looked into the key points above developing or amending your current

sponsorship policy and having it approved through your union council and Trustee board will be important in ensuring they're happy with your risk management processes.

The case studies in the following pages will help you think about what process you want to put in place to support and manage your student groups in obtaining and fulfilling contractual obligations around external sponsorship.

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If you have any questions about this guide or would like to suggest any amends please contact rosie.hunnam@nus.org.uk



