

Sponsorship Guide

How to secure sponsorships for your student group

Introduction

This guide has been produced to help committees who are looking to secure sponsorship for their respective Student Group. The premise for this guide is to help you gain sponsorship by suggesting a process which you should go through, reminding you of the responsibilities this entails, and ultimately protecting your student group.

Within this guide are a few notes about sponsorship, the questions you should consider when approaching a potential sponsor and establishing an agreement. Also included are some suggested methods of sponsorship and also a step-by-step guide through the process you should undertake to make your sponsorship agreement official.

At the back of this guide you will find the following forms:

- Sponsorship Letter template
- Sponsorship Proposal form
- Sponsorship Contract form

After all of these have been done (and signed by us), an Income Request **must** be submitted on our student group finance system. Remember nothing is official until it has been approved by the Students' Union. Please send all documents to the relevant staff contact email and/or : su-societies@qmul.ac.uk.

Important things to consider

Below are some key things to consider when looking to establish sponsorship for your group:

Sponsorship is a two-way thing

Nothing in life is free! You must remember when seeking sponsorship that any agreement you come to will be a two-way thing. You and your group will be expected to honour obligations in order to maintain the sponsorship. Sponsors are sometimes demanding a lot more to part with their cash now than they used to, so don't expect to get something for little or even nothing and consider what you feel comfortable with.

Keep it simple and realistic

The more straightforward your sponsorship agreement, the easier it will be to uphold. Don't enter into an agreement if you are not confident that you and your club or society will be able to honour your end of the partnership. Remember, not everyone in your club and society will share your commitment, so think of your members and what they will be prepared to give in return for sponsorship. Remember; not fulfilling

commitments will harm your group and the Students' Unions reputation, which will in turn effect the chances of gaining future sponsorship.

Be in it for the short haul

Your committees and members will change each year, as a result, what you are prepared to do for sponsorship, and indeed what you need to gain from it will vary from year to year. It can be risky to commit to lengthy sponsorship agreements, as in the future they may not seem such a good deal. Our advice would be to seek agreements on a yearly basis, as it is much easier to renew a short-term contract you are happy with than break a long term one which no longer suits your needs.

Seek common goals

As sponsorship represents a partnership, it is best to approach potential sponsors to whom you know you can offer something genuine in return. Think about companies or businesses which you and your club or society are regularly in contact with, or those who have similar aims to yourselves.

Save yourselves time

More than likely your sponsorship proposals will be very similar. Once you have your first one, keep it! Then use it as a generic template which you can amend and adapt for other potential sponsors. Larger student groups may want to consider having different tiers of sponsorship, e.g. Gold, Silver and Bronze, with different sets of proposed activity for different prices.

What the sponsor can do for you

It's not all about the money! Although a financial contribution is what most societies will seek from their sponsor there are more varied ways in which a sponsor can aid your society.

Provide finance

The most obvious contribution a sponsor can make to your society is to give you money in return for advertising or use of their product or business. There are other initiatives such as a referral scheme where your group is given an amount per head, or percentage of profit from any business you direct towards them.

Provide kit or equipment

A sponsor may provide kit, clothing or equipment for your group in return for their name being displayed on it or another arrangement such as being present at events equipment supplied is used at.

Discounts

If you and your groups are regular customers of a particular business, then you may be able to negotiate sponsorship in the form of a discount. This could be money off equipment or supplies ordered from a specific shop, a reduced admission price to events when taking all of your society along, or a discount when hiring specific services or facilities

Offer facilities or venue

If your society has specific equipment or facility needs that cannot be met by the Union or the University, then effective sponsorship for you may take the form of an agreement for the use of a more tailored venue. A company may be willing to let you use their venue in return for advertising or your involvement in their other activities.

What you can do for the Sponsor

It is important to remember that as a society you can offer much more to potential sponsors than just a t-shirt with their logo on it. Affiliating with large organisations and playing kit sponsorship may be highly prized in business and professional sport, but there is a chance that your sponsors will not see it as such an effective marketing tool at university level. So, be prepared to think outside the box and use the strengths of your particular group to find something that can benefit both your society and any potential sponsors.

Advertising

Helping to get a company's name into the University and the community is the most accepted form of sponsorship. This has traditionally been done through displaying the sponsor's logo on playing, training or social kit but this is where you need to think creatively. Other initiatives could be possibly displaying company banners or promotional material at club/society events, having sponsors attend your events, not just on a stall promoting themselves but doing something interactive and adding something to it. Or you could contact your members on their behalf, which may be desirable if you have many members or your society is relevant to their organisation.

Attendance

As a collective, the business brought by just the members of your society can give businesses quite a boost. Arranging to hold events with potential sponsors, or simply ensuring your members use the sponsor's service or products regularly could be deemed a significant contribution to a sponsorship agreement.

Aiding with promotions

Enthusiastic, motivated and vibrant people like you can be great ambassadors for businesses or companies. If your club/society is of an artistic nature, an effective form of sponsorship may be to agree to perform at or be involved in a company's events or promotions. Just offering the services of your members to help publicise your potential sponsors could prove valuable.

Involvement in activities

The experience and knowledge of your society is another valuable commodity and you may be able to offer this to potential sponsors for the benefit of your group. For example, if you are working with an external venue, you may be able to get the use of their facilities at a reduced rate if you agree to offer your experience to help with their other activities, such as coaching community groups.

What not to do

In addition to the advice listed above there are also facts which you must be aware of when looking for sponsorship.

No contract, no sponsorship

This guide and the steps identified in it are designed to safeguard you from unfair and unreasonable sponsorship tie-ins. For your sponsorship to be official you must have a signed agreement. (We have provided templates here: [Sponsorship-Contract-Form.docx](#)). It must be signed by your potential sponsor and the relevant staff member from the SU, depending on your student group.

Do not commit the Students' Union to anything

Don't promise anything you can't deliver yourselves. For example, promising access to the Students' Union marketing channels or allowing sponsors space at the fresher's fair. Even if it's through your table, this is not allowed. Also, don't promise anything on behalf of any other student groups, even if it's a joint agreement, clearly define your responsibilities separately.

No signature, no sponsorship

If the contract is not signed by the relevant member of Students' Union staff, then any deal you have struck is not recognised by the Union and as such you will be entirely liable for any shortfalls resulting from the agreement.

Maintaining Your Agreement

Signing a sponsorship contract is the start of a commitment and it is important that you do your best to maintain your agreement with a sponsor. The more pro-active you are in working with your sponsor the more likely they are to work with your group in the future. Honouring your commitment is vital to this, but doing a few extras also helps. A thank you letter when the agreement is signed or when money or services are received is a good start, as are pictures of events and examples of sponsor's money, logos, or donations in action.

Step By Step Guide

To help you through the process of finding and securing sponsorship we have produced a step-by-step guide. This guide takes you through the recommended six steps you should follow to obtain sponsorship for your club or society.

1. Find your sponsor

The first step is to identify potential sponsors. Think about companies you use regularly, those to whom you can offer something in return or simply local businesses who may welcome the exposure.

2. Introduce yourself

Once you have identified a suitable sponsor, the next step is to introduce your club or society to them. The most effective way of doing this is to send a letter (or email) including a proposal detailing who you are and what you are after. You can find templates of both these documents at the end of this guide which you can amend to suit your own student group.

3. Prepare your proposal and talk to us

Remember to keep your proposal simple and realistic, this is just an introduction after all. Once you have completed these documents we recommend to notify the relevant staff member at the Students' Union. They will check your proposal and your potential sponsor to ensure that your plans do not contravene Students' Union rules or put unnecessary strain on your group.

4. Discuss with the sponsors

Once you've been given the green light by the Union, the next step is to discuss your proposal with your sponsors. Think about how you want to do this, face to face (definitely if they are local/small), over the phone or by email. You want to give yourself the chance to discuss other options that may not have been considered in your original proposal. If you are happy with both what the sponsor is offering you and what your club or society is offering them in return then progress to step 5.

5. Complete the sponsorship agreement

Fill in the sponsorship agreement detailing all you have agreed when meeting with the sponsor. It's important that you make include as much detail as possible in case there are any later issues with your sponsorship. You can find the form here: [Sponsorship-Contract-Form.docx](#) .

6. Get it Signed

Lastly, to make it official you need to get your agreement signed. The first signature you need is that of the sponsor, to ensure they are happy with the agreement. Then you need get the agreement signed by the relevant staff member, as this will mean that the Union recognises your agreement. It is good practice to send the final sponsorship agreement with both signature to all parties. You should keep the original in your society records. This will be useful when dealing with the next sponsorship or when handing over to future committees.

7. Fill in an Income Request

Fill out an Income Request on the Student Group Finance System. Make sure you attach the final agreement, including both signatures. Once we have these then finance will invoice the sponsor for the money they have promised you! Sometimes it can take sponsors a while to pay so keep track of your budget and get in touch with the Students' Union if you have any questions.

The Forms

We have added two templates below for you to use for sponsorships. If you want to use this, all you need to do is look for the *[italic type]* and replace it with the details it asks for. The first one is a proposal email and the second one is a proposal form. You can amend this as much as you want to suit your group and needs.



Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union

Students' Union Hub, 329 Mile End Road, London, E1 4NT

tel: 020 7882 8030

web: www.qmsu.org

[INSERT DATE]

[SPONSOR NAME]

[SPONSOR ADDRESS]

RE: SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY– *[INSERT CLUB/SOCIETY NAME]*

Dear [Sir or Madam, OR NAME OF CONTACT IF KNOWN]

My name is *[YOUR NAME]* and I am the *[YOUR ROLE]* of the Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union *[YOUR CLUB OR SOCIETY]*. As with any student group we want to provide the best experience possible for our members and to do this we need the support of external parties. With this in mind we are currently looking into potential sponsorship avenues for the *[2025/26]* academic year.

Attached to this letter is a brief document giving you a bit more information about *[YOUR CLUB OR SOCIETY]* and details of sponsorship opportunities with us. These details include suggestions as to what you can do to help us and equally what our group can do for your business.

If you are interested in working with us during the coming year, or would just like some more information, do not hesitate to get in touch with us to discuss things further, or perhaps to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ROLE]

On behalf of *[INSERT CLUB/SOCIETY NAME]*

[INSERT CONTACT DETAILS]

Sponsorship Proposal



Queen Mary, University of London
Students' Union

Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union Students' Union Hub, 329 Mile End Road, London, E1 4NT tel: 020 7882 8030 web: www.qmsu.org

[YOUR GROUP NAME]

1 [YOUR GROUP NAME] Background

[Give an overview of your student group. Sponsors like to get a bit of background information such as how it fits into QMSU, when it was founded and why. They also like to hear more about your goals and aims and what your year ahead is looking like. Highlight why your group matters to your students.]

2 Past achievements of the [Your club/society]

*[some examples: Awards / Titles won. Large events / trips – people attended, money turned over.
Money raised for RAG. Community / partnership work
Successfully supported candidates in SU elections (shows influence)]*

3 Aims for this academic year

[Your aims and objectives. Anything relevant to the potential sponsor]

4 What the [YOUR GROUP NAME] can do for you

[The benefits of them sponsoring you.]

5 What you can do for the [Your club/society]

*[What you plan to do with the sponsorship (if it's something specific)
How they can help you if it's not financial (providing equipment, discounts etc..)
How it will benefit your members and club / society]*