

Ethical guidelines for fundraising in Norway

The Norwegian Fundraising Association - The Norwegian Control Committee for Fundraising

Why are ethical guidelines for fundraising organizations necessary?

The Norwegian Fundraising Association's member organizations and organizations registered in The Norwegian Control Committee for Fundraising are dependent on public support to conduct their activities and reach their objectives.

These principles are agreed recommendations that the Norwegian Fundraising Association and The Norwegian Control Committee for Fundraising wish to see as a basis for fundraising in Norway. The purpose is to strengthen public confidence in the organizations.

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure the donors' interests and to ensure that the organizations behave in a manner that creates and maintains the confidence of the donors.

Five principles for good fundraising practices

These ethical guidelines for fundraising are based on the International Statement of Ethical Principles in Fundraising (APF and EFA).

1. Respect

Respect in the encounter with the donor is essential to maintain a positive reputation for fundraising. A gift is always voluntary and it is the donor that sets the terms.

- All fundraisers must behave in a respectful manner and avoid what can be regarded as pressure towards the potential donors
- Aggressive fundraising methods and campaigns must be avoided
- Organizations should always obtain consent for further contact with the donor
- If someone wants to exempt themselves from being contacted by the organization, this must be respected
- If a donor, within reasonable time, requires repayment of a gift or withdraws a promise of a gift, this must be respected
- If a donor wishes to remain anonymous, this must be respected
- The organizations must respect the donors' wishes to reduce any negative experiences among the public
- Photos used in connection with the fundraising work must relate to the actual situation being described. The organization must clearly state if this is not the case
- Where possible the organization should obtain permission to use a picture provided by the person depicted
- People should in image and text be described in a dignified manner by the organization and its partners
- Be extra considerate to minors and vulnerable people.

2. Clarity

Clarity is important to avoid misunderstandings. Clarity creates confidence that the money is fundraised in an ethical manner and that the gift/money goes to the stated purpose. In all fundraising, the organization and the purpose must be clearly indicated.

- Do not use names or slogans that can be confused with already established campaigns or organizations
- In any fundraising campaign where organizations personally address individuals, the fundraiser must be equipped with a visible identification card. The identification card must show the fundraiser's name and organization. Fundraisers must also be able to show a formal valid ID-card upon request
- When fundraising over the telephone, the name of the fundraiser, call centre and the organization represented must be stated. The fundraiser should also be able to provide the name of a contact person in the organization
- When recruiting new donors, they must be clearly informed about the organization's practices with regard to future requests for information and offers regarding participation in fundraising activities
- Agreements that commit donors to give more in the future must be in writing
- In an agreement it must be clearly stated that the donor may denounce it at any time, so that any obligation ceases
- In sponsorship/buddy schemes it must be specifically stated whether the sponsorship applies to a specific person or a group of people
- It should be clearly stated whether the organization fundraises to the organization in general or whether it is for a particular project. If the highlighting of the general work mentions examples of projects it must be clearly stated that these are only examples
- Specific goals must be illustrated through a project that will provide a comprehensive understanding of how the funds are used, such as land, people, projects, etc. A comprehensive understanding is created through relevant, truthful and easily understood information. It should also be clear where one may find more information about the project
- If several organizations have a joint campaign, all of the organizations' names, addresses, phone numbers and logos must be displayed. Exceptions are when the organizations have a common fundraising campaign secretariat. In such cases it is sufficient that the organizations' name and logo, and the Secretariat's address and telephone number is displayed
- In street fundraising campaigns, position lists agreed upon between the organizations must be respected
- The organizations should try to avoid carrying out major fundraising campaigns at the same time
- The organizations should follow the quarantine recommendations during the time of the annual TV-campaign (TV-aksjonen)
- If an organization receives a gift that is obviously meant for another organization, the donation must immediately be transferred to the correct organization. In doubt, the donor must be contacted to determine whom the gift is meant for.

3. Transparency

Transparency is essential to create confidence and trust in the relationship with the donors. The organization must be open about all matters, both in relation to financial and organizational/managerial matters.

- The organization should be able to clearly account for all revenues and costs
- Any person may demand to have access to the organizations' annual accounts and auditors' reports
- Donation boxes should be emptied in the presence of at least two people
- If several organizations have a joint campaign, the distribution ratio must be publicly available
- If projects have a maximum demand, a statement of how the organization will use any excess funds must be available.

4. Organization

The organization, the implementation of fundraising campaigns and the structuring of the organization itself are prerequisites for a clear, credible fundraising approach. The organizations work with values that are managed on behalf of the donors. It is therefore essential that there are procedures in place and provisions that reduce the risk of inappropriate conduct.

- Donors must have attained the age of majority, or have the consent of their parents or guardians
- If the fundraiser is from a lower grade than grade 5 in primary school, then the fundraiser must be supervised by an adult
- The organization should consider taking special precautions when minors are involved in the fundraising. Fundraising campaigns aimed at children below 18 years are not allowed
- The organization must follow The Marketing Control Act's guidelines when it is an external company or any other external party's task to fundraise money
- The Marketing Control Act's section regarding payment for goods, services or other products without prior agreement must be followed
- If the fundraising campaign after a planned and necessary initial phase does not give profits within a reasonable time, the campaign must stop
- Every organization should have guidelines for managing gifts in the form of real estate, securities, household goods, bequests, etc.
- Every organization should have procedures for how to handle questions and complaints
- It should be easy for anyone to find out where and how one can make a complaint against the relevant fundraising organization
- The organization should have its own board. The board shall have regular meetings, at least twice a year
- The organization must have an external auditor
- The organization should have guidelines for the implementation of any fundraising campaign, for the control of funds and the management of these
- The board or an individual member of the board should not have commercial or economic interests, or otherwise be involved in the organization's activities in a manner that may question the person's impartiality or independence in relation to the decisions taken or the activities carried out.

5. Credibility

Credibility is related to the organization's management of funds and the communication of information to donors about the finances and technical aspects of fundraising.

- All organizations must have guidelines and a strategy for their own fundraising work
- The organization's fundraising policies, different fundraising forms and methods of fundraising, as well as the management of gifts must be described in the organization's guidelines and strategy
- The fundraising organization must not in its external communication use formulations that claim that there are no administrative and fundraising costs and thus give the impression that the fundraising is free
- Earmarked funds must be used only for that specific purpose. In the event of a change in the circumstances the donor must be notified and offered a refund or a transfer of money to another cause. The funds will be used according to the regulations of The Foundations Act
- The organization has the right to refuse gifts or partnerships that are not in accordance with the organization's values or way of working
- If the cost of accepting a gift is not in reasonable proportion to the size of the gift, then the organization should reject it
- If the organization is unable to use the gift, product or service, it must be rejected
- If there is uncertainty about whether a project will be carried out or not, then the information about what the money in such case will go to must be provided
- If the collection of clothes and other goods do not go directly to the needy, but for example, is sold, this must be disclosed
- Information about the organization's fundraising goals and results must be available on the organization's website.