

Sponsorship can be a good way for a community group or not-for-profit organisation to access revenue, services or goods - either over a period of time or as a one-off - to support an event.

Sponsorship can be defined as:

A relationship between a provider of funds, resources or services and an individual, event or organisation which offers, in return, some rights and association that may be used for commercial advantage.

In return for that revenue or those goods and resources, a group or organisation offers exposure, positive image, profile and publicity. This need not be high profile or wide exposure publicity. Corporates often value local profile, or causes with which there is an obvious connection with their core business.

The difference between partnership and sponsorship lies both in the longevity of the relationship and in the nature of the corporate's commitment. *Partnership* involves both organisations *working together* to meet a common goal, where *sponsorship* may involve a corporate *supporting* a community organisation to meet the community organisation's goal, which will also benefit the sponsor.

Approaching sponsors or partners for support for your event can increase the amount of cash or resources available to stage your event and/or reduce entry charges. You can also approach businesses for support in administering or organising your event. Support may be cash or it may be in-kind (also known as contra) whereby the sponsor offers you goods or services. Sponsorship is different from philanthropy – sponsors expect something in return for their money. Before approaching potential sponsors consider what might be in it for them.

- Good corporate citizen – Naming rights, Logos on publicity material, acknowledgement at opening etc.
- Advertising and promotion – signage around venue, Logos on material, opportunity to display product
- Sense of involvement with event/community – corporate volunteering, preferred ticket packages – staff rewards etc.
- Access to particular markets – distribution of literature, display space etc.
- Corporate entertainment – private viewing, preferred ticket packages
- Sales – exclusive sale rights at event/s (particularly food suppliers)

Offer a range of packages and options for potential partners.



Critical Success Factors

Considerations in approaching sponsors

- The trends in sponsorship include a more strategic focus in which sponsoring organisations develop long term relationships with community organisations and events, often involving employee time and effort rather than cash.
- Sponsors are looking for “a good fit” between the event/organisation/issue and their own corporate image.
- Sponsors are also looking for evidence of sound business management and of well thought out long term plans, including clearly defined roles for the sponsor and for the receiving organisation; and identification of the expected inputs and anticipated outcomes for each party.
- Sponsors have specific needs including clear communication throughout the process, troubleshooting where required and extensive reporting after the event. A simple thank you goes a long way.

Above all sponsors need to feel that they are receiving value for their money or effort in terms of their original motivation for providing sponsorship.

Source The Allen Consulting Group

Writing a Sponsorship Proposal

As with a partnership, you should write a formal (but brief) proposal to an organisation from whom you are seeking sponsorship. This could be in the form of a letter, but may need to be a more formal proposal if you are seeking a large amount of support. You should include:

- Outline of your organisation (you want to tell them how important your work is and how professional you are).
- Outline of the project or activity you are seeking sponsorship for and the benefits that will arise for the community (make some connection to the nature or location of their business).
- Outline of the specific benefits to the corporate in sponsoring your organisation (particularly include details of any publicity or *exposure* the project and sponsor will receive).
- Describe how the sponsor will be acknowledged and thanked for their support.

