

What Sponsors Want

A sponsorship is not about businesses being nice to a not-for-profit for the sake of being nice.

It should always be viewed a business relationship, one which should be mutually beneficial. For the not-for-profit, there should be a financial return (or the equivalent – free premises, products or exposure, for example).

For the business, there needs to be a commercial or reputational advantage.

When you make a pitch to a potential sponsor, you need to be able to show them that you can make a difference to their bottom line. If you know what your organisation has to offer, you'll be better equipped to work out what sort of businesses to approach for sponsorship.

There are seven main things sponsors look for:

1. To gain prestige
2. To raise or improve their profile
3. To reward themselves or their friends
4. To gain access
5. To avoid risks
6. To sell their product
7. To target their product
8. To get free advertising

Sponsors want prestige

Are you able to offer a high-profile patron or celebrity supporter for the sponsor to be photographed or associated with? If you're not able to supply a major national figure, what about any well-known local notable who would be a drawcard?



Sponsors want to improve their profile

Most modern companies want to be seen as good corporate citizens – they want to leave potential customers with the impression that they're a business they can feel good about transacting with. Could an association with your organisation help a business create the kind of public profile they want?



Sponsors want to reward themselves and their friends

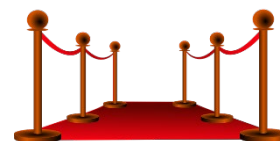
Think about the "special offers" you might be able to offer sponsors and their friends (including their staff and customers). Can you offer seats to your next ball/movie night, admission to your important games, specialist knowledge or training, or tickets to your upcoming concert or function?

**SPECIAL
OFFER**



Sponsors want to gain access

Can you or your members open doors for a sponsor in any way? Do your events attract people national or local big hitters? Do your opinions influence the direction of policy in your area? Do your staff serve on other or committees that could be useful to a sponsor?



Sponsors want to avoid risks

Can they be sure you're not going to embarrass them by collapsing in a cloud of scandal? Can they be sure that your message is not going to provoke a backlash? Can they be sure you're in this for the long haul and won't leave them in the lurch? Ensure that you have the correct risk management plans in place.



Sponsors want to sell their product

Are you popular? Do you have a lot of members or supporters, or access to a larger (or different) audience than they do? Will your supporters be influenced by your recommendation? Try to prove to a sponsor that your followers and supporters are a suitable target audience for their product.



Sponsors want to target their product

Are you focused or work in a single sector of the community? Are you identified with a particular age group or geographic area? If so, then you should know the businesses that have their markets in those areas or are relevant in these sectors.



Sponsors want to get free advertising

Do you feature in the media often? Have you got any guaranteed celebrities or even near-celebrities to pull media to your events? Is your media team or PR department able to work the system to get bonus coverage? All of these things are valuable and quantifiable.

