[ORGANIZATION]
Sponsorship Policy

Definition

Sponsorship is a business relationship between two organizations. In this case it is between the [ORGANIZATION] and traditionally corporations but it could also be extended to government organizations. These corporations or government organizations look for marketing and community relations opportunities in exchange for money, products or services, and they want corporate recognition for their involvement.

Purpose of Policy

1. Set out the criteria and decision making process for sponsorships of [ORGANIZATION] activities.

Overall Policy

[ORGANIZATION] may solicit and accept sponsorships for events, programs and operations within the terms outlined below. Sponsorship monies are deemed a desirable form of revenue diversification which allows [ORGANIZATION] to keep membership dues low and event fees affordable while contributing to the operational funds of the organization. [ORGANIZATION] may consider in kind, indirect and monetary sponsorships. Note, the [ORGANIZATION] will not be issuing charitable tax receipts in return for sponsorship funding.

Decision Process

The [ORGANIZATION] Board of Directors is ultimately accountable for the sponsorship policy and for approval of individual sponsorship agreements. However, successful sponsorships are based on relationships. Event organizers and committees shall be free to solicit, accept and negotiate most sponsorships without delay of taking decisions to the national board. The decision process is therefore divided into two types:

1. Sponsorships limited to events or single program actions (E.G., support for the Annual Conference) totalling no more than $10,000 and in full compliance with the sponsorship policy.

   The decision is delegated to the Executive Director or appropriate committee chair(s).

2. Sponsorships of any size involving exclusivity, a length of three years or more, an amount exceeding $10,000 or any doubt about compliance with sponsorship policy.

   The Board of Directors, using its normal decision process, makes the decision, and its decision is final. Sponsorships shall be recommended to the Board by staff or committee chair(s). All sponsorships shall be reported to the [ORGANIZATION] Board, within regular event reporting or status reports, so that a database can be maintained and potential major sponsors identified.

Who to Accept

Only reputable individuals and organizations whose image, product or services do not conflict with [ORGANIZATION]'s mission or values may be considered as sponsors. There is no obligation to accept any sponsorship offer. [ORGANIZATION]'s long term reputation and credibility always takes precedent over short-term monetary needs.
[ORGANIZATION] may enter into discussions with any government or crown agency with jurisdiction in Canada, or [ORGANIZATION] members without the scrutiny noted below for private and nonprofit organizations.

While each potential sponsorship agreement will be considered on its merits, and judgement and discretion will characterize the decision making, the following questions will always be raised:

- Would this association be a good fit with [ORGANIZATION]’s image?
- Does the sponsorship conflict with our values?
- Does the sponsorship suit our overall strategy?
- Will this sponsorship help us realize our objectives?

Ethical filters that help determine a desirable sponsor are:

- Environment and health.
- Disclosure and accountability.

Research on behalf of [ORGANIZATION], particularly in choosing which organizations to proactively approach, will concentrate on those areas unless the theme of the event or program makes another focus more relevant.

For much small sponsorship, usually linked to an event, it is not unreasonable to research the organization sufficiently to know its values or its record on many possible ethical filters. However, the organization contact shall be asked about likely issues and their response documented.

A company may be rejected if the corporate representative refuses to answer a potentially relevant question. Not every question need be asked of every potential sponsor, and in many cases none of these questions will be relevant.

The [ORGANIZATION] representative shall preface any questions by noting the [ORGANIZATION], as a national charity, must withstand extra scrutiny. The questions are asked to fulfill due diligence requirements. If an organization representative is later found to have misled [ORGANIZATION], [ORGANIZATION] has the right to cancel the agreement.

Sponsorship shall be reviewed with more rigor and detail where the risks to [ORGANIZATION]’s credibility and integrity are higher, ie national or multi-year agreements. In such circumstances, information obtained solely from the potential sponsor is rarely sufficient. It may be sufficient in combination with public information. Eg Corporate Social Responsibility standings published in Report on Business or inclusion in Ethical Funds portfolios. If no such public information is readily available, research is required. Any sponsorship question may be raised with the Board between meetings if staff or committee chair wishes to draw on a wider knowledge and perspective available from Board members.

It is unfair to the [ORGANIZATION]’s volunteers and agents, and to the potential sponsor, to put time into an arrangement which has no hope of acceptance. [ORGANIZATION] will not continue sponsorship discussions with any organization once that organization, its parent or subsidiaries is found to be engaged in:

- Criminal activity
- Sourcing from slave or child labour

To ensure that [ORGANIZATION] is perceived as an organization welcoming to everyone involved in land
conservation, [ORGANIZATION] shall not enter into sponsorship discussions with organizations that have a primary focus on:

- Party politics
- Religious activities (faith based Corporate Social Responsibility coalitions would be eligible as sponsors)

The following activities require additional rigour in screening the organization for a [ORGANIZATION] sponsorship:

- Sourcing of products or labour in repressive regimes.
- Resource extraction
- Degrading sex or violence
- Production of land mines, chemical weapons, arms or munitions or promotion of nongovernmental use of weapons.

The company would be eligible, for example, if it were active in improving conditions in a repressive regime, or received only a small percentage of its revenue from one of the above activities.

Significant media coverage (preferably from several sources) noting ethically problematic activities is sufficient rejection if the [ORGANIZATION] representative deems it credible enough to the land conservation community that [ORGANIZATION]’s image will be hurt by association.

Confidentiality

It could damage to [ORGANIZATION]’s reputation if discussions with an inappropriate sponsor became public knowledge. Also, [ORGANIZATION] shall not be the source of any public information about rejected sponsorships. To reduce liability and maintain relationships in case details change in the future, rejections shall be kept confidential. The information will normally be known only to the staff or the committee chair, and the Board if it was involved.

Scope of Sponsorships

Timing: Program and operational sponsorships may be negotiated for any specified time period. Relationships that are anticipated to exceed three years require a review at least every three years. Event sponsorship may be for one event or a related series of events.

Number and Size: For small events and specific aspects of [ORGANIZATION]’s operations, having only one or two sponsors makes it easier for each sponsor to receive sufficient recognition. Several sponsors shall be preferred for larger events and programs, unless the sponsorship is sufficiently significant to enter into discussing of branding the event or program with a corporate or product name. The total amount eligible for sponsorship shall be based on the full cost of the item including all related overhead. All event and program cash sponsorships shall include a charge of 10 – 15% to be applied to operational costs.

Benefits and recognition

Operational and program sponsors shall be recognized in ongoing ways such as the web site, member communications and literature related to the sponsored program. Recognition is limited to display of the sponsor’s name and logo, a few words of description and a link to the sponsor’s website. Additional recognition such as the use of product names, banners, advertisements or special promotions shall involve the provision of
additional resources to [ORGANIZATION]. [ORGANIZATION] staff and/or Committee chairs shall develop a schedule of fees for such promotion. This schedule of fees shall require Board approval in instances where the fee from any one sponsor exceeds $10,000. Complete recognition levels for Operational Sponsors can be found in Appendix I.

Event sponsors shall be recognized only in connection with the event, which may include any advance publicity, programs, [ORGANIZATION] web or e-bulletin announcements, event signage, oral thanks etc. Events accepting more than one sponsor may assign recognition levels depending on amount or amount range. This may be done by linking sponsors directly to a portion of the event, e.g. reception or by identifying levels e.g. platinum, gold, silver, and bronze. The [ORGANIZATION] national office shall collect information on such recognition levels from organizers to avoid unintentional inconsistencies. [ORGANIZATION] may establish common names and ranges for sponsorship levels with generic benefits applicable to each level of an organizational sponsorship.

Programs and events may be named after sponsors providing 60% or more of [ORGANIZATION]’s total related costs including overhead and share of operational costs. Such naming shall always be time-limited and require advance Board approval.

In no circumstance will [ORGANIZATION] become involved in a situation that requires it to endorse a sponsor’s product. [ORGANIZATION] shall recognize that members and the general public will assume [ORGANIZATION] has researched its sponsors and decided that the company and its products represent the highest ethical and “green” standards. A prominent disclaimer shall therefore accompany each sponsorship recognition, noting that [ORGANIZATION] thanks its sponsors for their support but does not endorse their products or services.

Sponsors wishing to promote their support of the [ORGANIZATION] may use the name, logo, URL (live linked where possible), in accordance with contract terms regarding advance approval of the specific content and wording from the [ORGANIZATION]. In the absence of a signed contract, sponsors may not use the [ORGANIZATION] name or logo in any public material. Any unauthorized use makes the existing sponsorship agreement void and disqualifies the organization from further [ORGANIZATION] sponsorship until and unless the Board determines that eligibility has been restored.

[ORGANIZATION] will not grant exclusivity extending beyond a single event without a full examination of the benefits to the [ORGANIZATION]. Large companies requesting exclusivity must:

- Be funding a minimum of 75% of the total related costs and share to be applied to operational costs.
- Specify the corporate division, if applicable of any exclusivity request.

Promotion

[ORGANIZATION] shall develop a promotional piece outlining why [ORGANIZATION] is a desirable recipient of sponsorship. The promotion shall be aimed at organizations wishing to enhance their reputation by supporting a respected national land conservation organization and/or wishing to reach individuals with special influence on land conservation in communities across Canada. This piece shall be added to the web site and fundraising tool kit and kept current. Event organizers and committee chairs may supplement the general piece with the benefits of their program or event e.g. audience size and demographics.

Terms

All sponsorship agreements over $10,000, and or over three years or that include naming rights shall be confirmed in writing by the Chair of the [ORGANIZATION] and co-signed by the sponsor’s representative. For sponsorships that do not meet this threshold the agreement will be signed by senior [ORGANIZATION] staff or
the committee chair.

Staff or the committee chair shall draft an agreement consistent with the size and the scope of the sponsorship. In most cases a short letter with sign-back will be sufficient. The agreement shall be directly with the sponsoring company, not any agent or broker.

Even such short agreements shall include a clarification of the planned use of the support, minimum recognition the sponsor shall receive, the need to have any use of each other’s logos approved in advance, and the statement the [ORGANIZATION] does not endorse sponsor’s products or services. A sample agreement is attached for a short-term sponsorship (Appendix II). [ORGANIZATION] shall develop a template contract for long-term sponsorships.

Sponsorships exceeding a single event or action shall be confirmed by contract. In addition to the items stated above, the contract shall clarify relevant aspects of:

- When the sponsor will provide payment, or make promised in kind goods or services available.
- Who the main contact(s) will be for each party.
- Any interim or final reporting agreed upon, how the agreement shall be monitored and when reviewed.
- When the agreement terminates, and how early termination is effected.
- Any minimum or maximum amount, and how determined, and any exclusivity commitment.
- How any failure to meet commitments will be handled. (e.g. what happens if the event is cancelled)

Update Process

Given changes in societal views and values as well as monetary values, the [ORGANIZATION] Board shall review its sponsorship policy at a minimum of every 24 months.

Approved [DATE]
Appendix I: Operational Sponsorship Levels

This paper refers to partner or operational sponsorships. These financial contributions are made to enable the corporations to show support to the [ORGANIZATION] and to align with an organization that shares similar policies and practices. These funds, less the real cost of the benefits back to the corporation, are considered discretionary money and can be used by the [ORGANIZATION] for any purpose within approved budgets and policies. This policy does not cover event/program sponsorships, grants or contribution agreements; funds that are made available to the [ORGANIZATION] for specific purposes as specified by the funder.

Bronze - $1,000 - $2,499
- Thanked in [ORGANIZATION] newsletter
- Name used in the following year’s promotional package mailed to over 300 business and community leaders

Silver - $2,500 - $9,999
- Permission granted to list [ORGANIZATION] logo on your corporate website for the period of the sponsorship (min 1 year) subject to advance approval of final content and wording
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] website for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Thanked in [ORGANIZATION] newsletter
- Name used in the following year’s promotional package mailed to over 300 business and community leaders

Gold - $10,000 - $24,999
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] mobile display for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Permission granted to list [ORGANIZATION] logo on your corporate website and other corporate publications for the period of the sponsorship (min 1 year) subject to advance approval of final content and wording
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] website for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Thanked in [ORGANIZATION] newsletter
- Name used in the following year’s promotional package mailed to over 300 business and community leaders

Platinum - $25,000 - $99,999
- A permanent token of acknowledgement to be displayed in your place of business
- Invitation to the Annual [ORGANIZATION] Gala Dinner, including 4 tickets, and an opportunity to address and business leaders from across Canada
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] mobile display for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Permission granted to list [ORGANIZATION] logo on your corporate website and other corporate publications for the period of the sponsorship (min 1 year) subject to advance approval of final content and wording
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] website for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Thanked in [ORGANIZATION] newsletter
- Name used in the following year’s promotional package mailed to over 300 business and community leaders
Visionary - $100,000+

- Sector exclusivity in area of Partner Sponsorships
- A permanent token of acknowledgement to be displayed in your place of business
- Invitation to the Annual [ORGANIZATION] Gala Dinner, including 6 tickets, and an opportunity to address members and business leaders from across Canada
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] mobile display for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Permission granted to list [ORGANIZATION] logo on your corporate website and other corporate publications for the period of the sponsorship (min 1 year) subject to your advance approval of final content and wording
- Your corporate logo and/or name listed on [ORGANIZATION] website for the period of the sponsorship (minimum 1 year) subject to your advance agreement of final content and wording
- Thanked in [ORGANIZATION] newsletter
- Name used in the following year’s promotional package mailed to over 300 business and community leaders
Appendix II: Template for Short-Term Sponsorships

(date)
(sponsor contact)
(sponsor company name and address)

Dear (sponsor contact)

I am pleased to confirm the (sponsor organization) and the [ORGANIZATION] will be co-operating in the (event/program).

Thank you for agreeing to sponsor this activity by provide in ($ and/or in kind contribution) by (timing). Your participation will help ensure its success. Your support will be recognized by (insert recognition agreed to). If for any reason (the event/program) does not take place as planned, you will be contacted to discuss appropriate changes.

Please continue to discuss any details with (insert [ORGANIZATION] contact name) at (insert contact number). Kindly let us know if you cease to be the main contact person at your company. I am available at (insert contact number) if you wish to talk generally about [ORGANIZATION] or about other sponsorship opportunities.

I must confirm that as a sponsor, you will not in any way imply that [ORGANIZATION] has endorsed your products or services and you will seek advance approval for each and any use of the [ORGANIZATION] logo, such as on your website. [ORGANIZATION] will do the same with respect to any use of your logo.

After signing below, please fax this agreement to (insert [ORGANIZATION] representative) at (insert [ORGANIZATION] fax number).
Again, welcome to the family of [ORGANIZATION] sponsors. I hope your involvement now is the start of a long and mutually beneficial relationship with [ORGANIZATION].

Sincerely

__________________________
(signature)
[ORGANIZATION], Event Chair

_____ ____________________________ _______________________
(Date) (name of sponsoring organization) (signature of representative)