

SIGBI ETHICS POLICY

It is important to ensure that any sponsorship or partnership on any Soroptimist projects meets with the “high ethical standards” demanded by the Soroptimist aims and objects. These standards should relate to products, investments, employment, and management.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- a. **Human Rights** – particularly the status of women and children
(Cultural differences should not be confused with what are HUMAN RIGHTS)
- b. **Employment** – are they a good employer with a good Health and Safety policy? *(There are cultural differences and in some countries child labour is the only source of income for a family. Clubs will need to ensure that the conditions the child is working under are acceptable and hopefully some schooling provided)*
- c. **Equal Opportunities** – this is looking at the status of women, diversity of race, gender and religion. *(Cultural differences are appreciated but clubs should endeavour to ensure that where practical conditions and opportunities are equal)*
- d. **Investments** – do they have investments in industries which harm individuals or the environment. *(For example; the arms, oil and tobacco industries – but it should be borne in mind that some countries in the Federation may well be reliant on some of these industries)*
- e. **Donations** – are they acceptable *(it is possible to refuse a donation should this compromise the aims and objects of Soroptimism)*

PREPARATION AND PROCESS

It is important that a process of due diligence is undertaken.

Risk Assessment

A clear process of risk assessment will identify at an early stage the element of risk involved in any activity. Working with a company brings with it many benefits but there is almost certainly an element of risk. Research will highlight some issues and action can then be taken at an early stage. For example:-

- Inappropriate or negative PR
- Clash between the company and the aims of Soroptimism
- Endorsement of poor products, services or working practice
- Accounting practices and possible misuse of funds

Research

Investigate the following –

- **Will the company give to an NGO which is NOT a charity** (*Soroptimist International is not a registered charity. Some clubs have established charities for fundraising, but this is not SIGBI*)
- **Does the company or individual have a history of giving to and/or interest in your particular project, event or purpose?** (*The company may well publish guidelines. Where a national company check if the local branch has the ability to give local donations*)
- **What is the public perception of the company and its brand?**
- **Will association with the company be an asset?** (*The Soroptimist International “brand” is valuable and should be protected so any partnership should be of mutual benefit*)
- **Does the company work in equal partnership with organisations?** (*This is important in terms of control over the project or event*)
- **Ensure there is no conflict with the Ethics Policy.** (*This could affect the standing of Soroptimism.*)
- **Financial status of the company** (*where there is a large sponsorship it may be prudent to establish the financial security of the company prior to any approach*).

The Approach

- **Identify the potential sponsor.** (*Ensure they are interested in your project or event whether this be a company or an individual*)
- **Approach the right level in the company** (*this will depend on the size of the company as to the levels of decision and NEVER use a duplicated letter*)
- **Remember companies plan ahead – 6 – 12 months** (*local companies may differ but all sponsorship proposals should be planned well in advance*)
- **A clear proposal with costings** (*Set out what you need – expertise, financial support or volunteers -, why and what you are prepared to give the sponsor. An individual sponsor will also require this information)? Could a template be included here?*)
- **Remember VAT** (*within the UK this is applicable to some elements of an event or sponsorship- please check with your Accountants*)
- **Sponsorship is a two-way relationship (not patronage).** (*Identify what you believe will appeal to the sponsor, his staff and his business*)
- **Where appropriate involve the sponsor.** (*Beware not to let go of control of the project or event*).
- **Prepare an agreement document** (*This sets out the arrangements – financial, organisational and responsibilities - between both parties and is important for an event as this may cause it to be cancelled if the sponsorship is not fulfilled and prevents fraud*)

The Media

- **Joint marketing** (*The ability for this will vary within Clubs, Regional/National Associations and Federation*)
- **Encourage press to attend the event or see the project** – (*beware of “cheque presentations” seek some other attraction such as good photographic opportunities and interest stories. This will not always be possible for some of the Clubs, Regional/National Associations within the Federation*)

Success Factors

It is good practice to assess the success of a sponsorship for both parties which will help strengthen relationships for the future. Establishing strong relationships with potential and existing sponsors is a way of promoting Soroptimist International locally, nationally and internationally.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND SPONSORSHIP CHECK LIST

RESEARCH Into Sponsors	Most of the questions are relevant to both companies and individuals. Please be careful using personal knowledge only.	Yes	No	Don't know (then check)
Giving				
	Do they give to NGOs – non charities?			
	Do they give locally?			
	Do they give nationally?			
	Do they give internationally?			
	Do they have grant guidelines?			
Credibility				
	Do they have a good reputation?			
	What is the public perception of them?			
	Has there been adverse media coverage?			
	Are they financially strong?			
Ethics				
	Do they have good Human Rights policy?			
	Do they have an active Equal			

	Opportunities policy? (real or apparent)			
	Are you being asked to endorse a product?			
	Do they have an ethical investment policy?			
Expectations	Do they want something in return? If so what			
	Is this an equal partnership?			
	Have you got control of the finances?			
	Will you give complimentary tickets?			
	Does the Sponsor want to be involved?			
Media	Do you have good contacts in local papers/radio?			
	Do they have good media contacts?			
Planning	Have you prepared a plan for the event?			
	Have you put in milestones?			
	Have you fully costed the event?			
	Do you have sufficient volunteers?			
	Do you have contingency plans?			
	Do you have an agreement with the sponsor?			
	Does the agreement include timescales?			
	Do you have the right contact?			

RISK ANALYSIS

1. How many Yes/No ticks – this is worth looking again and making sure you are comfortable with the sponsorship.
2. Ensure the responsibilities of both parties are covered in the agreement.
3. Confirm the payment date
4. Sponsor involvement

REMEMBER

1. Taxation on sponsorship
2. REPUTATION is easily lost and hard to regain

