

# BIG CHANGE.

## Ethical Fundraising & Partnerships Policy

### 1. Purpose and Commitment

This policy outlines Big Change's commitment to ethical fundraising and partnership practices, ensuring that all funds raised align with our mission, values, and dedication to creating positive and lasting change. Our goal is to prioritise partnerships and contributions that uphold the integrity of our work and the well-being of the communities we serve, particularly young people.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all fundraising and partnership activities conducted by Big Change, including individual and corporate donations, grants, sponsorships, and partnerships. It is intended to guide staff, volunteers, trustees and stakeholders in qualifying and evaluating potential funders and ensuring our fundraising practices are transparent, ethical, and mission-aligned.

### 3. Fundraising Principles

We are committed to the following principles:

#### 1. Mission Alignment

- All fundraising efforts must directly support our mission and values.
- We will only accept funding that enhances our ability to deliver impactful, positive change.

#### 2. Integrity and Transparency

- We will foster respectful, open, and honest relationships with Donors and Partners, emphasising long-term engagement and communication.
- We will communicate our fundraising practices openly with stakeholders.
- Donors will be informed about how their contributions will be used.

#### 3. Accountability

- We will ensure all fundraising decisions are made through a structured, transparent, and inclusive process.

#### 4. Avoiding Harm

- We will not accept funds from industries or entities that engage in practices harmful to young people, the environment, or under-served communities.

#### **4. Acceptable Fundraising Practices**

To maintain ethical integrity, Big Change will:

1. Conduct due diligence to evaluate the ethical practices of potential funders.
2. Seek funding from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government entities that share our values and commitment to creating a positive impact.
3. Prioritise partnerships with socially responsible organisations committed to sustainability, equity, and social justice.
4. Ensure that all communication with donors is honest, respectful, and transparent.

#### **5. Exclusion Criteria**

Donations will not be accepted from or partnerships made with individuals or organisations where their reputation or brand will adversely affect ours and therefore undermine our work. The reputability of individuals and partners will be considered as part of our qualifying process, and the know your customer and due diligence checks.

We will not solicit or accept donations from individuals, organisations, or industries that conflict with our mission or values. These include, but are not limited to:

1. **Extractive Industries:**
  - Fossil fuels, mining, deforestation, and industries contribute significantly to climate change and environmental degradation.
2. **Industries Harmful to Young People:**
  - Companies that profit from or promote unhealthy habits, such as tobacco, alcohol, gambling, or products/services negatively impacting mental or physical well-being.
3. **Exploitative or Oppressive Practices:**
  - Companies or entities with a record of exploiting under-served groups, engaging in unethical labour practices, or violating human rights, criminal sources. or associated with the sale of pornography.
4. **Misaligned Mission or Reputational Risk:**
  - Entities whose practices undermine trust or conflict with the values of Big Change, such as promoting misinformation or engaging in unethical advertising.

Due diligence desk research and “know your customer” checks will be carried out with all potential partners at the contract stage; however, we do not have the capacity to be able to research and monitor the complex relationships of our funders’ subsidiaries, supply chains, and investments.

#### **6. Decision-Making Process**

All potential funders will be evaluated using the following process:

1. **Initial Screening:**
  - Assess the funder's alignment with our mission and values.
  - Review exclusion criteria to identify red flags.
2. **Due Diligence:**
  - Research the funder's history, industry, and practices using public records, ethical indexes, and stakeholder input.
  - Identify any controversies, risks, or practices harmful to young people or the environment.
3. **Evaluation and Scoring:**
  - Develop a scoring matrix to assess alignment, impact, and risk.
  - Prioritise funders with strong mission alignment and ethical practices.
4. **Finance Committee Review:**
  - Present any contentious decisions or funders rejected to the Committee.
  - Decisions will be documented to ensure transparency and consistency.

### **Avoidance of conflicts of interest**

Big Change employees, board members, and volunteers involved in fundraising activities will avoid any situation that may result in a real or perceived conflict of interest that could compromise the best interests of donors, partners, or the organisation.

### **Rejecting inappropriate donations**

Big Change reserves the right to decline donations that are incompatible with its values, mission, or ethical principles. Donations that may present a conflict of interest or that involve questionable sources will be carefully evaluated by the Leadership Team and, if necessary, by the Board of Trustees, and may be declined.

## **7. Stakeholder Engagement**

To ensure a collaborative approach:

1. Staff and trustees, and where possible our Community and young people, will have opportunities to provide input on fundraising policies and practices.
2. Leadership will play an advisory role, offering guidance while respecting the partnership team's autonomy.
3. Feedback loops will be established to monitor and adjust this policy as needed.

## **8. Monitoring and Accountability**

1. All fundraising and partnership activities will be monitored to ensure compliance with this policy.
2. The Finance Committee will review and update the policy annually to address new challenges, industries, or societal changes.
3. Any stakeholder concerns regarding the ethical nature of a donor will be investigated promptly.

## **9. Communication of the Policy**

This policy will be shared with staff, donors, and the public to ensure transparency and foster trust. It will also be available on Big Change's website and as part of our annual reports.

## **10. Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance Committee and leadership to ensure it remains relevant, comprehensive, and reflective of our values.

By adhering to this Ethical Fundraising and Partnerships Policy, Big Change will maintain the highest standards of integrity, ensuring that all contributions support our mission while respecting the dignity and well-being of those we serve.

Concerns or observations related to potential violations of this policy should be reported in the first instance to the Director of Strategic Partnerships, or any of the Leadership Team with escalation to the Trustees if necessary.