

The Watermill Theatre - Fundraising Code of Conduct

As one of the most respected regional producing theatres in the country, The Watermill Theatre is a registered charity (no. 261430) and is hugely grateful to the many charitable trusts, corporates, individuals and organisations who support its work, on and off stage. We feel privileged that so many people choose to support us.

Commitment to our supporters

Voluntary donations and sponsorships are incredibly important to us. Without the generous support from our donors, we simply wouldn't be able to produce our award-winning shows, engage with our community, create participatory opportunities for people of all ages, run our education and outreach programme, and cultivate the theatre makers of tomorrow. Fundraising activity may also contribute towards running costs and maintenance of our beautiful Grade II listed buildings.

We pledge to make the following commitments to every supporter:

- We will be honest, truthful, transparent and professional in our dealings with you
- We will acknowledge your donation swiftly, as every donation really matters to us
- We will use your donation where it is most needed. Most donations support our artistic programme and/or our work in the community - unless specific instructions are given by you to support other areas of our work
- We will respond to any queries and/or concerns you might have, efficiently and in a timely manner
- We will keep you informed about fundraising campaigns and ways in which to support us in the future by post unless you have expressly told us not to contact you
- We will keep you informed about fundraising campaigns and ways in which to support us in the future by email and SMS, only if you have given us consent to do so (email communication with our corporate supporters differs, please see privacy policy)
- We will respect your privacy and will only release details about your gift with your express consent or if disclosure is required by law
- We may on occasion use publicly available information to ascertain your likely interest in supporting The Watermill Theatre. If we do this, we will abide by ICO guidelines with regards to your rights to be informed.

Commitment to proper and effective fundraising

The Development team is employed to research, solicit and process sponsorship, donations and memberships from individuals, charitable trusts, businesses and public bodies. In addition, the Friends Committee (a volunteer group of around 10 committed individuals) also fundraise on behalf of the theatre. The function of the Development Department and the Friends Committee is overseen and supported by the Board of Trustees.

All those fundraising on behalf of The Watermill Theatre are expected to:

- act in the best interests of The Watermill Theatre
- behave in a professional manner at all times, demonstrating the highest level of integrity
- observe The Watermill's commitment to its supporters, as well as all relevant laws and regulations (*see below, at the end of this document)
- read, observe and regularly review the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice;
- disclose to donors relevant information which may affect the making of a donation
- consider the appropriateness and proportionality of any gift that they are offered by a donor
- decline all personal gifts

Where a fundraiser cannot abide by the above code, s/he should declare this to the Development Director, who can arrange for an alternative representative of The Watermill Theatre to work with the donor if appropriate.

Development department staff must also raise concerns about any donation or sponsorship when they have reasonable grounds for believing that an individual lacks the capacity to make a decision to donate, and must not exploit vulnerable circumstances of any donor.

Statement on accepting donations, membership and sponsorship

The Watermill Theatre actively seeks support from a wide range of individuals and organisations to assist in achieving its fundraising objectives. We consider potential donations and sponsorships on a case-by-case basis and will measure donations and sponsorships (above £6,000) against three principles:

They must:

- support the charitable objectives of The Watermill Theatre
- reflect the integrity of the Watermill Theatre
- not influence The Watermill's artistic, educational or organisational decisions in any way

The Development Department monitors potential donations and corporate partnerships for compliance and risk. Final decisions may be escalated to the Board of Trustees and it is the Board's legal obligation to act in the best long-term interest of The Watermill Theatre. The Board reserves the right to refuse a donation or sponsorship if it can reasonably conclude that its acceptance would be more likely to be detrimental to the organisation.

The Watermill Theatre reserves the right to turn down a donation, membership or sponsorship if:

- the actions or activities of the donor are damaging to The Watermill Theatre, its reputation or its beneficiaries
- the reputation of the donor risks bringing the theatre or its core staff into disrepute by association
- the reputation or activities of the donor risks discouraging audiences or donors
- the donor wishes to exercise influence over creative/educational/organisation policy or activity
- acceptance might give the impression that the donor expects the theatre or anyone associated with it to perform some function or activity improperly, or to confer upon him/her some form of advantage (for example, influencing a tendering process)
- the cost of servicing the sponsorship, donation or membership is greater than its value, or unreasonable in terms of its size or impact on the work of the theatre
- the offer of support is tied to a particular project or activity which, whilst reflecting the theatre's objectives, is nevertheless impractical
- the support consists of goods, services or property which the theatre cannot lawfully use, convert, exchange or sell in direct support of its charitable objects
- the donation is anonymous, as such a donation prohibits a proper risk assessment
- there is suspicion of money laundering
- accepting the sponsorship, membership or donation conflicts with the theatre's legal or regulatory obligations.

For the purposes of this statement, the following definitions should be used:

Sponsorship – payment in support of a core activity, post, production or project in return for specific benefits, which may include entertaining, employee involvement or branding/promotional opportunities. As a rule, sponsorship payments will be subject to VAT. **Membership** – relates to our Patronage schemes including Friends, Benefactor and Circle Member of The Watermill Theatre. Depending on the level of support, these schemes may comprise a benefits value. Any amounts given over and above a benefit value is given freely as a donation and is eligible for Gift Aid (if relevant). **Donation** – a purely charitable contribution which may be made from personal income (and Gift Aid applied, if relevant), or from a personal or family charitable trust, company, CAF or similar schemes.

The term Supporter or Donor applies to any party entering into any of the above transactions.

Additional research and referral to the Board of Trustees will always be undertaken in the case of:

- potential naming rights
- any Company working in an industry that might reasonably be considered high risk or controversial for reputational reasons
- instances where basic level research indicates that the potential donor may have been involved in illegal activity, whether verified or not

The Development department acknowledges the UK government sanctions against certain countries and will ensure that the theatre will be guided by this list (which will change from time to time) and we will only accept funds which can be legally received. The link to the Government website is as follows: <https://www.gov.uk/current-arms-embargoes-and-other-restrictions>

Sometimes the acceptability of a donation or sponsorship changes over time, perhaps because of a change in business practice or because new information comes to light. Where a donation or sponsorship falls into the above criteria, research should be annually updated by the Development Director with any new issues referred to the Trustees.

Advice, Guidance and Process

The Watermill Theatre is a member of The Fundraising Regulator and abides by the Code of Fundraising Practice. We apply key principals and behaviours to our fundraising activity and we are committed to being legal, open, honest and respectful.

For more information, <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/code-of-fundraising-practice/>

*We undertake to comply with relevant law and regulations, in particular:

- General Data Protection Regulation (in relation to handling the personal data of any donors)
- The Charities Act
- Tax and Gift Aid legislation
- Charity Commission guidance (in relation to seeking views on whether to accept or refuse a particular donation)
- The Bribery Act 2010 (in relation to bribery offences)
- Fundraising Regulator, Code of Practice

For information on how the organisation handles your personal data, please refer to our [Privacy Policy](#)

Queries or complaints about any area of The Watermill's fundraising should be addressed in the first instance to Jo Bycroft, Development Director, The Watermill Theatre, Bagnor, Newbury, RG20 8AE or email jobycroft@watermill.org.uk

