

Sponsorship Guide for Societies

Introduction

Looking to gain sponsorship for your society? Great! This guide has been designed to help you understand how to approach sponsors, what to consider before making agreements, and how to make sure everything is done properly — protecting both you and your society in the process.

Sponsorship can be a brilliant way to support your activities, but it's important to go about it the right way. This guide outlines the key steps, offers useful advice, and highlights what you can and can't do.

Key Things to Think About

Before diving into conversations with potential sponsors, take time to reflect on the following points:

1. **Keep It Practical**

Big promises may sound exciting, but are they realistic? Try not to overcommit or agree to anything you and your society can't comfortably follow through with. Sponsorship should benefit both sides — without becoming a burden.

2. **It's About Mutual Benefit**

Sponsorship is never one-sided. You'll likely be expected to offer something in return, such as promotion or engagement. Make sure your society is ready to meet any expectations you agree to.

3. **Start Short-Term**

Society membership and leadership can change from year to year, which means your sponsorship needs might too. It's usually best to keep initial sponsorships short-term (e.g. for one academic year) so they remain flexible and easy to adjust or renew.

4. **Work with Relevant Businesses**

Aim to connect with companies that align with your society's purpose or values. Think local businesses you already interact with, or ones that could genuinely benefit from engaging with students.

What Sponsors Can Offer

Sponsorship doesn't have to mean just handing over cash. Here are some other ways a sponsor could support your society:

- **Money (Yes, Still Important!)**
Funding can help cover event costs, printing, society materials, and more. Just be sure it's in exchange for something clear and manageable from your side.
- **Clothing or Branded Items**
Sponsors might offer society hoodies, t-shirts, or other items with their logo on them. Always check in with the SU to make sure branded clothing follows our guidelines.
- **Discounts and Perks**
Your members might benefit from discounts at a sponsor's business — for example, reduced prices for supplies, services, or even food and drink if relevant to your society's activities.
- **Free Use of Facilities**
Some sponsors may offer access to their spaces — whether that's a room for meetings, a venue for events, or specialist equipment — in return for publicity or partnership.

What You Can Offer Sponsors

Your society has plenty to offer. Here are some ways to show your value:

1. **Help Them Get Noticed**
Displaying a sponsor's name or logo at events, on clothing, or in society materials helps promote them to students and the wider community.
2. **Bring in Business**
If your society uses or recommends a sponsor's services, that can have real financial value. Holding your socials or events at a sponsor's venue, or encouraging members to support them, can be a powerful incentive.
3. **Collaborate on Promotions**
Sponsors may appreciate support with events, marketing, or creative input. Societies with performance, media, design, or social talents can be especially useful in this area.
4. **Share Your Skills**
Some societies have specialised knowledge — whether academic, cultural, or

practical. Offering your expertise (e.g. helping run an activity or supporting a community project) can form a valuable part of the sponsorship.

5. **Support Their Community Goals**

Large companies may have targets for community involvement or charity work. You can help them meet those goals by partnering on fundraising, supporting a local cause, or participating in volunteer initiatives — especially those aligned with the SU's charity priorities.

Things You Can't Do

To keep things fair and transparent, there are a few important boundaries to be aware of:

- **No External Bars or Pubs**

Societies are not allowed to receive sponsorship from bars or pubs outside the University. Wolverhampton SU has its own venues (like Luna Lounge and Walsall Bar), and we expect these to be given first consideration for student events.

- **No Letting Agents**

We don't approve sponsorships with letting agents, as we can't guarantee their quality or support for students. It also risks giving the impression that the SU endorses or partners with one specific agent, which we want to avoid.

- **No Contract = No Deal**

All sponsorship agreements **must** be formalised using our official **Sponsorship Contract Template** (available from the Committee Resource Hub: Funding & Finance). Without this, your sponsorship isn't recognised by the SU.

- **No SU Signature = No Support**

To be valid, the contract must be signed by:

- The Societies & Volunteering Coordinator
- The SU Chief Executive
- A representative from your society
- The sponsor

If you don't have the SU sign-off, the agreement is unofficial, and any issues that arise are your personal responsibility. **Need Help? Just Ask.**

Sponsorship can seem complicated at first, but you're not alone. The SU team is here to support you, check your proposals, and answer any questions. Don't be afraid to get in touch early — especially before agreeing to anything in writing.

Step-by-Step: Securing Sponsorship

Here's a simplified guide to walk you through the full process:

- 1. Explore and Research**

Identify businesses or organisations that feel like a good fit. Local, relevant, and student-friendly are always good signs.

- 2. Reach Out**

Email or message potential sponsors with a short introduction about your society, what you do, and what you're looking for.

- 3. Write Your Proposal**

Keep it clear and achievable. Outline what you're offering, what you'd like in return, and what makes your society unique.

- 4. Speak to the SU**

Before making any commitments, check in with the Societies & Volunteering Coordinator. They'll review your proposal and advise if it meets SU guidelines.

- 5. Meet the Sponsor**

If the SU gives the green light, arrange a chat with the sponsor to finalise terms. You might find new opportunities to collaborate that weren't in your original pitch.

- 6. Complete the Contract**

Fill out the Sponsorship Agreement Template with all the agreed details. Be thorough — clear terms protect both parties.

- 7. Get It Signed and Shared**

Make sure all four signatures are collected (society, sponsor, Society & Volunteering Coordinator, and Chief Executive). Then share the final version with both the SU and your sponsor.