



Accepting Sponsorship Guide Australian Government Charging Framework Information Sheet

Purpose

This guidance is relevant for staff of Australian Government entities within the General Government Sector (GGS) who are involved with sponsorship arrangements¹. In this context, sponsorship means any paid contribution by a non-government organisation to support government activities, in return for negotiated benefits, such as co-branding or promotion. Sponsorship arrangements often involve a long-term relationship between the Australian Government and sponsor, particularly where there is co-branding of a regular event, programme, or on-line service.

This information sheet should be read in conjunction with Resource Management Guide: 302 Australian Government Charging Framework, available at www.finance.gov.au.

Sponsorship considerations

In assessing whether to engage in sponsorship activities, entity staff should consider:

- whether the proposed sponsorship arrangement will be cost-effective², including assessing any changes to programmes, services, processes and/or infrastructure, including on-line systems
- consistency with government policy, including whether the proposed sponsorship arrangement is likely to:
 - impact on the entities capacity to meet its purpose
 - cause offence
 - mislead, misrepresent or deceive
 - involve any real or perceived conflict of interest, with the Australia Government, or the GGS entity
 - imply government endorsement or favourable treatment of the sponsor
- whether the proposed sponsorship arrangement will comply with applicable Commonwealth, state and territory laws, including broadcasting and media; electoral; privacy; intellectual property; trade practices and consumer protection; and workplace relations laws
- seeking legal advice about their capacity to accept sponsorship under their enabling legislation and/or any other relevant legislation that applies to their operations
- the impact of the sponsorship arrangement on programmes, services, and communications, including:
 - not detracting from the effectiveness, performance and integrity of Australian Government communications
 - ensuring that sponsorship meets accessibility requirements and standards, such as web content accessibility guidelines
 - meeting privacy requirements, including in respect to the provision of information to sponsors

¹ It is important to note that some GGS entities might be prohibited from accepting sponsorship.

² The cost to the Commonwealth entity of accepting and administering the sponsorship arrangement should be minor compared to the receipts generated from the sponsorship arrangement.

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- how the entity will continue to meet Australian Government branding requirements, particularly where sponsorship involves co-branding
 - whether the sponsorship arrangement would be likely to create the impression of endorsement, approval or support
 - how to engage with sponsors that compete with the entity or the entities services
 - the appropriateness³ of sponsorship arrangement involving sponsors engaged with:
 - tobacco or alcohol products
 - gambling products or services
 - firearms, weapons or related products
 - human or animal cruelty
 - political activities.

Better practice processes

Entities should:

- develop and publish an entity sponsorship policy and/or plan, if they undertake significant and/or ongoing sponsorship activities, which:
 - lists any programmes, activities, events or communications that can be sponsored
 - clearly details benefits and conditions for sponsorship arrangements
 - identifies sponsorship considerations, such as any sponsorship proposals that will not be considered
 - includes relevant sponsorship processes, communications and timing
 - details relevant compliance requirements
 - states how, and how often, the policy/plan will be reviewed
- implement appropriate reporting, such as annual publication of a list of all sponsors
- document, and actively manage, sponsorship arrangements, including setting out clearly the reciprocal benefits on offer through the sponsorship and reviewing any sponsorship arrangements, at least annually
- wherever possible, use consistent sponsorship agreements or contracts for sponsorship arrangements
- ensure that any sponsorship arrangements:
 - allow for the Australian Government to refuse or withdraw from the arrangement at its discretion
 - provide that the sponsor fully disclose any matters relevant to the sponsorship, such as legal action
- implement a complaints and conflict resolution processes
- develop and implement relevant risk management processes
- have in place relevant approval arrangements, including determining when ministerial approval is required for, or notification of, particular sponsorship
- generally not enter into sponsorship arrangements with organisations that they regulate, unless issues relating to potential conflict are publically addressed.

³ The appropriateness of sponsorship content should be considered in the context of the aims and objectives of the entity. Sponsorship content from one entity may not be appropriate for another entity (e.g. the promotion of alcohol products by the Australian Grape and Wine Authority may be acceptable, but not for the Department of Health).