

Ethical Fundraising Policy

Executive Summary:

This policy guides MCS in making decisions on accepting and refusing donations, managing any risk or conflict around potential donations, and ensuring decisions are consistently made in the best interests of the Charity. The policy aligns with Charity Commission guidance, reflects best practice and makes clear the Trustees' legal obligations and the day-to-day procedures and due diligence that we adhere to.

The policy provides as clear and objective a standard as possible, helping us balance the need to raise funds and ensure potential donations support the Charity's objectives, whilst allowing practical and ethical factors relevant to the specific charity and situation to be considered. In principle, donations to charities can and should only be refused in exceptional circumstances when:

- it would be unlawful to accept them; or
- accepting them would be detrimental to the achievement of the purposes of the organisation as set out in its constitution (with the anticipated damaging needing to be weighed up against the benefit of having the funds available to pursue the charity's purposes).

The policy applies to all types of donation of £1,000 or more made to MCS or our trading subsidiary, M C S Sales. The policy does not apply to non-financial engagement with companies, organisations and individuals or the provision of paid-for services (e.g. the Team Beach Clean days or consultancy services).

The policy outlines 'Acceptance Criteria' (Green List) which support our strategy to actively seek opportunities to work collaboratively with companies, organisations and individuals to successfully achieve shared objectives, including those businesses who are credibly seeking to improve their practices. We strive to ensure a good fit between the funder and the charity, developing partnerships the whole organisation can be proud of.

The policy also outlines 'Refusal Criteria' (Red List) including specific behaviours and activities that are directly contrary to the objectives or agreed policies of the Charity. This includes refusing donations from companies who directly extract and/or refine oil, coal & gas and/or transport it at sea; conduct deep sea mining; exploit the Polar Regions; keep cetaceans in captivity; sell red (5) rated seafood (as per our Good Fish Guide); have breached environmental or planning legislation; have committed a wildlife offence, or persistently pollute the ocean. Where our Charity brand appears on a product we are particularly careful to ensure the values we represent and the trust we have with our supporter audience are not undermined. In addition to these specific criteria, the policy lists a number of industry activities and types which have the potential to impact the marine environment if poorly managed. It outlines the enhanced due diligence procedure which will support decisions being made with care and consideration in these situations.

A copy of the full policy can be requested by emailing fundraising@mcsuk.org