RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Donor Recognition and Stewardship Policy

Policy Volume	Support Services
Policy Chapter	Development & Alumni Policies
Responsible Division	Division Communications and Advancement (DCA)
Responsible Director	Director: Division of Communications and Advancement
Dates of First and Subsequent Council Approvals	(1 January 2003; 1 January 2013;11 June 2020; 19 September 2024)
Policy Approval Pathways	Approval: Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), Budget Executive Committee (BEC), Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP), and Council. Noting: To be served at Faculty Boards, Senex, and Senate for noting.
Revision History: Approved Reviews	2003; 2013; 2020; 2024
Review Cycle	3 years
Next Review Date	2027

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

1.1. Policy Title	Donor Recognition and Stewardship Policy
1.2. Policy Statement	This policy should be read and implemented with the Fundraising Policy and other related Rhodes University policies and governance directives. Rhodes University recognises the importance of acknowledging donors' generosity in supporting the University. Effective donor relations management through recognition and proper stewardship can encourage additional gifts and prompt others to contribute or continue their support.

1.3. Reason for Policy	This policy contains procedures to uphold the University's values and protect its integrity in its dealings with the donor communities. It ensures a transparent, coordinated, and equitable process for accepting current and future gifts and respect for donors' wishes. The University reserves the right not to accept any gifts that may include, but are not limited to: 1.3.1 Gifts from donors who do not share the University's vision, mission, and values. 1.3.2 Gifts that hurt or could potentially hurt the reputation of the University, including inappropriate gifts. 1.3.3 Gifts that are very difficult, impossible, or perilous to administer. 1.3.4 Gifts that create risks for beneficiaries, the University, its staff, and/or students. 1.3.5 Gifts that have not been approved per this policy.
1.4. Policy Objective/s	This policy has as its purpose to: 1.4.1 Ensure proper management and professional administration of institutional donor relations. 1.4.2 Uphold a standard of accountability that illustrates to donors how their contributions assist the University in achieving its objectives and goals. 1.4.3 Develop a consistent donor recognition and stewardship approach within a coordinated and sustained framework. 1.4.4 Ensure that a clearly stated policy of gift acceptance, donor recognition, and stewardship is applied consistently throughout the institution. 1.4.5 Cultivate existing donors and encourage them to continue their philanthropy or to increase their donations to the institution. 1.4.6 Attract new donors by creating awareness and interest. 1.4.7 Create and nurture a positive relationship with donors.
1.5. People affected by this Policy	This policy applies institution-wide to all activities that raise funds or accept gifts on behalf of or using the University's name and branding.
1.6. Who should read this Policy	All staff and students at the University should read the policy or be informed of it.
1.7. Implementers of this Policy	Any Rhodes University staff member, student, or representative of an associated entity who seeks or receives funding or gift in the name of the University.
1.8. Website address/link for this Policy	www.ru.ac.za/givingtorhodes

RELATED DOCUMENTS FORMS AND TOOLS

2.1 Relevant Legislation
2.1.1 Rhodes University Statute (As published under Government Notice 15 March 2005) 2.1.2 Companies Act No. 71 of 2008 2.1.3 Financial Sector Regulation Act No. 9 of 2017 2.1.4 Non-Profit Organisation Act No. 71 of 1997: s 13(5) 2.1.5 Revenue Laws Amendment Act No. 31 of 2005 2.1.6 SARS Interpretation Note No. 113 (dated March 2021) 2.1.7 Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) 2.1.8 Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (or IPR Act) 28 of 2013 2.1.9 Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000 (Section 14) 2.1.10 Protection of Personal Information (PoPI) Act, No. 4 of 2013 2.1.11 Income Tax Act, 1962
2.2 Related Policies
2.2.1 Fundraising Policy 2.2.2 Database Policy 2.2.3 Communication and Marketing Policy 2.2.4 Policy on Naming and Renaming Buildings, Facilities, Academic Units and Structures 2.2.5 Web Policy 2.2.6 Acceptable Use Policy Including Network Policy and Password Policy 2.2.7 Procurement Policy 2.2.8 Guideline to the Rhodes University Purchase Order System 2.2.9 Guidelines for Foreign Payment
2.3 Related Protocols
2.3.1   Brand Manual
2.4 Forms and Tools 2.4.1   Contracts 2.4.2   Donation Reporting Form 2.4.3   Donor Recognition Chart

POLICY DEFINITIONS

NO	TERM	DEFINITION
3.1	Anonymity	The donor's wish for non-disclosure.
3.2	Tax Deductible donations	Donations where tax certificates in terms of Section 18A of the South African Income Tax Act apply.

3.3	Gift Acceptance Principles	Specified criteria for evaluating proposed gifts as directed by an appropriate governing structure within the University. These might include, but are not limited to: 3.3.1 Guidelines to the donations form and practice and, 3.3.2 Compliance with institutional governance, financial instruction, and directives.
3.4	Public Acknowledgement	Public recognition in printed or digital platforms or the University's public exterior space as may be mutually agreed upon by the Donor and the University.
3.6	Third Stream Income	'Third stream income' is all income derived from sources other than public subsidies and student fees for tuition or accommodation. Third-stream income types include donations, research grants, contracted research, consultancy, technology transfer income, research Chairs, sponsorships, advertising, conferences and vacation accommodation, and interest derived from investments.
3.7	Gift Acceptance and Management	The protocols, policies, and processes govern the acceptance and correct (in line with the donor's wishes) use of the gift.
3.8	Gift Acknowledgment	The protocols for executing accurate, timely, and meaningful expressions of gratitude.
3.9	Donor Recognition	Appropriate donor recognition, considering such factors as donors' preferences (for example, anonymity and the format in which their names are presented) and institutional culture and values. Recognition is the public form of donor acknowledgement.
3.10	Reporting and Compliance	Standards, systems, and methods of delivery for demonstrating fiscal accountability—prudent investment and spending in accordance with donors' expectations—to donors, conveying ongoing appreciation, and reporting on the impact of philanthropic support and complying with all of the donors funding terms and conditions.
3.11	Project Leader	Any Rhodes University staff member, student or representative of an associated entity who seeks or receives funding or gift in the name of the University.
3.12	Gift	Any item of value given to the University by a donor who expects nothing significant of value in return other than recognition and disposition of the gift in accordance with the donor's wishes.

3.13	Gift in Kind	Refers to all gifts that are not monetary or financial, such as providing goods or services to the University.
3.14	Good Practice	A standard procedure of acknowledging and recognising the donor, disposing of the gift in accordance with the donor's wishes, and reporting back to the donor on how the funds were used as the donor's requirements.
3.15	Donor interaction	Engagement with a donor across all channels, i.e. verbal, email, written, social, mobile, and web channels.
3.16	Stewardship	Relationship-building and communication take place after the gift has been received. It involves managing gifts, updating donors on the progress and impact of their gifts, and easing donors into the following cultivation process by keeping them involved with the University.

4. PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THIS POLICY

OVERVIEW
This policy regulates the University's third-stream income environment. It provides a framework for accepting and administering all third-stream income to Rhodes University in all forms, including monetary gifts, donations, and in-kind donations. All gifts should be accurately recorded and administered as per this policy. In addition, donor information is essential in ensuring donations are acknowledged and stewarded accordingly. The policy outlines issues such as fundraising-related ethics and stewardship at the University in accordance with its mission and vision and good governance practice. It aims to: 4.1 Assign responsibilities to various persons or structures within the University   4.2 Clarify when gifts are to be reviewed before acceptance   4.3 Outline how donors are/or should be acknowledged for their gifts   4.4 Prohibit acceptance by Project leader/s of any gift, hospitality or other inducements that may influence them in their decision-making responsibilities or that may be seen to influence them in the performance of their duties and responsibilities

5. DIRECTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

5.1 OVERVIEW

As the custodian of this policy, the DCA is primarily responsible for relationship management and stewardship of donors.

5.1.1 The DCA provides advice and support on issues such as gift acceptance and management, gift acknowledgement, donor recognition, and reporting as may be necessary.

5.1.2 The DCA monitors and reports on the implementation of this policy and institutional compliance in the exercise of donor recognition and stewardship activities

5.1.3 Project leaders must ensure that all interactions with donors, including donor contracts and agreements, are captured on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system within seven (7) working days after each donor interaction.

5.1.4 All gifts shall be processed and acknowledged in writing on the appropriate Rhodes University letterhead within seven (7) days of receiving the relevant gift.

5.1.5 Donations made to support a naming opportunity involving a building or the interior space of existing buildings on campus (for example, academic classrooms, faculty offices, library space, lecture halls, and departmental auditoriums) must be contained in an official contract or memorandum of understanding and may only be signed by the Registrar and/or Vice-Chancellor.

5.1.6 Unforeseen circumstances in the future may require the University to alter an original naming agreement with a donor or honouree. If alterations become necessary, the University will seek to honour the original agreement as much as possible, find acceptable alternatives, and negotiate naming designations.

5.1.7 The Finance Division will provide the DCA with access to all gifts received (by all third-stream income streams), the allocated cost centre, and the overall balance of the accounts.

5.2 DONOR RECOGNITION AND STEWARDSHIP PROCEDURE

5.2.1 Gift Acceptance and Administration

Upon receiving a gift, the recipient must capture all interactions on the CRM within seven (7) days. Please note that gifts falling under the categories of Excluded Gifts as defined in the Fundraising Policy (such as token gifts below R1000, non-strategic gifts, and symbolic gifts) are not required to be recorded in the CRM.

Refer to section 3.11 Excluded Gifts and Revenue in the Fundraising Policy for specific thresholds and exclusions.

5.2.2 Gift Acknowledgement and Stewardship

The DCA is responsible for overseeing reporting and compliance with the terms outlined in gift agreements or contracts. If a staff member other than the DCA is better suited to be the primary contact for the donor, Project Leaders must notify the DCA within twenty (20) working days of receiving the gift. Additionally, all contact reports must be recorded in the CRM within twenty (20) working days of such contact.

5.2.3 Stewardship packages

The University categorises gifts from donors, and groups of donors below must be recognised and stewarded according to their contributions as specified in the 'Donor recognition chart'.

5.2.4 Gift Agreements and Contracts

All donations/gifts must be formalised in an agreement to be signed by the donor and the University. All agreements must be captured on the CRM.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Roles and responsibilities of Key personal/Divisions/Faculties/Departments)

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Vice Chancellor	The vice chancellor plays a key role in developing and upholding ethical standards and promoting transparency and accountability in the institution's recognition and stewardship operations.
Director of DCA/Deans/Directors of Affiliated Entities/CHERTL HOD/ SARChi Chairs	Developing and implementing strategies to appropriately recognise donors, supporters, and stakeholders for their contributions to Rhodes University
Development and Fundraising Manager	Collaborate with other Departments/Divisions to integrate recognition and stewardship efforts into the broader strategies and goals of Rhodes University
Alumni & Stakeholder Relations Manager	Collaborating with the Development and Fundraising Manager to coordinate efforts in stewarding donors who are also alumni or stakeholders, ensuring they receive appropriate recognition for their contributions.
Project Managers	Keeping accurate records of projects for feedback to project contributors for reporting and future reference. Maintain and enhance relationships with project contributors over time, ensuring continued engagement and support.

7. CONTRACTS

Area of Concern	Division Faculty Department	Telephone	Email
The DCA aligns all its activities to the Institutional Development Plan (IDP), based on the principles of Advancement and Project Management, within the Funding Cycle and Effective Communication	Director: Communications & Advancement	046 603 8514	dcadirector@ru.ac.za
The Development Unit facilitates third-stream income generation from all donors; (Individual, Government, Corporate, Foundations Trusts, and others.	Manager: Development Fundraising (Vacant)		development@ru.ac.za
The Alumni Relations & Stakeholder Unit facilitates all stakeholder engagement and third-stream income generation	Manager: Alumni Relations & Stakeholders	046 603 8516	alumni@ru.ac.za

from all individual donors, including Alumni and Old Rhodians. This includes reunions and related events.			

8. POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

Rhodes University acknowledges that a policy of this nature may not anticipate every possible issue that may arise regarding donor recognition and stewardship activities. As a result, the University reserves the right to modify this policy as deemed fit from time to time. The next ordinary review of this policy is set for 2027. The review process shall be as follows:

The Director of Communication and Advancement will send a notice to the IPC notifying them of the upcoming policy review.

A notice will be sent to the University Community for policy amendment submissions.

Proposed amendments are tabled to the IPC for consideration.

Amendments are then sent to the Faculty Boards for noting.

Amendments are forwarded to the Budget Executive for review.

After the Budget Executive review, amendments are sent to the Finance and General Purposes committee.

Proposed amendments are then sent to the Senate.

Finally, the amendments are presented to Council for final approval.

Note: The approval pathway includes the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), Budget Executive Committee (BEC), Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP), and Council. For noting, amendments will be served at Faculty Boards, Senex, and Senate.

9. POLICY CONTEXT: RELEVANT DOCUMENTS CITED/CONSULTED/ADOPTED

1	Institutional Development Plan 2023-2028
2	Institutional Sustainability Plan

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Appendix A: Donor Recognition Chart
2. Appendix B: Student Fundraising Form
3. Appendix C: Project Authorization Form
4. Appendix D: Fundraising Process Chart

Donor Recognition Chart

	R5m +	R2m	R1m	R500,000-R999,999	R100,000-R499,999	R50,000-R99,999	R25,000-R49,999	R10,000-R24,999	R5,000-R9,999	R1,000-R,4999	R1-R999
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT											
Thank you letter from Vice Chancellor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■
Thank you letter from the Dean/Director of Communications and Advancement /Director of Institute/ CHERTL HOD/ SARChi Chairs	■	■	■	■	■	☐	☐	■	■	■	■
Thank you letter from the Manager of Development and Fundraising	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	☐	☐	☐	☐
Birthday email from the Fundraising and Development/Alumni office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
RECOGNITION ACTIVITIES/EVENTS											
Guest of Honour at an event hosted by Vice Chancellor	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Reception/dinner hosted by Vice-Chancellor and/or Dean	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Invited to Influential Old Rhodian Dinner/Fundraising gala dinner	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
VISITS AND CONTACT											
Receives an annual visit/call from the Vice Chancellor	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Receives an annual call /visit from Director of DCA and/or Dean/Project Leader	☐	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Receives an annual/call visit from Project Leader/or development personnel	☐	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Receives telephone calls annually/bi-annually	☐	☐	☐	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

FUNDRAISING PROJECT APPROVAL FORM

This form is required for submission of projects for approval to the Director of Student Affairs, for onward transmission to the Development office. It is the responsibility of the Project Leader to complete this form, unless the Project Leader has not yet been appointed, in which case it is the responsibility of the Director (Project Champion or manager as delegated by the director).

Project Name:	
Description:	
Project Champion:	
Project Leader:	
Approval Sought:	

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Background

What is proposed?

Why should the proposal be implemented?

THE VALUE OF THE PROJECT TO THE UNIVERSITY

How is the project aligned to institution's core projects and priority project

Benefits expected from the project

Investment required and ongoing cost to the University

HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

Plan for development phase

Plan for implementation phase

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Source	Amount of Approval Required
Department/Division/Unit/Institute Budget	
University's Reserve	

Student Fundraising Form (Project Approval)

External Funding	
Other	
TOTAL	

SUBMITTED

	Signature	Date
Project Leader		

APPROVALS

	Signature	Date
HOD/Institute/Unit Director		
Dean		

RECEIVED

	Signature	Date
Development & Fundraising Manager		

FUNDRAISING PROJECT APPROVAL FORM

This form is required for submission of projects for approval to the Faculty Board, Unit/Institute Head or Division Director for onward transmission to the Development office. It is the responsibility of the Project Leader to complete this form, unless the Project Leader has not yet been appointed, in which case it is the responsibility of the Project Champion.

Project Name:	
Description:	
Project Champion:	
Project Leader:	
Approval Sought:	

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Background

What is proposed?

Why should the proposal be implemented?

THE VALUE OF THE PROJECT TO THE UNIVERSITY

How is the project aligned to institution's core projects and priority project

Benefits expected from the project

Investment required and ongoing cost to the University

HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

Plan for development phase

Plan for implementation phase

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Source	Amount of Approval Required
Department/Division/Unit/Institute Budget	
University's Reserve	
External Funding	

Project Approval Templates and Guidelines (Project Approval)

Other	
TOTAL	

SUBMITTED

	Signature	**Date**
Project Leader		

APPROVALS

	Signature	**Date**
HOD/Institute/Unit Director		
Dean		

RECEIVED

	Signature	**Date**
Development & Fundraising Manager		

Institutional Fundraising and Related Process

CORE AREAS	PRIORITY PROJECTS	STUDENT AND OTHER PROJECTS
• Ongoing Programmes • Campaigns • Infrastructure Projects OUTCOME General / Broader Appeal	• Isivivane • Institutional Transformation • Centre for Postgraduate Studies • Nano Technology Innovation Centre • Rhodes Sport • Water OUTCOME Targeted Proposals	• IDP Alignment • ITP Alignment OUTCOME Coordinated Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation

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PROJECT PRIORITIZATION AND APPROVAL
- Project Review Committee
- Faculty / Unit / Centre Approval of Projects
- Student and Other Divisional Approval of Projects

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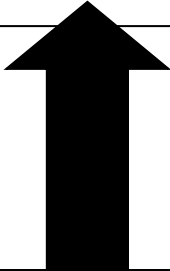
### SUBMISSION TO DEVELOPMENT ON PRESCRIBED FORM
Development Support
- Prospect Research
- Proposal Writing
- Training
- Donor Liaison (Stewardship)
- Compliance and Certification
- Follow Up and Reporting

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4. Sign Form and Concept 3. Dean Signs Off 2. Department Head Signs Off 2. Faculty Member Initiates FACULTY AND AFFILLIATED PROJECTS	4. Sign Form and Concept 3. Director Signs Off 2. Manager Signs Off 1. Student / Staff Member Initiates STUDENT AND OTHER DIVISIONAL PROJECTS

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Identification of Projects Requiring Funding

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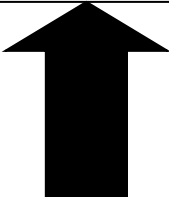
Existing Institutional Planning Systems
- Council Decisions
- Institutional Development Plan (IDP)
- Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP)