Brown University
Division of Advancement
Fundraising Guidelines for Student Groups

Revised: October 22, 2009

As a private university, Brown depends on the financial support of alumni, parents, and other members of the Brown community to achieve its mission. We recognize the importance of maintaining good relationships with those in the Brown family and desire to have a fundraising policy that helps us achieve this goal. In addition, we seek to ensure that all contacts between the University and these important constituents reflect Brown's high quality and excellence.

Student groups have expressed an interest in soliciting philanthropic support from members of the Brown community, and a policy has been in place since 1992 governing these solicitations.

SECTION I: PLANNING FOR FUNDRAISING

When fundraising is an appropriate option?

- Your group has a developed budget and objectives
- Your project is important to the group, tied to group's priorities/mission, and approved by Student Activities and Advancement.
- Your group has been established for 5 years or more and has a pool of alumni from which to seek support
- Other funding avenues have been exhausted **(see list of different funding avenues on page 2)**
- Profits from fundraising will outweigh the costs

How does my group qualify?

There are certain **criteria** that must be met for a student group to be able to utilize the University's professional fundraising services.

1. **The student group is a recognized student group by the office of Student Activities and has a category II ranking or higher.**
2. **Student Activities has determined that the resources requested are not available to the student organization through other channels.**
3. **The student group request for fundraising has been reviewed and approved by Student Activities Office, Advancement, and either the Graduate School Council or the Undergraduate Finance Board as an appropriate activity or cause for funding.**
4. **The group has provided to Advancement a list of all current members and any former members. These individuals have been identified by first name, last name, and class year. If the group is maintaining contact information (addresses, phone numbers, and or email addresses) for alumni and/or information on past gifts to the group, that information has also been provided. Robert Verdi (x3-6585) Robert_Verdi@Brown.edu in Alumni Relations can assist you in developing a list of your alumni and reconnecting you with them via non-fundraising communications and events**.

Once an organization has met all of the above criteria, they must set up a meeting with Amy Bostock Laprey, Director of Direct Marketing and Participation, (Amy_Laprey@Brown.edu, or x3-3358), the liaison between student groups and the Development Office.

If we don’t solicit gifts from alumni and parents, where else can we get funding?

- Undergraduate Finance Board or Graduate Student Council (as appropriate)
- Fundraisers (e.g., sale of T-shirts, magazines, candy bars, etc.)
- Donations from local businesses (food, gift certificates, etc.)
- Admission fee to an event or gathering (dinners, dances, etc.)
- Profits from donated goods (community yard sale)

The Student Activities Office can provide more information and advice on pursuing these opportunities.

When can we fundraise?

There are windows of opportunity when student fundraising can occur. The Division of Advancement will work with each student group to coordinate its solicitation schedule with the appeal calendar for the University; this will ensure that alumni are not being contacted multiple times within the same timeframe. The windows of opportunity are **January, February, July, and August**. Each student group has the opportunity to fundraise **once per fiscal year** (July 1 to June 30th). To fundraise during these times, you must submit a Student Group Fundraising Request form, available online at http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Student_Activities/finances/budget.html#raised, from the Student Activities Office (x3-2341) or from Amy Bostock Laprey (x3-3358) in the Office of Development. Submission deadlines are as follows:

November 1 for fundraising in January and February
May 1 for fundraising in July
June 1 for fundraising in August

What solicitation methods can we use?

The Division of Advancement can assist student groups with fundraising via telemarketing, direct mail, email and the web. **Personal solicitations are not permitted**. Submitting grant proposals to corporations and foundations requires the pre-approval of the Division of Advancement.

Once approved whom can we contact?

Student groups can contact **alumni who were members of their group and parents of current and past members**. Alumni who participated in your student group while at Brown are likely to have a level of interest in your activities today. It is helpful if your group has maintained contact with alumni providing information and opportunities for connection before beginning fundraising efforts, and Robert Verdi (x3-6585) in Alumni Relations can provide assistance to you in developing a list of your alumni and reconnecting with them via non-fundraising communications and events.

Student groups may contact corporations and foundations <u>only</u> with prior approval of the Office of Development. This does not include restaurants and other local merchants from whom in-kind gifts are sought (e.g., food for an event, a gift certificate as a raffle prize, etc.).

The Office of Development retains the right to exclude certain alumni/ae and corporations/foundations from a solicitation list*, based on a number of considerations. Student groups may **not** contact:

- Members of the Brown Corporation (current and emeriti trustees and fellows of the University) and their spouses
- People who have requested absolutely no solicitation from Brown or no solicitation of the type being planned (phone, mail, email)
- People or corporations/foundations who are considered to be in sensitive negotiations with the University regarding a donation

*All lists will be reviewed by the Office of Development prior to solicitation.

What happens if our student group doesn't follow these guidelines?

Unfortunately, one of the outcomes of groups fundraising at times other than those approved is that alumni and parents can become annoyed at the University for barraging them with requests. The likelihood that these alumni and parents will contribute to your student group or the University as a whole is significantly lessened. Similarly, if your student group approaches individuals or corporations without the approval of the Development Office, you may interrupt or confuse solicitation conversations already underway which could result in a loss of income for Brown University.

If you do not adhere to these fundraising guidelines, the Development Office will prohibit your organization from fundraising for 18 months following the unauthorized solicitation. As an individual, you may receive additional sanctions through the non-academic disciplinary system, administered by the Office of Student Life, for violations of the operational rules of an office of the University.

SECTION II: MAKING THE SOLICITATION HAPPEN

How much can we expect to raise?

Approximately thirty to thirty-five percent of Brown alumni and parents make gifts to the University every year to support Brown's academic mission. You should expect that your results will be lower than this when fundraising for your student group. It is important to remember that the amount of money that your student group will raise can vary because of several factors:

- Audience (parents, young alumni, older alumni, etc.)
- Giving capacity/history of those being solicited
- Strength and relevance of your case for support
- Strength of connection between your student group and the prospects
- Solicitation method (phone, mail, email, etc.)
- Number of alumni who participated in your student group (groups that have been established for a longer period of time will have a broader base of alumni from which to solicit)
- Age of audience (younger alumni have less resources than older alumni)
- Alumni or parents may already be giving to other areas of Brown or other philanthropic priorities

Telemarketing

Telemarketing pledge rates can vary between 20 to 25 percent. It is important to keep in mind that the amount pledged over the phone will vary from the amount that you receive because not everyone will complete payment on his/her pledge. Fulfillment rates can vary between 65 to 75 percent on average.

Direct Mail

For direct mail the average return rate can vary anywhere between 2 to 5 percent depending on the size of your mailing and the makeup of the audience. Past donors to your group, for example, are more likely to contribute than those who have not given before.

Email and Web

Both email and web are emerging methods of solicitation, and their effectiveness has been more difficult to track. Currently the average return rate on an email solicitation is low, somewhere around 1 to 2 percent.

What assistance does the Advancement Division provide?

Telemarketing

- Identify alumni who were members of the student group using the Advancement database (limited to the information that has been forwarded to Advancement).
- Assist with the creation of a script, identification of objectives, design of ask amounts, and development of the case for support
- Give student groups access to the University's automated telemarketing center, located in the basement of Maddock Alumni Center (38 Brown Street)
- Help create a thank-you letter to follow the call and to ensure the accurate and timely processing of gifts
- Send pledge reminders to those who have not paid their pledges every 30 days
- Provide tax receipts to donors
- Provide list of donors for stewardship purposes and reports that show how much was raised

Direct Mail

- Identify alumni who were members of the student group using the Advancement database (limited to the information that has been forwarded to Advancement).
- Help identify objectives, design ask amounts, and develop the case for support
- Help to create the text for the letter and the form which will be returned to the University with gifts (the remit piece)
- Provide mailing data (names, addresses, salutations)
- Provide tax receipts to donors
- Provide list of donors for stewardship purposes and reports that show how much was raised

Email

- Use the Advancement database to identify alumni who were members of the student group (limited to the information that has been forwarded to Advancement)
- Help identify objectives, design ask amounts, and develop the case for support
- Create the email text and subject line
- Provide the data (names, email addresses, salutations)
- Provide tax receipts to donors
- Allow group to link to Advancement's online giving page to ensure secure processing of credit card gifts at www.gifts.brown.edu
- Provide list of donors for stewardship purposes and reports that show how much was raised

Web

- Review and approve web page(s) prior to posting
- Allow group to link to Advancement's online giving page to ensure secure processing of credit card gifts at www.gifts.brown.edu.
- Provide tax receipts to donors
- Provide list of donors for stewardship purposes and reports that show how much was raised

What are our responsibilities as a student group?

Telemarketing

- Cover all costs associated with calling (an estimate can be provided upon request).
- Recruit up to 20 callers from your organization
- Ensure that callers attend all three required sessions (day 1–training, day 2-calling, day 3-follow-up), for a total of 8 hours.

Direct Mail

- Create and submit letterhead for approval
- Write the letter, execute the mail merge, and mail the letters (all letters must include an appeal code and account number (assigned by the Advancement Division) as well as instructions for mailing checks to Box 1877)
- Ensure that all gifts are directly returned to the Gift Cashier (Box 1877)
- Track responses and feedback and report it back to Advancement, including address updates and requests to be removed from the solicitation list
- Send thank-you notes (by mail or email) to each alumnus/a or parent who has made a gift to your organization

Email

- Create and send the email
- Track responses and feedback and report it back to Advancement, including bounced emails, email address updates, and requests to be removed from the solicitation list
- Send thank-you notes (by mail or email) to each alumnus/a or parent who has made a gift to your organization

Web

- Create web pages(s) and secure Advancement approval before posting

Who will pay for our solicitation? How much will it cost?

Students should be aware that their organization is responsible for some of the costs incurred in their fundraising efforts.

Costs for Division of Advancement	***Costs for Student Group***
• Consultation with Assistant Director, Student Programs • Website with secure credit-card processing to receive online gifts • Data Maintenance (keeping good address, phone, and email information on alumni and parents, as well as maintaining a record of the alumni of your student group) • Tax Receipts sent to donors • Training and Materials • Database Setup (phone only) • Pledge Reminders sent every 30 days until the pledge is paid (phone only) • Maintenance of a 20-Station Automated Call Center (phone only)	• Postage on solicitation letters and phonathon pledge confirmation letters • Stationery - ($1.08 – includes letter/envelope/business reply envelope) • Credit Card Fees (3% of the amount of the gift) • Phone Charges (phone only)- local calls are $.05 per minute and long distance calls are $.10 per minute • Salary for Student Phonathon Managers (phone only) $150

Whom should we contact if our group wants to fundraise?
Please feel free to contact Amy Bostock Laprey (Amy_Laprey@Brown.edu, extension 3-3358) the current liaison between student organizations and the Office of Development, if you have any questions.

SECTION III: TECHNICAL DETAILS

What is considered a gift?
Generally speaking, a gift is classified as a financial contribution in exchange for which a donor has received no goods or services (http://www.irs.gov/). Because Brown University is a qualified nonprofit organization, gifts to your student group that are received and receipted by Brown can be claimed by donors as charitable deductions with the IRS.

However, if your group asks alumni for gifts and promises to send them your latest CD, tickets to your next performance, or a subscription to your publication in return, then their "gifts" would no longer be considered charitable contributions by Brown or the IRS.

The following website will provide the IRS policy on gifts and charitable giving.
http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=123201,00.html

Where should alumni and parents send their gifts?
All gifts (checks, cash, and credit cards) must be sent directly to the **Gift Cashier (Box 1877)** to assure proper recording.

To whom should checks be made payable?
All checks should be made payable to **Brown University**.

Can we accept credit card gifts?
Gifts can be made on credit cards. Student groups must cover the processing fee for these gifts. The processing fee is 3% of the total gift.

Can we accept gifts online?
Gifts can be made online. All gifts to your group must go through the University's secure giving website only at www.gifts.brown.edu.

SECTION IV: FINAL NOTES

The Student Activities Office and the Division of Advancement are eager to assist student organizations in meeting their funding needs. Our goals are to educate students about philanthropy and the role that it plays at Brown University and to provide them with the tools and training necessary to be successful in their fundraising efforts while ensuring that we are thoughtful and professional in the delivery of requests for support to the University's alumni and parents.

Please feel free to contact Amy Bostock Laprey (Amy_Laprey@Brown.edu, extension 3-3358) the current liaison between student organizations and the Office of Development, or J. Philip O'Hara '55, Director of Student Activities (J_O'Hara@Brown.edu, x3-1155), if you have any questions.