



Policy for Corporate Engagement

Mission Statement

The Natural History Museum (NHM) maintains and develops its collections and uses them to promote the discovery, understanding, responsible use and enjoyment of the natural world.

Guiding Principles

1. The NHM is happy to work with any company if by doing so they can be confident that the Museum's aims and mission will be furthered. This stance is clear and simple and means that no sector or company is *per se* excluded.
2. Potential support from individuals, corporations or sectors where there may be a conflict with the NHM's mission will be subject to a rigorous assessment procedure as outlined in the attached Guidelines for Fundraising, Sponsorship and Corporate Partnership.

Decision Making Authority and Responsibility

1. After completion of the review process, as outlined in the attached Guidelines, where a potential relationship is deemed to be low risk by the Evaluation Panel, responsibility for determining whether to proceed lies with the Director of Public Engagement and the Head of Development.
2. Where the Evaluation Panel makes a referral to Directors' Group, the authority for determining whether to proceed with a relationship rests with the Director of the Museum in consultation with the Directors' Group.
3. The final decision rests with the Director of the Museum.
4. At the discretion of the Director, a decision may be referred to the Board of Trustees for an ultimate recommendation.
5. The Board of Trustees will receive a short report that includes the rationale for the decision taken on all cases referred to the Director and Directors' Group.

Procedure for Corporate Engagement

Remit

The Natural History Museum works with a range of companies across a broad spectrum of activities. This document outlines the procedures the Museum will adopt with respect to fundraising and the commercial sponsorship of projects, events and exhibitions, and programme partnerships (including commercial partnerships, licensing, investment partners and strategic alliances). The guidelines do not cover procurement, consultancy work and services provided by the Museum to a third party or vice versa. The guidelines do not cover external Events hire.

The Process

1. In advance of a formal meeting with a potential corporate supporter or partner, the Development Department Research Team will complete a brief company profile. The purpose of this document is to provide the fundraising staff with basic information on a range of areas including the company's geographic and business focus, its key decision makers, and existing voluntary sector partnerships. At this stage, this basic profile will not take perceived ethical considerations into account although it is likely to highlight any initial areas of potential concern.
2. Subsequent meetings between the NHM and the potential corporate partner on joint working will provide the opportunity for both parties to provide information on mission, corporate objectives, and future plans. If it is agreed at this stage that the opportunity exists to develop a relationship further under a specific area of work (e.g. exhibition sponsorship, Learning, scientific partnership), the Development Research Team will conduct a full and comprehensive review of the potential partner (details of the content of the review are shown in Appendix 1). The review will be a factually based document and will not contain recommendations.
3. An Evaluation Panel consisting of Senior Museum representatives with expertise in the given area will evaluate the potential partner against the information contained within the review in four key categories. The Evaluation Panel, appointed and endorsed by the Director, will consist of five permanent members who will each be a specific category owner. The categories and panel members assigned to each are:
 - a) **Neutral Chair** – Special Adviser, Directorate
 - b) **Public Reputation Risk** – Head of Media Relations
 - c) **Scientific Reputation Risk and Mission Affinity** – Science Policy Coordinator
Partner Value – Head of Development/Head of Business Strategy
 - d) **Brand Alignment** – Head of Communications

The panel will meet on a monthly basis when necessary. In the event of a panel member being absent, a Deputy will be appointed from within the Panel to sit in their place. By agreement, the Chair may co-opt specific individuals with additional relevant expertise onto the Panel. In general, the expected turn-around time for allocating a score will be 48 hours.

The category owners will score a potential partner against an agreed scoring system, providing rationale for the allocated score. The proposed scoring system is shown in Appendix 2. A

partner receiving a score below an agreed threshold will not be considered a risk. Those above the threshold value will require consideration by Directors' Group.

4. Directors' Group will receive three documents in advance of their meeting:
 - (i) The Development Department Review documentation
 - (ii) The Evaluation Panel scoring documentation
 - (iii) A Directors' Group paper providing the reasoning behind the scores and outlining the reasons for referral and possible courses of action.

The Chair of the Evaluation Panel (or Deputy) will attend the Directors' Group meeting to provide a summary of the process and discussions relating to the partner under consideration and to answer any specific points raised regarding the above. The meeting should result in a decision on whether a relationship with the partner should be developed or pursued no further. The decision should be communicated to Development and/or Commercial Department and appropriate action taken.

In exceptional circumstances, the Director may wish the Board of Trustees of the Natural History Museum to make the final recommendation. In all cases, the Board of Trustees will be provided with a short report on all cases where a potential partner exceeded the risk threshold along with a rationale for the subsequent decision on engagement.

The Guidelines for Fundraising, Sponsorship and Corporate Partnership and the Process of Corporate Engagement outlined above need to be interpreted within The Institute of Fundraising's Codes of Fundraising Practice, specifically their papers on "Charities working with Business" and "The Acceptance and Refusal of Donations". Copies are available within the Museum's Development Department or can be downloaded from www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk

*For the purposes of this process, a Partnership is defined as the Natural History Museum working together with a company to meet mutual goals. This definition does not include a financial transaction alone.

Appendix 1.

Corporate Review – Areas included in the review and sources

Key areas included within a full review include:

- Confirmation of solvency and any associated information
- Confirmation of company listings and information pertaining to the legitimacy of the company.
- Information on recent (up to and including the last 24 months or from the date of the previous NHM review) general news items covering business activity, 'state of health' (i.e. profits warnings, takeovers, and de-mergers), and specific issues relating to the company covered in key 'reputable' sources i.e. The Times and Financial Times, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph and The Independent. These newspapers are selected to provide a balanced view on the issues identified.
- Information from the company itself on historical environmental and social performance. The review would seek to identify a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, an Environmental Policy and information on good environmental practice, and information on a range of social and human rights issues.
- Information resulting from searches carried against the Ethical Consumer Research Association database – Corporate Critic. The database indexes and rates the CSR records of over 15,000 company groups both private and publicly listed. Research is categorised by five broad ethical areas and then rated.

Appendix 2. Corporate Evaluation Model and Associated Scoring System

In order for us to take a more objective and integrated view of potential partnerships across the Museum, the following model has been developed through which we can determine the value of our external partnerships and the potential risks associated with any association. The model has been based on the market valuation model used for determining our audience priorities and that used for valuing and delivering accreditation.

There four categories that form the basis for the evaluation process. These are:

- 1) **Public Reputation Risk** – the extent to which an association with a company could damage the Natural History Museum’s reputation as an authoritative, trusted voice on environmental and conservation issues in the eyes of the general public and our key non-scientific stakeholders.
- 2) **Scientific Reputation Risk and Mission Affinity** – the extent to which an association with a company could damage the Natural History Museum’s reputation among peers in the scientific community and conflict with the stated aims of our Mission. The Museum is recognised internationally as an organisation that produces objective scientific research based on rigorous and sound scientific principles in our core areas of activity. The Museum’s mission encompasses responsible use of the natural world.
- 3) **Brand Alignment** – the extent to which the partner’s brand contributes to the reach and reputation of the Museum’s own brand. For example, whether the partner brand has resonance with an audience and/or market, that the Museum is trying to reach;; or whether the partner brand’s values match those of the Museum’s and will contribute to our brand position.
- 4) **Partner Value** - the level to which a partnership with the company enables the Museum to deliver its mission and corporate objectives whether via financial, technological, creative, or gift in kind support or in the development, content or delivery of a specific project and whether the partner brand can help us deliver additional revenue by association with that brand.

Scoring System

A valuation will be undertaken scoring each potential partner on a scale of 1-10 against the 4 categories described above. For categories 1 and 2 (Public and Science Reputation risk / Mission Affinity), a score of 1 = low risk and 10 = high risk. For categories 3 and 4 (Brand Alignment and Partner Value), a reverse score system operates where a score of 1 = high (premier) value and 10 = tertiary value.

With four categories, each potential partner will receive a score of between 4 and 40. Any company with a score of less than 20 and scores of less than 7 in the first two categories is considered low risk and/or positive brand and partner with which to be associated. A potential partner with a score greater than 20, or scores greater than 7 in the first two categories represents a significant risk to the Museum and therefore will be referred to the Directors’ Group for consideration.

Responsible Owner: Policy Adviser, Directorate
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