

Money is a vital part to the survival of sports clubs, but with funding drying up, what other avenues can your club explore to obtain external finances? It is definitely worth considering for your club.

* What is sponsorship?

“Any commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and sponsored party contractually provides financing or other support in order to establish an association between the sponsor’s image, brands or products and sponsoring property in return for rights to promote this association and/or image for the grant of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits”- Chamber of Commerce.

* Sponsorship is a two way process

It is very rare that you get money for nothing and sponsorship is no different.

Your club will be expected to honour obligations in order to maintain the sponsorship, so don't expect to take the money and run.

* What can you offer them?

- Logos printed on your: kit, equipment, minibus, sideline banners
- Their logo on your: website, email headers/ footers, letter heads
- Mention the company name in any events, team publicity and end of season reports
- Hold an event at your sponsor’s venue

* What they can offer you

- Finance: in return for promotion
- Kit: with their logo or company colours
- Discounts e.g. money off equipment or supplies ordered from a specific shop, a reduced admission price to events when taking all of your club or society along, or a discount when hiring specific services or facilities
- Facilities or a venue to host events

* Your sponsorship offering

Before approaching a potential sponsor, you must define the objectives of; and fully understand the opportunities available to both sides.

Look at your clubs future plans and objectives, as well as your current income and spending.

One of the main aspects that sponsors look for is the PR opportunity.

DISCLAIMER:

Information is for guidance only and does not constitute formal professional advice. As such, no reliance should be placed on the information contained in this toolkit. Where specific issues arise in your organisation advice should be sought from the relevant expert(s) as necessary.



Targeting sponsors

Research potential sponsors via websites, annual reports, newspaper articles or community and club contacts. Then create a shortlist of the companies you want to target and contact. Your initial correspondence should briefly describe your interest and opportunities.

Keep in mind that some sponsorship money might be appropriate for additional support from Sport England and lottery funded initiatives. For example, Sportsmatch is a business sponsorship incentive scheme to provide pound-for-pound matching on sponsors' contributions.



Presenting your case

If there is any specific information they require, prior to the meeting, and compose a sponsorship proposal which covers:

- Further information on your club, including number of members, key achievements etc.
- The sponsorship opportunity (emphasising how this will benefit them)
- Anticipated publicity from the sponsorship
- Value and cost of the sponsorship
- What the money will be spent on
- Details of any other sponsors you currently have
- Contact details



Signing the agreement

This should outline what is expected from each party and their respective responsibilities, thereby reducing conflicts in the long term. As a general rule, the detail of the contract should reflect the value of the sponsorship.

Make sure to include: payment amounts and dates, contract duration, naming the rights, obligations of both parties, both parties logos, market exclusivity and a termination clause.



Working together

It is essential that you keep them involved and interested. This will maintain their attention and demonstrate to them the value of their investment. Set up a clear procedure for reporting news to the sponsor.

Send photos or case studies of how their support is benefiting the club on a regular basis. Get photos and cuttings of any PR which mentions or shows the logo of the sponsor and send these to them. Be sure to invite representatives of the sponsor to appropriate events.