

FUNDRAISING POLICY

Honest fundraising · Responsible use of money · Donor protection · Public accountability

Right First Time UK Ltd | Company number 17493370 | Version 1.2 | Updated 12 October 2026
Review: at least annually and after material changes

1. Purpose and scope

Right First Time UK (RFTUK) raises funds to support lawful public-benefit work, including public information, campaigns, research, community engagement, safeguarding, events, approved support for charities or community projects and reasonable organisational costs. Fundraising must be honest, respectful, accountable and consistent with RFTUK's purposes.

This policy applies to official fundraising by Directors, Campaign Leaders, Campaigners, Volunteers, employees, contractors, event helpers and authorised representatives. A supporter, subscriber or member does not gain permission to fundraise using RFTUK's name or branding simply by joining or donating.

2. Legal identity and fundraising status

Right First Time UK Ltd (company number 17493370) is a non-profit company limited by guarantee, not a registered charity or Community Interest Company (CIC). It has no share capital. Its governance and non-distribution arrangements are subject to its Articles of Association and applicable law; it does not automatically have a statutory CIC asset lock.

RFTUK must accurately describe its status and beneficiaries. It cannot claim Gift Aid on donations to RFTUK unless it becomes eligible and recognised under the applicable HMRC rules. Different UK laws may apply depending on the activity, fundraising method, location and recipient.

3. Core fundraising standards

RFTUK will be legal, open, honest and respectful; describe the beneficiary and purpose accurately; never conceal significant costs; avoid misleading claims or guaranteed outcomes; protect privacy and safeguarding; respect requests to stop; and investigate fundraising concerns fairly.

RFTUK aims to follow the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice where relevant. The requirements applying to a particular fundraiser must be checked before it begins, including any licensing, advertising, consumer, data-protection or third-party fundraising obligations.

4. Permitted purposes and methods

Funds may support campaigns, petitions, research, public guidance, homelessness or community-support initiatives, safeguarding, accessibility, volunteers, training, digital tools, hosting, communications, events, insurance, professional services, authorised expenses, appropriate staffing or contracted work and reasonable reserves.

Approved fundraising methods may include one-off or regular giving, online appeals, sponsorship, grants, events, in-kind support, permitted collections and lawful commercial activities. Material costs and conditions must be clear before donations are requested.

5. Donations are different from fees and sales

A donation is a voluntary gift, distinct from payment for Public Membership, a service, a product, event tickets or a sponsorship benefit. Fundraising descriptions, terms, receipts and financial records must reflect the real nature of the transaction rather than labelling all income as donations.

PCS access fees are service income for RFTUK, not donations. Parent-to-parent contributions made through a voluntary PCS arrangement are separate from RFTUK income; under the current model, RFTUK/PCS does not receive, hold or transfer those parent-to-parent contributions.

6. Restricted, designated and unrestricted funds

An express donor restriction for a stated project, campaign or third-party beneficiary must be identified, recorded, tracked and honoured. Restricted funds cannot simply be diverted to general running costs. Unrestricted donations may support RFTUK's lawful objects and reasonable organisational costs.

A donor preference that does not create a binding restriction must be clearly described as a preference. Appeals should explain, where foreseeable, what happens if a purpose is overfunded, underfunded, changed or cancelled. If a genuinely restricted purpose cannot proceed, RFTUK must review its terms and consider donor consent, a refund or another lawful solution before redirecting funds.

7. Costs, salaries, expenses and volunteer status

Fundraising may fund genuine operating costs. RFTUK must not promise that every penny reaches a frontline activity if material platform, administration, staffing or other costs are also paid from an appeal.

Founders, Directors and volunteers initially serving in voluntary roles are not paid wages merely for holding those roles; genuine authorised out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed. Any later paid employee, contractor or Director role requires lawful authorisation, affordability, fair remuneration, appropriate tax and employment treatment, records and conflict controls. People must not improperly approve their own remuneration.

Volunteers must not be pressured to meet fundraising targets or finance shortfalls. Cash, vouchers or regular rewards promised in exchange for volunteering hours may create employment or tax issues and must not be used to disguise pay.

8. Donor choice and protection from pressure

Fundraisers must not use bullying, shame, guilt, harassment, repeated unwanted approaches or deception. People must be able to decline, take time to decide or stop an interaction. Accessible information and reasonable communication adjustments should be offered where appropriate.

Where a person appears distressed, confused, coerced, in financial crisis or unable to make an informed decision, the fundraiser should slow down, stop or refer the concern appropriately. Disability, age, neurodivergence or mental-health history alone must not be treated as proof that a person cannot choose to donate.

9. Children, safeguarding and fundraiser safety

Fundraising involving children requires age-appropriate arrangements, suitable supervision, consent where needed and careful handling of photos, personal stories and identifying information. Children should not be subject to emotional pressure or unsuitable responsibility for money.

Activities should consider safeguarding, accessibility, health and safety, lone working, hostility and emergency risks. Fundraising targets never take priority over safety. Report unsafe situations and stop or adapt an activity if the risk becomes unreasonable.

10. Communications, marketing and donor privacy

Electronic fundraising messages may constitute direct marketing. RFTUK will apply UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and applicable Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) rules. Donating or subscribing does not automatically authorise every future marketing message; preferences, objections and opt-outs must be respected.

RFTUK must not assume it qualifies for the charitable-purpose electronic-marketing soft opt-in if it is not legally eligible. Donor data must be collected only where needed, secured, shared lawfully and never sold.

11. Platforms, fees, banking and cash collections

Online appeals should identify who receives the funds, the purpose, material payment or platform fees, any optional platform tip and which organisation controls the appeal. RFTUK should review provider suitability, security and fees.

Organisational funds must be kept separate from personal money, recorded promptly and reconciled against payment-platform, cash and bank records. Physical collections need any relevant permits or licences, secure containers and proportionate independent cash-count checks. Funds should be deposited promptly using authorised arrangements.

12. Events, raffles, lotteries and prize competitions

Before public events or collections, RFTUK should assess the venue, permissions, budget, beneficiary, insurance, accessibility, safeguarding, safety, ticket terms and cancellation or refund arrangements.

Before running a raffle, lottery, prize draw or competition, RFTUK must establish the correct legal category and any Gambling Commission, local-authority or other registration, licence and operating rules. Fundraising for a good cause does not by itself make a lottery or collection lawful.

13. Sponsorship, commercial promotions and grants

Sponsorship may offer publicity or another commercial benefit and should be documented where significant. Due diligence, conflicts, financial terms, marketing permissions and independence must be assessed. No sponsor may buy favourable findings or control an RFTUK campaign.

If goods or services are promoted as benefiting a named charity, RFTUK must identify any commercial-participator or professional-fundraiser requirements, including written agreements and public solicitation statements, before the promotion begins where legally required.

Grant applications and reports must accurately describe RFTUK's legal status, finances, eligibility and outcomes. Grant restrictions, reporting deadlines and possible repayment obligations must be recorded and followed.

14. Raising or transferring funds for another organisation

RFTUK may support suitable charities or community organisations where authorised and consistent with its purposes. Before significant transfers it should verify the recipient, purpose, payee details, any conflict and the applicable fundraising terms.

Where an appeal names another charity or beneficiary, public wording must explain who holds the money, who benefits, what deductions apply and whether RFTUK is fundraising in aid of or on behalf of that body. Applicable written agreements, solicitation statements, accounting and transfer requirements must be met.

15. Refusing, returning and checking donations

RFTUK may refuse or return donations for lawful reasons, including suspected fraud or criminal property, sanctions concerns, improper influence, duplicate or mistaken payments, serious safeguarding risk, or conditions RFTUK cannot fulfil.

Large, anonymous, unusual or conditional donations may need proportionate checks of the source, identity, risks and conflicts. Refunds should be assessed fairly and made by a safe method, generally the original payment route where appropriate, without helping to facilitate fraud. Payment-provider and statutory rights remain unaffected.

16. No purchased influence or party-political funding

A donation, sponsorship, grant or membership payment does not entitle anyone to select RFTUK's evidence, dictate its findings, suppress criticism, influence complaint outcomes or require false allegations to be published.

RFTUK remains non-party political. It must assess any relevant Electoral Commission non-party campaigning, spending, donation and imprint requirements before regulated election-related fundraising or activity. It will not use fundraising as a vehicle for political-party or candidate endorsement.

17. Finance, records and public transparency

RFTUK should record amounts, dates, sources where lawful and necessary, appeal purposes, donor restrictions, provider fees, refunds, transfers, approvals, invoices and relevant spending. Significant transactions require proportionate scrutiny and conflicts must be disclosed.

RFTUK's public transparency information may show donations, membership income, campaign spending, fundraising costs, technology, professional fees, expenses, appropriate remuneration and third-party support in meaningful categories. Public reporting should not disclose unnecessary donor personal data, financial credentials, security information or safeguarding records.

18. Fraud, unauthorised appeals and suspected misuse

RFTUK does not tolerate theft, fabricated expenses, bribery, false fundraising pages, concealed conflicts or diversion of restricted funds. Serious concerns must be recorded and escalated; RFTUK may suspend access, preserve evidence, seek advice and refer matters to banks, police or regulators where justified.

No one may set up an apparently official RFTUK fundraiser or use its branding without authority, use a private account as an official destination for donations, or change an appeal's purpose without addressing legal duties and donor expectations.

19. Complaints, corrections and refunds

Concerns about pressure, misleading appeals, safeguarding, privacy, donations, refunds, financial controls or fundraising behaviour may be raised through the RFTUK Contact Us page or its Complaints Policy. Complaints should be recorded, investigated fairly, responded to and used to correct material weaknesses.

When RFTUK discovers a material error in fundraising claims, beneficiary arrangements or intended use of funds, it should correct the public information promptly and consider appropriate notice, donor contact or remedies.

20. Six-point fundraising checklist

Before launch: (1) identify the beneficiary and purpose; (2) check the legal method, licences and required agreements; (3) establish authority and accounting controls; (4) explain fees, restrictions and conditions; (5) protect donors, children, privacy, accessibility and fundraiser safety; and (6) plan reconciliation, reporting and closure.

21. Related policies and PCS arrangements

This policy operates alongside RFTUK's Donation Transparency, Financial Controls & Expenses, Conflict of Interest, Safeguarding, Data Protection & GDPR, Volunteer, Community Standards and Complaints policies, together with applicable Membership and PCS terms.

Parent Contribution Service (PCS) is operated by RFTUK Ltd and is not a separate legal entity. Its voluntary parent-to-parent arrangements, calculator guidance and fees must never be confused with a charitable appeal, a CMS statutory determination or money held by RFTUK on behalf of parents.

22. Contact, guidance and review

For questions about an appeal, donation restrictions, fundraising conduct, accessibility, refunds or financial transparency, use the Contact Us page: <https://rightfirsttimeuk.com/contact-us.php>. Formal complaints may also be sent to complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner when fundraising methods, legal requirements, governance or material risks change. Official guidance includes the Fundraising Regulator Code (<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code>), HMRC Gift Aid guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/claim-gift-aid>), the ICO (<https://ico.org.uk>) and the Gambling Commission (<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk>).