

Ethical Partnerships & Solicitations

While seeking out public-private partnerships to preserve LAUSD's general funds for direct student service may be very strategic, our obligation to the public requires us to ensure that private support NOT be realized in a manner that will tarnish LAUSD's image or credibility as a public agency. To avoid unintended charges of conflict of interest or "pay-to-play" politics, particularly given our current national and local climate, it's vital to observe the specific guidelines and criteria outlined below:

Guiding Principle for Sponsorship Solicitations

Solicitations should only be made if they would not create in the minds of reasonable, objective, fair-minded observers a perception that there would be improper influence or advantage provided to our sponsors.

Operational Criteria

- (1) *Solicitations must be consistent with the Guiding Principle*
- (2) *Solicitations should be made either by a separate foundation or, when that is not possible, by employees who are not directly involved in any official decision-making regarding the parties that are being solicited*
- (3) *Solicitations should be made in a consistent and transparent manner*
 - *Specifically, any interested potential sponsors must be given the opportunity to contribute*
 - *The type of recognition, if any, should be identified in advance*
- (4) *Solicitations from any current or potential vendors or contractors must be managed with caution*
 - (a) *As a preferred goal, contributions made by vendors to an agency should be made to LAUSD's general fund and held in a special account for donated funds rather than in support of a specific activity or event*
 - *Specifically, no current or potential vendor or contractor should be solicited to sponsor any activity or event if it would be reasonably perceived that they would gain a direct benefit or advantage from official LAUSD decisions made at the event*
 - (b) *Solicitations of current or potential vendors or contractors should be avoided, if it is reasonably known that they are seeking a contract or decision from LAUSD within a 12-month window of the date of solicitation*
 - (c) *There should be clear written communications to vendors making it explicit that sponsorships are strictly a voluntary act of good citizenship and that they have no bearing on contracting decisions*
 - (d) *Any vendor recognition or appreciation must be provided in a manner that does not in any way suggest LAUSD's endorsement or preference*
 - *Recognition should actively reinforce the concept that a vendor's participation is voluntary and has no bearing on any LAUSD decision-making relating to the vendor*
- (5) *Gifts received as a result of solicitations by a LAUSD official for LAUSD must be recorded with transparency in accordance with the "Gifts to an Agency" rules set forth in California's Code of Regulations*