
Donation Acceptance Policy

Policy Sponsor:	Vice-President Advancement
Policy Contact:	Chief Development Officer
Policy Number:	N/A
Effective Date:	October 16, 2014
Approval Group:	Executive, Board of Governors
Approval Date:	October 16, 2014, Motion #193-04
Review Date:	To be reviewed biennially
Procedure:	Donation Acceptance Procedures

Purpose

Athabasca University welcomes donations to fund activities that support teaching, learning, and research excellence, to advance fulfilment of the university's mandate as approved by the Government of Alberta, and to provide financial assistance to students through scholarships, bursaries and other awards. AU follows all laws and legislation pertinent to the receipt of charitable donations and maintains the high standards of donor stewardship and accountability considered integral to ethical fundraising practice.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that

- informed decisions are made with respect to the acceptance of donations
- donations are receipted in accordance with legal requirements
- best practices and procedures are followed in the solicitation and stewardship of prospects and donors
- considerate, responsive and ethical relations are developed and maintained with donors

Definitions

Designated A donation for which the donor has specified where the support is to be



Donation	directed (e.g., to a particular faculty or centre or for a particular purpose). Also referred to as a <i>restricted donation</i> .
Donation	A voluntary transfer of property of value for which the donor expects and receives nothing in return. The term <i>gift</i> may be used interchangeably with <i>donation</i> .
Endowment	A designated or restricted donation, the capital value of which is preserved and invested, and the income from which investment supports a specified purpose.
Fair Market Value	The price for which an item would be sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer in an arms-length transaction in an open market, each party having full knowledge of the facts.
Gift-in-kind	Donated tangible or intangible property, including real property, notes, mortgages, limited partnership interests, royalty or copyright interests, art, books, ephemera, equipment, automobiles, inventory, personal property, software, securities, and other physical assets or materials of value. Also referred to as a <i>donation-in-kind</i> .
Official Donation Receipt	A receipt, meeting all federal and provincial legal requirements for such a document, issued to a donor for income tax purposes.
Planned Gift	A gift made in life or at death as part of a donor's financial planning. Planned gifts include, but are not limited to, bequests, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts (remainder of residual) and gifts of securities.
Prospect	A potential donor, sponsor or partner.
Securities	Liquid, publicly traded investment instruments that represent financial value, such as stocks, bonds, debt securities, funds, options, futures contracts or other derivatives.
Stewardship	Careful and responsible management of a donation, including reporting back to a donor on the impact of a donation and the outcomes resulting from a donation.
Undesignated Donation	A donation for which the donor has not specified where the support is to be directed. Also referred to as an <i>unrestricted donation</i> .

Policy Statements

1. AU is dedicated to the removal of barriers to university-level study and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide. AU is also committed to excellence in teaching, research and scholarship. All fundraising and development activity shall reflect the university's mission and core values.



2. AU values and protects its integrity, autonomy and academic freedom and shall not accept a donation when a condition of such acceptance would compromise these fundamental principles.
3. AU fund development activities and solicitation of donations will be consistent with the goals of the Strategic University Plan.
4. AU may, in its sole discretion, accept or decline a donation in accordance with the *Athabasca University [Donation Acceptance Procedures](#)*.
5. AU is committed to the highest standards of donor solicitation, stewardship and accountability, including appropriate acknowledgment and recognition of donations.
6. In accordance with the *[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)*, names of individual donors and amounts given are personal information and, with the exception of those who consent to having their personal information disclosed, will be handled with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
7. The policies and procedures detailed in the *Athabasca University [Naming and Recognition Policy](#)* and the *Athabasca University [Naming and Recognition Procedures](#)* will be followed for donations resulting in naming or special recognition.
8. Ownership of a donation made to AU vests with AU, whether the donation is for the benefit of AU generally or for some specific purpose.
9. A designated donation shall be used for the purpose for which it was intended. In the event that circumstances render the continuation of the purpose impractical or undesirable, AU may use the designated donation or income generated therefrom for such other purposes as will, in AU's opinion, honour as nearly as practical the original intent of the donor(s).
10. All undesignated donations of \$10,000 or more received in any fiscal year will be used at the President's discretion, on the advice of the Vice-President Advancement, for such purposes as will best address needs and advance the university's mission and academic priorities. All undesignated gifts of less than \$10,000 received in any fiscal year will be deposited into general revenues.
11. An endowment will be managed in accordance with the *[Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)*, as well as the *Athabasca University [Endowment Management Policy](#)* and the *Athabasca University [Investment Policy](#)*.
12. In accordance with the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Donor Bill of Rights, a donor to AU is entitled to the following:
 - 12.1 To be informed of the university's mission and of the way the university intends to use donated resources



- 12.2 To be informed of the identify of those serving on the university's Board of Governors and to expect the Board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities
 - 12.3 To have access to the university's most recent financial statements
 - 12.4 To be assured that gifts will be used for the purpose for which they are given
 - 12.5 To receive appropriate and timely receipting, acknowledgement and recognition
 - 12.6 To be assured that information about a donation will be handled with respect and, if desired, with confidentiality to the extent permitted by law
 - 12.7 To expect all relationships with individuals representing the university to be professional in nature
 - 12.8 To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, university employees or hired solicitors
 - 12.9 To have their names deleted from mailing lists if desired
 - 12.10 To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers
13. All fundraising solicitations on behalf of AU must
 - 13.1 Be made by or with the knowledge of the Development Unit of the Advancement Office
 - 13.2 Be truthful, fair and in accordance with applicable laws
 - 13.3 Accurately describe the intended use of the donated funds
 - 13.4 Be in support of AU's mission and academic priorities
 14. AU shall ensure, to the best of its ability, the security of all online transactions, including any and all digital records relating to a donation.
 15. When a gift is a gift-in-kind, the responsibility for managing the gift falls to the receiving department; for example, the AU Art Committee, the AU Library, or the Thomas A. Edge Archives and Special Collections.
 16. All securities donated to AU must be liquidable on a public exchange.

Applicable Legislation and Regulations

- [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)
- [*Income Tax Act*](#) (Canada)
- [*Post-secondary Learning Act*](#)



Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms

- [Donation Acceptance Procedures](#)
- [Athabasca University Archive Collections Policy](#)
- [Athabasca University Art Collection Policy](#)
- [Athabasca University Library Collections Development Policy](#)
- [Naming and Recognition Policy](#)
- [Investment Policy](#)
- [Endowment Management Policy](#)
- AFP Code of Ethical Principles and Standards (<http://www.afpnet.org/Ethics/EnforcementDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=3261>)
- Canada Revenue Agency guidelines (<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/prtng/gftng-rcptng-eng.html>)

History

The Governors of Athabasca University, October 16, 2014, Motion # 193-04 (approved)