

## FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Updated most recently: November 2020

### Overview and Mission

Girls Empowerment Network's **mission** is to ignite the power in girls by teaching them skills to thrive and believe in their ability to be unstoppable. Through activities and experiences designed to cultivate the Six Cs (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, Coping Skills, Collaboration, and Confidence) girls who participate in our programs show significant growth in **self-efficacy**, which is their belief in their ability to succeed. Increased self-efficacy supports:

- Mental health, resiliency, and self-advocacy,
- Confidence navigating and creating positive relationships,
- More effective participation in school, so girls pursue the college and/or career path of their dreams, and ultimately contribute to the community.



In order to fulfill mission work, Girls Empowerment Network (also referred to as “the Organization”) engages in multiple fundraising efforts and strives to maintain a diversified revenue stream. The Organization values its donors and stakeholders as critical partners in the empowerment of girls and thereby endeavors to support open, respectful relationships with donors. The Organization commits to certain ethical standards, including financial transparency, requiring regular audits of the Organization’s finances.

### 1. Policy and Purposes

This policy represents the formal fundraising policy of Girls Empowerment Network, governing the solicitation and acceptance of gifts, and conduct of fundraising staff. The Board of Directors, volunteer fundraisers, and employed staff solicit current and deferred gifts from individuals, corporations, foundations, and others for purposes that will further and fulfill the organization’s mission.

Purposes of this policy include:

- (A) guidance for the Board of Directors, officers, staff with respect to their responsibilities concerning gifts to the organization, and
- (B) guidance to prospective donors and their professional advisors when making gifts to the organization.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all “gifts” received by the organization. Gift in this context means a contribution with distinct financial value, given freely and without expectation of any goods or services in return. (The Organization’s revenue streams that are fee for service, program payments, ticket sales, etc. are not governed by this policy.) The Organization reserves the right to revise, amend, or revoke this policy at any time, and without prior notice.

### 2. General Gift Acceptance Policy

Unrestricted gifts of cash, stock, and other marketable securities are generally accepted. Donations can be made online through credit card at the Organization’s website: <https://www.girlsempowermentnetwork.org/donate> and checks can be mailed to:

Girls Empowerment Network  
PO Box 3122  
Austin, TX 78764

To make a gift of stock or marketable security, reach out to the Organization’s contact information on the final page of the contract to arrange a brokerage account transfer.

Girls Empowerment Network reserves the right to reject any gift. Subject to Section 6 below, all final decisions on the refusal of a gift more than \$2,500 shall be made by the CEO/Executive Director and the Board of Directors. The organization shall not accept gifts that:

- Are in-direct conflict with the Organization’s mission;
- Violate the terms of the Organization’s bylaws, contracts, and/or other corporate documents;
- Would jeopardize status as an exempt organization under federal or state tax law;
- Are too difficult (as determined by the CEO in his/her/their sole discretion) or expensive to administer;
- Are for purposes that do not further the organization’s objectives (as determined by the CEO in his/her/their sole discretion); or
- Could damage the reputation of the organization.

### **3. Recognition**

All gifts will be recognized in a reasonably timely fashion following receipt of gifts or commitment. The organization will make a reasonable effort to recognize donors consistent with their individual wishes and through the promotional and communication tools available to the organization, especially as outlined for specific sponsorship levels related to distinct events.

Donor anonymity will be protected as allowable by law, and if requested in writing to the Organization. All gifts will be entered into the donor database and a thank you letter/receipt will be sent to the donor as soon as reasonably possible. All donors who make gifts that meet the criteria for a tax acknowledgement letter will receive this from the organization’s fundraising staff. Donors of greater than \$1,000 USD/annually can expect continued, on-going gratitude and courtesy updates from fundraising staff about how their gift has made an impact for girls.

### **4. Professionalism, Confidentiality, Donor Privacy, and Conflicts of Interest**

These policies are written in accordance with pages 19-20 of the “Team Member Culture Guide & Handbook” of Girls Empowerment Network.

The Organization’s board, volunteer fundraisers, and employees should conduct themselves with utmost professionalism. Work should be done in a manner which is in keeping with the best interests of the organization, and employees should avoid actual and potential conflicts of interest or any circumstance that could raise even the appearance of impropriety. The Organization’s Board of Directors and staff agree not enter into any charitable transaction with a perceived or real benefit to the Organization’s representatives. Fundraising employees are required to sign a Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Agreement as a condition of employment.

The Organization recognizes that donor data and giving information is sensitive, private data that should be protected in accordance with Texas state law. Donor data will be used to help inform internal fundraising campaigns, projects, etc., among Girls Empowerment Network board, staff, and trained fundraising volunteers. Donor data will NOT be sold to third-parties or shared outside of Girls Empowerment Network board, staff, and trained fundraising volunteers, unless permission is granted by the donor.

### **5. Fundraising Ethical Standards**

Girls Empowerment Network funding solicitors, both staff and volunteer, will maintain the highest of ethical standards in all interactions. Fundraising staff are expected to know and commit to the Association of Fundraising Professionals ([AFP Code of Ethics](#)), which includes protecting donor privacy; all staff are compensated at a salaried or hourly rate; at no time will any staff member receive a percentage of gifts secured or be compensated on a commission basis, among other tenants. The Organization also is committed to the core principles of the [Donors Bill of Rights](#). This means that Girls Empowerment Network recognizes that donors have the right:

*I. To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.*

*II. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.*

*III. To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.*

IV. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.

V. To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.

VI. To be assured that information about their donation is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.

VII. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.

VIII. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors.

IX. To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.

X. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

## **6. Refunds**

All gifts made to the Organization are considered final. Refunds are not issued unless under special circumstances and at the sole discretion of the CEO/Executive Director for amounts over \$1,000.

## **7. Policy Regarding Specific Types of Gifts**

(A) *Gifts Generally Accepted Without Review ("Unrestricted Gifts of Cash")*. The organization will accept Unrestricted Gifts of Cash without prior review by the Board of Directors for donations of \$50,000 or more, as long as the identity of the donor has been vetted with respect to any reputational or policy issues. Unrestricted gifts of cash are acceptable in any form. Checks shall be made payable to "Girls Empowerment Network."

(B) *Gifts Subject to Review Prior to Acceptance*. All gifts, other than Unrestricted Gifts of Cash, must be reviewed by the Chief Development Officer or CEO/Executive Director and or Board of Directors prior to acceptance. Examples of potential gifts which require review:

1. Tangible Personal Property
2. Closely-Held Securities
3. Bequests
4. Retirement Plan Beneficiary Designations
5. Life Insurance
6. Restricted Gifts for specific purpose outside of the ordinary course of business for the Organization
7. Real Estate
8. Charitable Lead Trusts
9. Charitable Remainder Trusts

Girls Empowerment Network is open to creative gift-giving strategies. Prospective donors are encouraged to bring any questions about these types of donations to the development team. Final decisions of acceptance of a gift-giving strategy will be made by the CEO/Executive Director and Board of Directors.

## **8. Use of Legal Counsel**

(A) *The Organization*. The Organization shall seek the advice of legal counsel in matters relating to acceptance of gifts when appropriate. Review by legal counsel is recommended for:

1. *Gifts Subject to Review Prior to Acceptance*
2. Closely held stock transfers that are subject to restrictions or buy-sell agreements;
3. Documents naming the organization as trustee;

4. Gifts involving contracts such as bargain sales, partnership agreements, or other documents requiring the organization to assume an obligation;
5. Transactions with a potential conflict of interest;
6. Pledge agreements;
7. Any gift with restrictions.

*(B) Donor.* For non-standard gifts, in order to avoid conflicts or potential conflicts of interest, the Organization encourages prospective donors to seek the assistance of their own legal, tax, financial advisors in matters relating to their gifts and the resulting tax and estate planning consequences.

#### **9. Professional Services**

The Organization is not responsible for providing and/or responding to requests for legal, tax, or estate planning advice submitted by Donors. Prospective donors shall be responsible for their own legal, accounting, appraisal, and all other fees for all gifts made to the Organization.

#### **10. Changes to or Deviations from the Policy.**

This policy has been reviewed and accepted by the organization's Board of Directors, which has the sole power to change this policy in the future. In addition, the Board of Directors must approve in writing any deviations from this policy.

#### **11. Questions/Contact**

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and

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