

**Mount Saint Vincent University**

**The Ethical Fundraising and  
Financial Accountability Code**

*(Following the framework of Imagine Canada's Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code)*

## Introduction

Members of the University Advancement department adhere to the following organizations' code of ethics: AFP (Association of Fundraising Professionals), APRA (Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement), CAGP (Canadian Association of Gift Planning). Members attend conferences and workshops offered by these member organization as well as CCAE (Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education), CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) and Canada Revenue Agency.

### The Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code

The registered charity undertakes to adhere to the standards set out in the Imagine Canada *Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code* in its treatment of donors and the public, its fundraising practices and its financial transparency, and to be accountable through its Board of Governors for doing so.

#### A. Donor Policies and Public Representations

1. The Charity shall maintain its charitable status.
2. The charity shall prepare and issue official Income Tax receipts for monetary gifts and for gifts-in-kind pursuant to any policy established and published on minimum amounts to be receipted and in compliance with all regulatory requirements. The University shall acknowledge in writing contributions not entitled to be officially receipted, subject to any policy established and published on minimum amounts to be acknowledged.
3. All fundraising solicitations by or on behalf of the charity shall disclose the charity's name and the purpose for which the funds are requested. Printed and online solicitations (however transmitted) shall include its address or other contact information.
4. The charity must demonstrate the utmost transparency and accountability through accurate and accessible disclosure of information in a readily accessible location on its website. If the charity does not have a website, this information shall be included in readily accessible public materials or documents. Information that should be disclosed includes, but is not limited to the following:
  - the charity's most recent three years of annual reports and financial statements including notes as approved by the governing board;
  - the charity's registration number (BN) as assigned by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA);
  - any information contained in the public portion of the charity's most recent Charity Information Return (form T3010A) as submitted to CRA;
  - a copy of the Charity's Investment Policy relating to its investable assets, if applicable;
  - a list of the names of the members of the charity's governing board; and,
  - a copy of this *Ethical Fundraising & Financial Accountability Code*.
5. The charity or those fundraising on its behalf shall disclose, upon request, whether an individual or entity soliciting contributions is a volunteer, an employee, or a contracted third party.

6. The charity shall not make claims that cannot be upheld or are misleading.
7. The charity shall encourage donors to seek independent advice if the proposed gift is a Planned Gift and/or the charity has any reason to believe that the proposed gift might significantly affect the donor's financial position, taxable income, or relationship with other family members.
8. The charity shall honour donors' requests to remain anonymous in respect to:
  - being publicly identified as a supporter of the organization; and/or
  - having the amount of their contribution publicly disclosed.
9. The privacy of donors shall be respected. Any donor records that are maintained by the charity shall be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Donors shall have the right to see their own donor record, and to challenge its accuracy.
10. If the charity exchanges, rents, or otherwise shares its fundraising list with other organizations, a donor's request to be excluded from the list shall be honoured.
11. Solicitations by or on behalf of the charity shall treat donors and prospective donors with respect. Every effort shall be made to honour their requests to:
  - limit the frequency of solicitations;
  - not be solicited by telephone or other technology;
  - receive printed material concerning the charity;
  - discontinue solicitations where it is indicated they are unwanted or a nuisance.
12. The charity shall have appropriate fundraising policies in place, including but not limited to gift acceptance, treatment of restricted or designated gifts, naming and endowment policies. The relevance and appropriateness of the charity's fundraising policies shall be reviewed regularly by the governing board.
13. Recognition mechanisms created due to a gift shall not be arbitrarily changed or withdrawn. Unless otherwise negotiated at the time of the gift or changed through a joint agreement between the charity and the donor or the donor's family or legal representative, the original form of the recognition mechanism will be maintained. If the mechanism cannot be physically retained, it will be changed to another consistent with the original agreement. If continuation of the recognition creates a reputational risk for the charity, it may be terminated or altered.
14. The charity shall post its complaints process and related contact information in a readily accessible location on its website. If the charity does not have a website, this information shall be included in readily accessible public materials or documents.
15. The charity shall respond promptly to a complaint by a donor or prospective donor about any matter that is addressed in this *Ethical Fundraising & Financial Accountability Code*.

## B. Fundraising Practices

1. The charity's fundraising affairs shall be conducted in a responsible manner, consistent with the ethical obligations of stewardship and all applicable law.
2. Fundraising solicitations on behalf of the charity shall:
  - be truthful; and
  - accurately describe the charity's activities and the intended use of donated funds.
3. The charity shall not exploit its beneficiaries. It shall be sensitive in describing those it serves (whether using graphics, images or text) and fairly represent their needs and how these needs will be addressed.
4. When the charity conducts online solicitations its practices shall be consistent with or exceed the provisions of the *Canadian Code of Practice for Consumer Protection in Electronic Commerce*, which is downloadable at: [http://www.cmcweb.ca/epic/site/cmc-cmc.nsf/vwapj/EcommPrinciples2003\\_e.pdf/\\$FILE/EcommPrinciples2003\\_e.pdf](http://www.cmcweb.ca/epic/site/cmc-cmc.nsf/vwapj/EcommPrinciples2003_e.pdf/$FILE/EcommPrinciples2003_e.pdf).
5. When the charity conducts face-to-face solicitations, including but not limited to door-to-door campaigns or street-side fundraising, its practices shall include measures to:
  - provide verification of the affiliation of the person representing the charity; and,
  - secure and safeguard any confidential information, including credit card information, provided by donors.
6. Volunteers, employees and third party consultants/solicitors who solicit or receive funds on behalf of the charity shall:
  - adhere to the provisions of this *Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code*;
  - act with fairness, integrity, and in accordance with all applicable laws;
  - adhere to the provisions of applicable professional codes of ethics, standards of practice, etc.;
  - cease solicitation of a prospective donor who identifies the solicitation as harassment or undue pressure, or who states that he does not wish to be solicited;
  - disclose immediately to the charity any actual or apparent conflict of interest or loyalty; and
  - not accept donations for purposes that are inconsistent with the charity's objects or mission.
7. The charity shall provide, upon request, its best available information on the gross revenue, net proceeds and costs of any fundraising activity (including the fundraising costs categorized as education and/or public awareness) it undertakes.
8. The charity shall not, directly or indirectly, pay finder's fees, commissions or percentage compensation based on contributions.
9. Charities that undertake cause-related marketing in collaboration with a third party shall disclose how the charity benefits from the sale of products or services and the minimum or maximum amounts payable under the arrangement. If no minimum amount is specified, the charity should disclose this.

10. The charity shall not sell its donor list. If applicable, any rental, exchange or other sharing of the charity's donor list shall exclude the names of donors who have so requested (as provided in section A8, above). If a list of the charity's donors is exchanged, rented or otherwise shared with another organization, such sharing shall be for a specified period of time and a specified purpose and must be limited to what is allowed under Federal and/or Provincial privacy legislations.
11. The charity's governing board shall be informed at least annually of the number, type and disposition of complaints received from donors or prospective donors about matters that are addressed in this *Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code*.

### **C. Financial Practice and Transparency**

1. The charity's financial affairs shall be conducted in a responsible manner, consistent with the ethical obligations of stewardship and all applicable law.
2. All donations will be used to support the charity's objects, as registered with CRA.
3. The cost-effectiveness of the charity's fundraising programs shall be reviewed regularly by the governing board. No more will be spent on administration and fundraising than is required to ensure effective management and resource development.
4. The charity shall accurately disclose all costs associated with its fundraising activity.
5. The charity shall make the following information publically available (e.g., on its website, in its annual report, in its financial statements) within 6 months of its year end:
  - total fundraising revenues;
  - total fundraising expenses;
  - total expenditures on charitable activities/programming.
6. Charities with over \$1 million in annual revenue must have their financial statements audited by an independent licensed public accountant. Charities with annual revenue between \$250,000 and \$1 million may have a review engagement unless required by their governing legislation to have an audit.
7. If the charity's investable assets surpass \$1,000,000, an Investment Policy shall be established setting out asset allocation, procedures for investment decisions, and asset protection issues.

Approved by Development Committee on February 5, 2013

Approved by the Board of Governors on February 28, 2013

Reviewed by the Advancement and External Relations Committee - Jan 28, 2014 (No changes)