Charitable Donation Guidelines

Is your student group interested in fundraising for a charity or non-profit organization? Here are a few guidelines and procedures that will assist you in sponsoring a successful program.

• The charity you choose to support must be a registered 501(c) 3.

A 501(c) 3 designation means the organization has registered with the United States Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”) and met the standards of a non-profit. The non-profit organization your student group selects must be registered and must be able to submit a W-9 as proof of its 501(c) 3 designation. If you intend to make an international donation you will need to find the American arm of the recipient organization. For example, donations after the tsunami in Japan were made to the American arm of the Red Cross and designated for Japan relief.

• All your expenses must be paid for before a donation can be made.

When planning a charity event, the goal is to make more money than you spend. This sounds simple but it’s not always easy. Expenses can add up quickly. Take the time well before your event to write up an anticipated budget. Look at what you spent last year (if this is an annual program) as a guideline. Write up a detailed budget and anticipated income. Factor in a percentage of the expenses for unexpected costs. Use this total number to determine ticket prices (if applicable) and general fundraising goals.

After your event you will need to finalize all expenses and add up all your donations and ticket sales. Once you have determined your total proceeds, you can complete the Charitable Donation Form and a check will be processed for the charity of your choice. Full expense and income documentation must be submitted with the Form.

• Allocations Board funding cannot be used to cover event expenses if you plan to donate proceeds from ticket sales.

The purpose of Allocations Board (“AB”) is to provide funding to registered student organizations so they can provide free events to Boston University students. When the purpose of your event is to raise money for an outside organization, AB cannot contribute towards the potential profit. However, AB can lend you
money to cover initial expenses. If you have accepted an AB Loan, your organization must first repay the Allocation Board loan before making any donation to the designated charity.

The Charitable Donation Form provided by Student Activities requires you to list all your expenses, proceeds, and AB loan (if any) in order to document the complete financial details of your event. This Form will also serve as the check request for the designated charity.

Unfortunately, if your event fails to raise money beyond your expenses you will not be able to make a donation and your organization will still be responsible for repaying the AB loan money. However, if your event did not raise enough money to repay the AB loan in full, your organization will not be responsible for the outstanding amount. In that case, you will be responsible for paying as much as possible and Allocation Board will then forgive the difference.

Note: All Charitable Donation Forms are subject to Student Activities review and approval.

- Donations collected via raffles, collection bins, or other methods that are not tied to admittance to the program (i.e. a ticket) can be donated.
If your event includes voluntary fundraising activities during the event, these monies can be donated directly to the non-profit. All donations are subject to Student Activities review and approval.

- Your event should include educational programs about the designated non-profit organization and the services it provides.
Your attendees and contributors should know a little something about the non-profit organization they are supporting. Include some time in your program to educate them on the organization’s mission and charitable activities. If possible, invite to your event a guest who benefits from the services, local volunteers with the organization, or someone who works for the organization.

- No alcohol donations.
Donations of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

- All promotional materials must include the phrase “All proceeds (after expenses) will be donated to [insert designated charity].”