

ASDC Ethical Gift Acceptance Policy

Last reviewed: **July 2023**

This Ethical Gift Acceptance Policy aligns with our [Vision, Mission and Values](#), alongside our legal responsibilities as a charity, and commitments to our current stakeholders. We recognise that all conversations with those willing to financially support ASDC are on a case-by-case basis. However, this policy is in place with the intention of protecting ASDC and the members we represent from reputational or financial risk, and to prevent any negative experiences in our interactions with funders through increased transparency of process.

This Policy is concerned with our core funders through event sponsors, commercial partners (our associate members or event exhibitor) and philanthropic gifts. It includes in-kind contributions to ASDC from organisations or companies.

ASDC core members and national partners have different funding/gift acceptance policies and ethical criteria, and we do not presume to impact the policies of our individual science and discovery centre, eco-attraction, museum or STEM-engagement members and partners.

All core funding contributions (including gifts, sponsorship and associate membership) and organisations willing to financial support ASDC will be considered by our Chief Executive and members of our Board of Trustees against the principles outlined below and the values of our organisation.

This Policy takes a stance on fossil fuels and climate, indiscriminate weapons and human rights. It is subject to review every 12 months.

Principles of acceptance

We actively seek funders, suppliers and partners to work with ASDC who:

1. Share our vision of a society where science is accessible, inclusive and valued by all as a fundamental part of everyday life. For example, we seek organisations who promote equity, social justice and STEM participation and opportunities for all.
2. Support our [values](#) of Inclusion, Connection, Collaboration, Evidence-based practice and sustainability. For example, we seek organisations who enable environmental sustainability through reduced reliance on fossil fuels, sustainable waste management or reduction of chemicals that persist in and harm the environment.

We are unlikely to accept core funds from organisations or individuals whose main activities:

- Deliberately undermine or misrepresent the scientific process and evidence it produces.
- Substantively contribute to environmental degradation (including climate change and ecological destruction) such as exploration, extraction or production of fossil fuels.
- Involve the manufacture, transfer and sales of arms and weapons.

- Actively promote tobacco, heavy consumption/binge drinking of alcohol or gambling industries with a record of irresponsibility towards customers and addiction.
- Intentionally use exploitative, child, poor, or forced labour in their processes, including core activities that exploit vulnerable people for profit.
- Industries, partners or individuals with known extreme political views and activities that advocate discrimination, incitement to hatred or fail in their responsibility to respect human rights.

ASDC will not accept funding when:

- It is intended to unduly influence financial processes or is motivated by personal gain.
- Acceptance is expected to constitute a formal and written endorsement by ASDC and/or our members to related products, services, or publicised views.
- It is unlawful to do so, for example, laundering.

All fundraising by ASDC is for the benefit of the charity and will clearly state the purpose for which funds are sought. ASDC cannot accept funding in cases where to do so would not be in our best interests and conflict with our charitable aims. This includes cases where we would compromise our independence, create unacceptable conflicts of interest, expose ourselves and our members to reputational and/or financial risk or cause any other damage.

If the occasion should arise where ASDC has a multi-year partnership and the funder, supplier or partner changes their position on the above during the term of the partnership, ASDC reserves the right to review this agreement with the view to withdraw.

Current and prospective funders are entitled to the following upon request:

- The most recent annual report and financial statements
- Confirmation of our governance arrangements
- A copy of this document and any other relevant policies

We will normally publicly acknowledge all contributions and engagements unless the funder specifically requests anonymity. In cases where we receive an anonymous donation over £25,000, we will report it to the Charity Commission.

The privacy of funders will be respected. Any donor records that are maintained by ASDC will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Under the Freedom of Information Act, funders have the right to see their own donor record and to challenge its accuracy. Requests to remain anonymous will be respected as far as is legally, practically, and ethically possible.

ASDC will aim to respond within five business working days to a complaint by a current or prospective funder about any matter that is addressed in this ethics policy. In the first instance the complaint will be dealt with by our staff member receiving communications and our Chief Executive. If the complainant remains dissatisfied the complaint will be escalated to the Board of Trustees.