

1. Introduction

1.1 Lightyear Foundation is committed to carrying out its business fairly, honestly and openly. We believe that we should NOT receive benefits of any kind from third parties which might reasonably be seen to compromise our personal judgement and integrity.

1.2 This policy applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf, including Trustees, employees at all levels whether permanent or temporary, directors, officers, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, interns, agents, contractors, external consultants, third-party representatives and business partners . This procedure does not form part of any contract of employment. It may be amended at any time and we may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case. The policy applies to all processes and to any dealings with any customers, clients, partners, donors and suppliers.

2. Aim

2.1 Lightyear Foundation values its reputation for ethical behaviour and financial probity and reliability. Lightyear Foundation recognises that any involvement in bribery is both illegal and will adversely impact its image and reputation.

2.2 The aim of this policy is to help employees understand what to do if they are offered gifts and hospitality, and to provide a clear framework to ensure that all relevant parties understand what constitutes bribery, corruption, or exposes the charity to accusations (founded or unfounded) of unethical or unlawful behaviour.

3. Bribery

3.1 A bribe means a financial or other inducement or reward for action which is illegal, unethical, a breach of trust or improper in any way. Bribes can take the form of money, gifts, loans, fees, hospitality, services, discounts, the award of a contract or any other advantage or benefit.

3.2 Bribery includes offering, promising, giving, accepting or seeking a bribe.

3.3 All staff, volunteers and other parties as set out in section 1.2 above have a responsibility to help in the prevention, detection and reporting of bribery. Specifically you must not:

- give or offer any payment, gift, hospitality or other benefit in the expectation that a business advantage will be received in return, or to reward any business received;
- accept any offer from a third party that you know or suspect is made with the expectation that we will provide a business advantage for them or anyone else;
- give or offer any payment (sometimes called a facilitation payment) to a government or local council official in any country to facilitate or speed up a routine or necessary procedure;
- threaten or retaliate against another person who has refused to offer or accept a bribe or who has raised concerns about possible bribery or corruption;
- knowingly fail to challenge or report suspicions of bribery or corruption.

4. Gifts and donations

4.1 Lightyear Foundation in deciding whether to accept or decline a donation or gift will consider the charity's best overall interest and will not accept donations from donors whose activities appear to be in direct conflict with our charitable aims and objectives.

4.2 An employee or any member of their family/friends should not, directly or through others, solicit or accept money, gifts, hospitality or anything else that could influence or reasonably give the appearance of influencing the relationship with that organisation or individual.

4.3 Unless you have been informed otherwise you may accept a gift to a nominal value of £15, such as a box of chocolates or biscuits, advertising novelty or small seasonal gift when it is customarily offered to others having a similar relationship with that individual or organisation. It must be made clear to the person or organisation that is giving the gift that it will be reported to the Lightyear Foundation office where a decision will be made as to how to use the gift.

4.4 Lightyear Foundation will not take gifts from organisations or individuals who participate in activities which:

- could cause detriment to the charity's reputation.
- will disproportionately decrease the amount of donations to further the work of the charity.
- undermine our vision and values.
- are associated with unsuitable products, corporate and individuals e.g., arms dealings and tobacco.
- are from individuals, groups or organisations which are known to take advantage of disabled people or other vulnerable people.
- are personal gifts to Lightyear Foundation staff members, which should be discouraged at all times.
- are from unknown sources of funding. Lightyear Foundation will take reasonable steps to determine the ultimate source of funding for each gift and satisfy itself that the funds do not derive, directly or indirectly, from activity that was or is illegal.
- potentially harm our relationships with other donors, service users, stakeholders or volunteers.
- expose us to undue adverse publicity or reputational risk.
- require unacceptable expenditure or additional charity resources.

4.5 If supporters wish to make a donation to a specific area of Lightyear Foundation's work then they can make a specified donation by providing written instruction to this effect with their donation. Lightyear Foundation will always respect this. If Lightyear Foundation is unable to accept the request for the specified donation and the sponsor does not want the donation used in any other way Lightyear Foundation will refund the donation.

4.6 If a gift is received which may not be acceptable under the terms of this policy, the CEO or Deputy CEO must be notified at the earliest opportunity. This will be researched further and the matter will be referred to the Trustee Board with the necessary information regarding the donation.

5. Giving gifts and hospitality

5.1 Staff, volunteers, and all others as set out in 1.2, above, or any member of their family/friends should not, directly or through others, offer or give any, money, gifts, hospitality or other thing of value to an official, employee or representative of any supplier, customer or any other organisation, if doing so could reasonably give the appearance of influencing the organisation's or individuals relationship with Lightyear Foundation.

5.2 Staff, volunteers and all others as set out in 2.1 above, may with management approval give gifts of a nominal value up to £15, or provide meals, provided that the expenses are kept within a reasonable and approved level. Gifts must be of an appropriate type and value depending on the circumstances and taking account of the reason for the gift. Gifts must not include cash or cash equivalent (such as vouchers), or be given in secret. Gifts must be given in the name of Lightyear Foundation, not your name.

6. How to raise a concern

6.1 If any member of staff, volunteer or any other party as set out in 2.1 above, is concerned about a gift that has been given or offered which may represent a possible breach of these rules they should approach the CEO, Deputy CEO or Chair of the Trustees who will treat any such information in confidence.

6.2 Staff and volunteers should also consult the CEO or Deputy CEO if they have any questions – however minor – about the interpretation and application of this policy.

7. The Law

All staff and volunteers are required to comply with The Bribery Act 2010. The CEO is responsible for the policy in relation to The Bribery Act 2010. A breach of these rules and guidelines will be regarded as a serious matter which may lead to disciplinary action. The Bribery Act 2010 highlights two specific types of bribery that could lead to prosecution:

- the liability to prosecution if a person associated with Lightyear Foundation bribes another person, where an associated person is one who performs services on or behalf of the organisation; and
- bribery of a foreign public official, where an official is one who holds a legislative, administrative or judicial position in a territory or country outside the UK.

This means that Lightyear Foundation needs to take care to ensure that any contractors, subcontractors, agents or business partners acting on its behalf comply with the Act. Charities risk losing support if there is a perception amongst the public (justified or not) that charity funds are being applied lavishly or wastefully. Similarly, Trustees need to remember that accepting hospitality beyond the reasonable minimum, even if it costs the charity nothing, can give an impression of an inappropriate culture of extravagance, or inappropriate influence.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Last reviewed: 24/07/2023