



## ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF FUNDRAISING AND DONATING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Approved by the Board of the University of  
Helsinki on 24 November 2021

### **Ethical principles of fundraising and donating at the University of Helsinki**

Donations to the University of Helsinki, different units of the University and the University of Helsinki Funds provide important support for science, research and studying. Thank you to our donors and partners in joining us to apply the power of knowledge - for the world.

The operations of the University of Helsinki are founded on the University's values of truth, freedom, *Bildung* and inclusivity; the regulations of the University and its Funds as well as their strategic plans, guidelines and ethical principles; and valid legislation. Compliance with the ethical principles of fundraising and donating at the University of Helsinki, while treating donors respectfully, is required in all of the University's fundraising activities and donor relations.

Fundraising and donations support the core duties of the University of Helsinki: research, teaching and public engagement. Donors can include private individuals, foundations, businesses, organisations, public operators and donors making a bequest from Finland and abroad.

#### **Fundraising at the University of Helsinki is reliable, and the principles apply to all**

Fundraising at the University of Helsinki (hereafter the 'University') is based on the legislation, guidelines, values and trust mentioned above. The University and its partners operate transparently and honestly, and act with respect towards the donors. Publicly available data and data obtained in discussions with donors are utilised in fundraising. Data pertaining to fundraising and donations are processed confidentially, securely and with regard to the protection of privacy.

The University allocates any donated funds obtained through fundraising to targets specified in deeds of donation or other donation documents in a manner decided by the University. Related decisions are made by the Board of the University and/or other University leadership and/or unit leadership according to their authority as part of the University's regular management as well as operational and financial planning. The allocation of donated funds is transparent, and information about it is relayed as part of University communications. The expenses associated with fundraising are included in the University's operating budget, and they are reasonable compared to the income and benefit gained. The University reports on them as part of its accounting and reporting on its operations and finances.



## **Fundraising and donating guided by University values as well as sustainability and responsibility**

The University describes various donation targets in its communications, in addition to which the University can discuss new targets and make agreements on them with donors to be supported with donated funds. The University employs clear procedures in accepting, approving, processing and allocating donations.

The University investigates the background of its donors and donations thoroughly and sufficiently comprehensively in relation to the donation, complying with the principle of due diligence. All University operations are guided by legislation, values, the concepts of sustainability and responsibility as described in [the strategic plan of the University](#), and respect for the value of humans and nature as a whole. In terms of fundraising and donations, this means, among other things, that the University does not accept donations originating in any known illegal activity; donations whose purpose endangers the University's autonomy, independence or reputation; donations whose purpose conflicts with the University's values; or donations whose purpose may endanger the ethical, ecological, financial or social sustainability of University operations. The University makes decisions related to donations that pertain to the conduct of research or studies, personnel choices related to studying, research or employment, grades, or other academic performance. For the sake of the openness of University operations, it is important for the University to be able to state, for example, the scope and purpose of all donations in related communications.

For the purpose of fulfilling its obligations for due diligence, the University can assess the acceptance of donations to ensure, for example, its independence and decision-making which takes into consideration the University's values as well as responsibility and sustainability. The University can accept donations for which the University carries out an ethics assessment related to accepting the donation. Examples of situations to be assessed:

- The donation underlies a connection to activities that the University considers important to assess in relation to the University's values or the University's reputation and/or the University's vision for socially, financially or environmentally sustainable and responsible activities;
- The donor or a representative of the donor is a customer and/or service provider of the University of Helsinki (e.g., procurement or outsourced services), or the donor or their representative is otherwise affiliated with the University of Helsinki and/or a University unit supported by the donation; or
- The financial value of the donation is extremely high, or its transfer is associated with complex financial arrangements or an exchange rate risk.
- Assessment can also be carried out in situations where the University learns additional information that is fundamentally different from the information obtained at the time of donation.

## **A responsible and long-term approach to the allocation and use of donated funds**

(Monetary) donations given to the University of Helsinki and the University of Helsinki Funds are allocated as part of the University of Helsinki's investment assets. The University aims to ensure that its investment assets and investments yield good returns and positive performance outcomes over a long period.

Donated funds and/or income generated by them are used for the purpose indicated in the deed of donation or other donation document, as well as, whenever applicable, in the rules of the donated fund to be established with the donation. In the use of donated funds and the income



generated by them, the University adheres to their original purpose as closely as possible at any given time and executes the donor's will as well as possible. Whenever possible, any changes are discussed with the donor or their representative, with a separate decision made on the changes.

A significant share of donations are consolidated in funds, while the part of funds used consists primarily of the income generated by them. The fixed rate of return is confirmed annually by the Board of the University. At its discretion and/or as agreed with the donor, the University can also use the capital of donated funds. Any equity investments based on donated assets under government matched-funding schemes are used according to the terms of the relevant matched-funding scheme.

### **Donors are part of our partner network, while related communication is open**

The University of Helsinki manages its donor relations as part of its long-term partnerships in the manner described above, respecting the will of the donor: the oldest fund still included in the University's donated funds is based on a donation made in the 1740s.

Acknowledging our partners is part of long-term partnerships. The impact of donations and their use are communicated to all donors and other University partners that play a role in the University's partnership network. Club Giraffe is the University's donor community, which offers a membership to anyone who has made a larger donation to the University. The University also invites to its donor network donors who have made a bequest to the University or the University of Helsinki Funds.

The University reports on donations as part of its communications and reporting on its operations. The scope and purpose of the donation, among other details, can always be stated in related University communications.

The University also openly describes, for example, positions established with donated funds. As an acknowledgment of the support enabled by donated funds, the University can name, for example, research programmes or professorships in a manner agreed with the donor.

### **Approval of the principles**

These principles have been approved by the Board of the University of Helsinki on 24 November 2021.

### **Further information about the principles**

The following paragraphs describe the texts in the footnotes of the principles approved by the Board of Directors of the University of Helsinki (24 November 2021) as a separate whole, so that the entire file is in an accessible format and thus available to all readers interested in the principles.

#### **Further information: Introduction**

- The principles are intended for donors of the University of Helsinki, partners interested in donating and donations, authorities, and the media, as well as the entire University community, and they are part of the University's ethical guidelines: <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/about-us/responsibility-and-sustainability/ethical-guidelines>. [The international principles of fundraising](#) published in Finnish by the Finnish Fundraising Association (VaLa ry) have been taken into consideration in the University's principles.



- Core duties of the University: section 2 of the Universities Act (558/2009). Donations denote any gratuitous financial support received by the University of Helsinki, and they are always based on a deed of donation or other donation document. The University of Helsinki can receive and accept, for example, money, movable and immovable property, or copyrights as donations. Other forms of donations include rights of ownership, possession, access or other intellectual property rights, or the commercial utilisation of any of the above, or services. The University retains a valid fundraising permit in accordance with current legislation. Separate guidelines pertaining to, for example, procurements, business and research funding as well as sponsorships are observed, while project funds awarded by foundations or other parties are not considered donations even if the counter-performance associated with them does not extend beyond a reporting obligation.

**Further information: Fundraising at the University of Helsinki is reliable, and the principles apply to all**

- University of Helsinki staff or its partners accept no personal benefit related to donations or potential donations from donors or potential donors. For further information, see, for example, [the University of Helsinki anti-corruption policy](#).
- The University discloses data it has obtained to external parties for statutory purposes, or when such disclosure has been agreed with the donor, with the provisions of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (612/1999) or communications agreed with the donor as examples.

**Further information: Fundraising and donating guided by University values as well as sustainability and responsibility**

- Donations can be made by a range of means, including bequests, and the University can also accept non-monetary donations. The University only provides general advice pertaining to donations and accepts donations from legally competent donors only. The University can, for example, advise makers of wills or founders of funds on how to formulate the donation target in the will or the terms and conditions of the fund in a manner that supports research and studying in the long term and makes it as easy as possible for the University of Helsinki to interpret and comply with the donor's will in a dynamic manner. The University does not provide personal legal counselling, nor does it draw up wills. Wills are not drawn up on University premises, nor can members of University staff serve as witnesses to a will if it is known that the will contains provisions on bequeathing the estate of the maker of the will to the University.
- The University will report to public authorities any suspicion of illegal activity relating to donations.
- To comply with statutory obligations and its own principles, the University does not accept donations whose background the University cannot determine to a sufficiently precise degree.
- The University and the donor can through joint discussion determine, for example, the field of a professorship to be established with a donation, and the donor can target, for example, grants to specific fields. Decisions on appointments as well as recipients of grants, awards and scholarships are always made by the University of Helsinki.
- Assessment is carried out utilising methods in accordance with a rector's decision, for example, as part of the work of the Ethics Advisory Council. In addition, fundraising and donations are assessed as part of the University's management and accounting practices as well as internal audit processes.



- Examples of the situations when the University can assess the acceptance of donations to ensure, for example, its independence and decision-making which takes into consideration the University's values as well as responsibility and sustainability, include the donated funds' background in a fragile, unstable or undemocratic state, the donated funds' connection to parties subject to international sanctions, or their connection to industrial sectors that make the University consider it important to assess the relation of the donor, donated funds and/or the purpose of the donation to the University's values as well as sustainability and responsibility. When necessary, the University can assess donations on a case-by-case basis, for example, as part of the work of the University's Ethics Advisory Council.
- Examples of the affiliations of the donor to the university are for example that the donor or their representative serves on University bodies, they have employee or student status at the unit supported by the donation, or they or a person closely linked to them has applied for a student place or job at the unit in question.

**Further information: A responsible and long-term approach to the allocation and use of donated funds**

- Investment activities are carried out in compliance with [the Principles for Responsible Investment Activities approved by the Board of the University](#).
- The University has the right to collect from donated funds an overhead share on the basis of its decision and/or as agreed with the donor. At the moment (2021), overhead shares are only collected in agreement with the donor, and donated funds and/or income generated by them are allocated in full to the target indicated in the deed of donation or other donation document.

**Further information: Donors are part of our partner network, while related communication is open**

- For example, on its intranet and the public website, in publications related to donating, on social media and other potential communication channels, as well as in official inspection and audit reports.
- Donors can express a wish for the University to not publish, for example, the donor's name. The University of Helsinki's leadership and specialists coordinating the University's fundraising, donor relations and financial services have access to donation data, which are stored in relevant documents to be permanently archived and in the donor register. Data are disclosed for statutory purposes or for scientific research. Such purposes can include use referred to in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999). In situations where the disclosure of identifying information has no legal grounds, all identifying information pertaining to the donor is redacted in documents, especially in the case of private individuals.
- Practices related to nomination are processed in a manner decided by the rector of the University of Helsinki.