



Sponsorship Policy

Background

This policy aims to:

- make sure the LEP's position and reputation is adequately protected and not be brought into disrepute;
- identify the types of sponsorship that are and are not appropriate;
- provide clear guidance on the types of sponsorship it would consider in line with its business objectives;
- ensure maximum return on investment is generated;
- avoid any potential allegations of inappropriate dealings, favouritism or conflicts of interest.

Rationale

As a business led public-private partnerships entrusted by Government to manage public funds, we have a responsibility to ensure that we secure value for money and act openly and honestly. We use our convening power to bring together partners from the private, public and third sectors to collaborate on a wide-range of Issues to drive economic growth and productivity. As such each sponsorship request will be evaluated on a case by case basis and in line with the key objectives in our [Annual Delivery Plan](#) and code of conduct as set out in our [Local Assurance Framework](#) to ensure there is no conflict of interest or potential reputational risk.

The LEP will not enter into sponsorship agreements with:

- organisations which do not comply with this sponsorship policy or the Advertising Standards Authority code of practice;
- organisations in dispute with the LEP or its accountable body, Hertfordshire County Council, or where there is pending/active legal action. We will also not accept sponsorship from companies who are in contract negotiation with the LEP where this may be viewed as an endorsement of a bid;
- organisations with a political purpose, including pressure groups and trade unions;
- organisations involved in racial or sexual prejudice or discrimination on the basis of disability, faith or gender;
- organisations through which, in our opinion, their operations are involved in any illegal or immoral activities;
- an organisation where an agreement will damage the reputation of the LEP.

Our sponsorship activity should broadly support our key business objectives to:

- grow our world-class sectors and secure further inward and FDI investment
- invest in research and innovation and support our businesses to scale up and grow;
- deliver the skills needed to support our future sustainable and inclusive growth ambitions

There are three main types of partnership arrangements that the LEP will consider. These are:

- **Payment** – the partner requests a fee in exchange for an association and an agreed package of rights and benefits;
- **Value in Kind (VIK)** – the LEP offers its services (for free or at a reduced rate) in lieu of payment for an association and an agreed package of rights and benefits;
- **Marketing support** – the LEP offers marketing support to a partner event in lieu of payment for an association and an agreed package of rights and benefits.

Use of LEP Branding

Where the LEP or any part of its brand family has entered into a sponsorship agreement with another party, the LEP will have the rights of approval and prior agreement on all appropriate sponsorship related activity, such as use of the LEP brand or its brand family logos on any publicity and promotion of the sponsorship in sponsor's own advertising, media and marketing materials, including in digital and social media.

The use of LEP branding must adhere to the LEP or brand family guidelines and guidance on use should be sought from the LEP's communications team. The size and positioning of LEP logos on any promotional material, goods or signage must also be considered by the LEP communications team.

In return for using any LEP brand in promotion, the LEP will seek to maximize its association and its return on investment by securing:

- a visible association via online and physical presence at the event including keynote speaker opportunities; advertising; and key LEP messaging to be carried on all event collateral. The visibility will be tiered in line with the value of the sponsorship arrangement.

Where an exclusive sponsorship deal has been secured the agreement would expect to include:

- early opportunity to help shape the programme;
- 15-minute keynote speaking slot for LEP Board Member and participation in panel debate (s);
- branding to be prominently displayed on all event collateral with link to LEP/brand family website;
- prior approval sought for LEP Board Member quotes in PR and permission to take part in videos, podcasts, broadcasts, radio interviews etc

Monitoring and Evaluation

Sponsorship evaluation will monitor and measure the impact on brand awareness, brand image, and audience behaviour. This will include TV, radio, online, social media, or live event coverage. This will provide the ROI evidence needed to validate sponsorship value and optimise brand fit. This evaluation will be used to inform future decision-making and ongoing review of our sponsorship policy.

Responsibilities

The LEP's communication team provides expertise on and acts as the LEP brand guardians. The overall co-ordination of sponsorship agreements across the LEP are the responsibility of the communications team in consultation with the Partnerships Director. The Strategy Group, which comprises LEP Board Members and the LEP's Senior Leadership Team, will provide the necessary scrutiny and transparency on all sponsorship arrangements.

Disclaimer

Acceptance of sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products and services and does not confer any other rights or privileges. The LEP also reserves the right to review both this sponsorship policy on a regular basis and to seek legal guidance if any terms of the sponsorship arrangement have not been met. In the event of any dispute or conflict of interest, the LEP will seek guidance from its accountable body, Hertfordshire County Council.

Version Control	Final/Draft
Title and Version	Code of Conduct v2
Author	Sally Stanley
Agreed Date	23 March 2023
Last Review Date	
Next Review Date	April 2024
Approval by	LEP Board

