

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Administrative Operations
AREA: Development

Number: 03.04.01

SUBJECT: Development Solicitation
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I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document outlines procedures to be used for solicitation of any private funds for the University of Houston. This University Advancement (UA) Development policy covers private donations from individuals, corporations, foundations, and organizations, and is consistent with System Administrative Memorandum (SAM) [08.A.01](#).

II. POLICY

Coordination of private fundraising activity directly impacts the external perception of the University as Tier One and allows for the execution of best practices regarding solicitations.

1. All University faculty, staff and volunteer board members (e.g., support organizations' board members) involved in qualifying, cultivating and/or soliciting gift prospects and donors must utilize the UHS Relationship Management System through University Advancement staff members and use the University's *Advance* database.
2. The following require advance approval by the Vice President (VP), University Advancement, before solicitation:
 - a. Solicitations equal to or over \$1,000,000
 - b. Gifts that propose a naming opportunity
3. The following require advance approval by the Director of Annual Giving:
 - a. Solicitations via direct mail
 - b. Solicitations via phone
 - c. Solicitations via online media
 - d. Solicitations via events where requesting donations or gifts are part of the invitation
4. The Office of Gift Planning is responsible for review and approval of all solicitations for irrevocable and revocable deferred gifts.
5. Prospects that are approved through the annual Business Planning process are considered to be cleared for solicitation at the approved level.
6. In all cases, major gift prospects, corporations and foundations should be approached in coordination with the UA professional staff responsible for managing the University relationship with the prospect in question – the Relationship Manager (RM). The RM coordinates all cultivation, solicitation and stewardship activities for the donor prospect.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. Solicitation – The work of asking a person or entity for a contribution of money or resources during a fundraising or marketing campaign. To request or appeal for such a contribution.
2. Gift – A contribution received by the institution for either unrestricted or restricted use in the furtherance of the institution for which no commitment of resources or services has been made other than, possibly, committing to use the gift as the donor specifies. The contribution is a nonreciprocal transfer in that there is no implicit or explicit statement of exchange, purchase of services, or provision of exclusive information. If the donor receives benefits in return for the contribution, the amount of the gift recorded and reported is reduced by the fair market value of all benefits given according to IRS and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regulations. Unless otherwise stipulated, the institution has no obligation to report to the donor how the gift is used or invested, but the University of Houston prefers to provide such reports of donor impact on the institution's mission as a part of donor stewardship.
3. Major Gift – A significant donation from an individual to a charitable or voluntary organization. At UH, a major gift is a single commitment of \$25,000 or more.
4. Prospect – Any potential donor whose linkages giving ability and interests have been confirmed. Someone with the potential to make a gift who meets the selection criteria for a solicitation project, invitation list or newsletter mailing.

IV. PROCEDURES

1. Requests for solicitation are to be submitted as part of the annual Business Planning process, managed by the AVP for Development, or designee as assigned, with annual templates for planning to be distributed to college and administrative unit Advancement Officers.
2. Requests for data (name, contact information) for a solicitation are to be submitted to the Office of Annual Giving. Submit the Appeal Request Form (also available as the Data Request Form), which can be accessed on the Advancement Intranet. First priority will be given to requests received during annual Business Planning. Not all such requests will be approved.
 - a. All requests need to include proposed fund-raising goal, timing, audience and strategies.
 - b. The Director of Annual Giving, or designee as assigned, must also approve the design, message, timing and audience.
 - c. Responsibility defining timing, target audiences and appropriate data for the solicitation rests with the Office of Annual Giving.
 - d. Costs for a special solicitation are the responsibility of the unit requesting the project.
 - e. For a direct mail project approved by but not implemented by Annual Giving, 10 samples of the direct mail package are to be provided to the Office of Annual Giving.

3. To submit a request for solicitation that requires approval from the VP or AVP, at any time other than during annual Business Planning, colleges and administrative units are to work through the senior-most director of Advancement assigned to them. Otherwise, a written solicitation plan may be sent for solicitation approval directly to the AVP for Development.

V. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Vice President for University Advancement

Review: Every three years on or before June 1

VI. APPROVAL

Vice President for University Advancement

Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance

President

Date of President's Approval: _____

VII. REFERENCES

[SAM 08.A.01](#) – Management and Development of University Advancement Activities

REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Approved Date	Description of Changes
1	TBD	Initial version