Public Fundraising Regulatory Association

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Policy

The work of the PFRA

In 2011/12, Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) members recruited approximately 240,000 new donors on UK high streets. Donors recruited this way give around £45 million a year to charities and good causes.

Who are we?
We are the nationally recognised self-regulator for face-to-face (F2F) fundraising activity in the UK, putting good regulation at the heart of our work. Our aim is to promote responsible F2F fundraising practices in the solicitation of committed gifts conducted in public spaces by charities and good causes. To do this we work in partnership with councils including licensing teams and town centre managers, as well as business improvement districts. The PFRA's self-regulatory offer is delivered **free** to councils through our Site Management Agreements (SMAs).

How are we funded?
We are funded through annual membership fees from charities, professional fundraising organisations, as well as associate members. However, the majority of our funding comes through a levy paid by our charity members, who contribute 75p for each donor they recruit through F2F fundraising. This helps to ensure we are a charity-led organisation. We also levy a charge to charities conducting 'prospecting' – collecting potential donors' contact details so they can be asked to give on a later date.

What do Site Management Agreements (SMAs) do?
Our SMAs are voluntary agreements between us and councils (or town centre managers, business improvement districts, etc.) allowing us to effectively regulate F2F fundraising in the local area. Research by the LGA found that 78% of responding councils with a voluntary agreement in place had found it an effective way of managing collections.[1]

- SMAs are negotiated with councils to balance the duty of charities to ask for donations with local needs. They define the terms and conditions for F2F fundraising occurring on the public highways in council areas, including where fundraisers can work, what days and how many etc. These agreements allow for local preferences within a simple framework, guided by section 60 of the 2006 Charities Act.
- We work closely with our council partners to monitor and enforce these agreements, the Institute of Fundraising's Code of Fundraising Practice, our own rules, and issue

[1] http://www.local.gov.uk/c/journal/view_article_content?groupId=10171&articleId=3585080&version=1.5

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penalties and sanctions to members who breach agreed standards. The penalty points accrued by our members are then turned into a monetary fine once organisations have passed a threshold.

What else does self-regulation include?

Alongside this we have a wider model of self-regulation which includes:

- Accrediting our members to ensure they have adequate systems in place to enable them to comply with best practice, and undertake non-financial audits to confirm systems and processes (including observing the training of fundraisers). All fundraising organisations that do F2F fundraising are members of ours.
- Policing and promoting the Institute of Fundraising's Code of Fundraising Practice, which is the benchmark for best practice standards. We have developed Rule Books for both street and doorstep F2F activity introducing a range of detailed rules (which complement the Code of Fundraising Practice) that allow us to issue penalties and sanctions against any of our members who breach the rules and fail to meet agreed standards of behaviour.
- Ensuring that complaints are managed and resolved, often live.
- Allocating fundraising spaces fairly to all members, big and small, according to the conditions agreed with local authorities, managing diaries and reporting them to councils, reducing the burden of having to field phone calls from charities and agencies who want to fundraise in your area.
- Running a programme of mystery shopping across the UK, which we have increased this year. Every month our professional mystery shoppers aim to assess 50 street fundraising teams. In addition, our own compliance staff undertake spot-checks of our members' activities to monitor and raise professional standards.

How can we help you?

Site Management Agreements and our wider regulation work means that you will:

- Get a free, effective and locally tailored solution to resolve issues with street fundraising.
- Have more control over the numbers of fundraisers within your local area, as well as where and when they operate.
- Get sent a diary every four weeks detailing who is coming to your area and when.
- Only have to deal with one organisation to resolve any complaints – which can be dealt with live.
- Have the assurance of support from our standards and compliance team as well as a set of rules which provide the standards for you to police best practice and work with us to rectify rule breaches.
- Continue to help charities support their beneficiaries.

Who to contact for more information

Please contact Compliance and Outreach Officer, Tom Rosenfeld (tom@pfra.org.uk) for more information.

Our website address is: www.pfra.org.uk