

TaxWatch Ethical Fundraising Policy

The purpose of the TaxWatch fundraising policy is to ensure that TaxWatch can raise the funds necessary to operate on a sustainable basis whilst ensuring the highest standards of integrity and transparency.

The ethics committee and the acceptance of donations

TaxWatch has established an ethics committee as a sub-committee of the TaxWatch board in order to oversee our fundraising policies and the acceptance of significant donations.

The ethics committee will review all significant donations in line with this policy. A significant donation is a donation worth more than £2,000.

The decision on whether to accept a donation will be taken by the chair of the Ethics Committee, after seeking the advice of committee members.

When reviewing a donation the ethics committee will take into account whether the acceptance of any donation is likely to harm the effectiveness of TaxWatch as an organisation in pursuing its mission. In particular this means instances where:

1. A donation would likely harm the reputation of TaxWatch amongst the public, stakeholders or other donors.
2. A donation would create a perception of an unacceptable conflict of interest.
 - E.g. TaxWatch would not accept a donation from an individual or business in return for investigating a competitor, or for the promotion of a particular policy where the donor has a financial interest in seeing that policy implemented.
3. The source of funds is unclear, or where there is a suspicion that the funds may have been tainted by criminal activity.
4. A donor has been a proponent or promoter of aggressive, contrived and artificial tax avoidance schemes, and continues to argue in favour of the legitimacy of such practices.
5. The ethics committee feels that a donation would hinder TaxWatch's ability to pursue its mission in any other way not mentioned above.

TaxWatch may receive funds from donors who have benefited from tax exemptions which TaxWatch believes should be ended, so long as those exemptions or benefits were legal and used in line with their intended purpose.

Editorial Committee

We believe that the best safeguard of our independence as an organisation is to ensure a proper separation of funding from editorial control.

To this end TaxWatch has setup an independent editorial committee which oversees editorial decision making.

Donors to the organisation will be precluded from becoming members of the editorial committee, or from participating in meetings of the editorial committee.

Project funding

In order to maintain editorial independence TaxWatch will generally only seek funding for core costs. TaxWatch will generally not seek funding for specific projects, although it may do where those projects are in line with the organisation's strategic goals. Funding for specific projects should not comprise more than 20% of TaxWatch's annual budget.

Where funding has been received for a specific project or activity this should clearly be identified alongside any material published in connection with that activity.

Where project funding is received, the Ethics Committee should review any conflicts of interest between the donor and the project receiving support.

Gifts

Employees of TaxWatch, members of the Editorial Committee and Directors should not generally accept gifts or hospitality in connection with their work – unless there is a clear business purpose in doing so (for example a waiver for a conference fee in return for speaking). Staff, directors and members of the editorial committee should declare any gifts received in connection with their work above a value of £25.

Transparency

TaxWatch will publish the names of all individuals and organisations which make a donation larger than £2,000.

Donations from companies

TaxWatch expects the highest standards of corporate tax compliance and transparency when it comes to accepting donations from corporations.

TaxWatch will not accept donations from businesses which have entered into artificial arrangements to dodge their tax obligations.