

John F. Kennedy School of Government
Gifts Policy Committee
Scope, Standards, and Procedures

Scope

When a proposal is prepared for submission to an external sponsor organization for a specific research, training or outreach activity, the Kennedy School's review and approval process is well defined. Proposals and detailed budgets are reviewed and approved in advance through the *Dean's Approval Process* by the Research Administration Office, the Office of Financial Services, and the Academic Dean. Proposals are then submitted to the sponsor by Harvard's Office for Sponsored Research (OSR). If successful, these proposals are awarded as grants or contracts.

Potential *gifts*, on the other hand, are reviewed by the *Gifts Policy Committee (GPC)*. Comprised of senior representatives of the KSG Financial Services, External Affairs, and Research Administration Offices, the GPC is well positioned to advise the Dean, Academic Dean, and Executive Dean on financial and administrative matters related to selected gift opportunities. Senior representatives of these offices meet regularly and are charged with reviewing certain gift proposals and advising the Dean in these (and other) specific areas:

- Potential for furthering the mission of the School, its centers, programs and/or faculty members
- Financial analysis
- Risk management (broadly defined to also include reputational risk), including coordinating due diligence
- Administrative concerns, including space and personnel implications
- Compliance issues (e.g., gift v. grant distinctions, donor anonymity, use of the Harvard or KSG names)
- Monitoring of overseas programs activity, protection of human subjects in research, and potential conflict of interest concerns

The GPC's role is strictly advisory to the Dean. In its review of potential gift opportunities, the Committee does not make any independent judgments regarding potential academic merit, nor does it seek to encroach on any area of academic freedom. Rather, by exploring administrative and/or financial cost/benefit trade-offs, and by ensuring sufficient faculty oversight and engagement, the GPC seeks to assure the Dean that a potential new initiative advances the School's mission, and does so with a clear understanding of the associated costs and benefits. Questions regarding faculty oversight and engagement (as detailed below) will be coordinated by the Chair of the GPC with the Academic Dean, as needed.

Standards

All gifts and endowments, regardless of size, must be processed and approved through the External Affairs Office and Office of Financial Services. However, potential gifts presenting one or more of the following characteristics must receive formal review by the GPC:

- When a proposed gift (or pledge) exceeds \$100,000
- When a gift is proposed as a new formal endowment account
- When there are questions of gift v. sponsored agreement criteria
- When there are questions as to the extent of KSG faculty leadership and oversight
- When there are questions as to the source or identity of the donor(s)
- When there are concerns about gift terms and conditions, including any donor naming expectations or use of the Harvard or Kennedy School names
- When a gift would have significant infrastructure implications (e.g., space, staffing, IT services)
- When there are commitments of additional funding, either by matching gifts to be raised from other donors or funds to be provided from KSG

Reviews of potential gift opportunities may explore the following questions and others, as applicable:

- What specific program activities will be supported by the new gift?
- Will these activities be overseen by a KSG Research and Policy Center (identify)?
- Are one or more KSG core faculty members committed to providing meaningful intellectual oversight?
- Does the program address a major issue(s) of contemporary public concern and will the program contribute directly to the scholarly reputation of KSG core faculty members?
- Will the program make a *direct and tangible* contribution to the KSG curriculum?
- Will the program require new investments in KSG infrastructure or staffing?
- Is the program likely to catalyze other initiatives that may generate larger revenues and expanded faculty and/or student opportunities in the future?
- Is there clear evidence of *prior* KSG interest in this policy area? Or, might the proposed program strengthen areas of inquiry that KSG regards as important and where the School's portfolio is currently thin?
- Might the program bring together KSG (and other Harvard) faculty members who would otherwise not collaborate?
- Are the gift terms and conditions consistent with University and KSG policies and are they sufficiently broad to allow for flexible spending? In the case of an endowment, do the terms provide desirable alternative uses in the case of changed needs and circumstances?

Procedures

Proposals for GPC review may be submitted by any faculty or senior staff member at any time (via email with relevant attachments). The GPC strongly encourages any individual negotiating a new gift that falls under the scope of this committee to bring it to the attention of a committee member as early in the process as is possible. Specific questions regarding finances (OFS), donor relations (EAO), or gift vs. sponsored agreement distinctions (RAO) may be brought to the attention of committee staff representing each of these offices. However, proposals may be directed to any member of the committee (below). At a minimum, material submitted for review should identify the potential donor(s) and briefly describe all donor solicitation discussions to date, describe the proposed value, timing and terms of the gift, and provide details of any discussions regarding *naming* a new initiative (program, chair, lectureship, etc.). Particular attention should be paid to the review criteria and questions noted above, as applicable.

A GPC member will acknowledge receipt of a proposal for review, and will circulate the material to the other Committee members. If no issues are identified, expedited approval notification will be given quickly. Otherwise, the proposal will be discussed at the next GPC meeting. Follow up questions, comments and next steps will be returned as quickly as possible following committee discussion. At the conclusion of the discussion and follow-up process, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Dean that: a) the gift opportunity be pursued (or accepted) as proposed, b) the gift be accepted but only with specific modifications, or c) the gift be declined and solicitation discussions discontinued. A final decision will then be relayed to the Center/Program/faculty member requesting the initial review.

If and as needed, the GPC may seek advice from or refer proposals for further review by other Kennedy School committees, including the Faculty Committee on Projects and Proposals (FCOPP) and the *ad hoc* Faculty Gifts Policy Committee. Information on these committees is available upon request.

Gifts Policy Committee Members

Matthew Alper, Associate Dean for Research, Research Administration Office
Christine Atwood, Senior Associate Dean for External Affairs, External Affairs Office
Derek Bok, Advisor
Dennis Thompson, Advisor
Stewart Uretsky, Associate Executive Dean and CFO, *GPC Chair*

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