Donations and Fundraising Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes a framework for the effective, efficient and ethical acceptance and management of philanthropic Gifts received by Macquarie University and its controlled entities (the University), through its fundraising activities.

Background

(2) Macquarie University, as a publicly funded University, is endorsed by the Australian Tax Office as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and can accept Gifts in accordance with the objects and purposes of the University.

(3) Philanthropy plays a significant role in fulfilling Macquarie University's mission and goals. Accordingly, the University welcomes Gifts from its graduates, staff, individuals, the business community and other organisations who are willing to support the University in accomplishing its mission.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all individuals involved in any aspect of acceptance or management of Gifts, Bequests, Cultural Gifts, Endowments, and University fundraising given with Philanthropic Intent, whether these are monetary or in-kind or any such activity approved to be undertaken on behalf of the University.

Section 2 - Policy

Fundraising

(5) To implement a strategic, uniform and coordinated approach to all fundraising activity, the University will:

a. adopt transparent and ethical processes for the acceptance and management of Donations and fundraising activities across the entire University;
b. develop operational procedures to accompany each fundraising activity such that a strategic, uniform and coordinated approach to fundraising, Gift acceptance and receipting is achieved. This is to ensure that multiple, conflicting, or inappropriate solicitations will be minimised;
c. protect the confidentiality of Donors consistent with their wishes and to the extent provided by law (e.g. Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 NSW). The University will, however, comply with any legal obligation to disclose the names of Donors and the nature and value of their Donations;
d. adequately identify funds and use them for the purpose for which they were intended; and
e. maintain Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Status under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth).

(6) The Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office is responsible for managing the University's relationship with Donors and prospective Donors.

(7) Delegated authority to approve University-wide, faculty, office and controlled entity fundraising campaigns and initiatives is stipulated in the University's Delegations of Authority Register.

This document may be varied, withdrawn, or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) for the latest version.

(8) No member of the University or its controlled entities may finalise approaches for fundraising purposes unless coordinated with and approved through the Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office.

(9) University Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office staff engaged in fundraising activities and Donor management must conduct themselves as ambassadors for the entire University.

Gift Acceptance

(10) The University will only accept Gifts where they are ethical in nature and are consistent with the mission, goals and policies of the University.

(11) The University will not accept Gifts if for any reason such acceptance would compromise its integrity, reputation, or autonomy, or where such acceptance would be inconsistent with the University's mission and policies. The University has the right to refuse any philanthropic Gift.

(12) In entering into affiliation, collaborative or contractual arrangements with third parties and in accepting Donations from third parties subject to conditions, the University will take all reasonable steps to minimise the restrictions or burdens imposed by such arrangements or conditions on the freedom of speech or academic freedom of any member of the staff or students carrying on research or study under such arrangements or subject to such conditions (see Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy).

(13) The University does not accept Gifts generated by the proceeds of the tobacco industry or crime.

(14) Ownership of all Gifts is vested in the University, whether they are for the benefit of the University generally or for some specific purpose.

(15) The University may accept Gifts of cash, personal and real property, trading stock and shares.

(16) Delegated authority for accepting cash and Non-cash Gifts, and for the subsequent disposal of Non-cash Gifts, is stipulated in the University's Delegations of Authority Register.

(17) If a Gift is in the form of Non-cash, advice must be sought from the Vice-President, Finance and Resources regarding the potential impact on the University. Non-cash financial Gifts (including bonds, equities, real property), will only be accepted if they meet the investment parameters of the Investment and Treasury Risk Management Policy, otherwise they will be liquidated upon receipt.

(18) The valuation and receipting of Gifts-in-kind is subject to the rules and regulations set forth by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the policies of the University.

(19) The University Librarian has oversight over Gifts of library resources, art or cultural objects to the University's Library, Museums and Collections in accordance with its collection development principles (refer to the Art Collection Policy).

Gift Purpose

(20) All Gifts, whether monetary or in-kind are to be made to the University with an express or implied intention to support the mission of the University.

(21) The wishes and intentions of the Donor provide guidance in determining the purpose for which the Gift will be used.

(22) Where a Donor has not indicated a purpose, the University will determine where the Gift is to be allocated.

(23) Before accepting a Gift, the University will consider any additional University funding or commitment required to

maintain, administer or comply with the conditions and intended use of such Gift.

Bequests

(24) The expressed wishes and intentions of the bequestor, as outlined in the will, are paramount in determining the purpose for which the Gift will be used.

(25) Where the University is unable to honour the intentions of the will, all appropriate legal measures will be taken to determine a purpose for the Gift that most closely aligns to the bequestor's intentions.

(26) Liaison with the executors of the estate and the deceased person's family members is primarily the responsibility of the Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office. Other University departments, staff or faculty members may, however, participate as appropriate.

Gift Administration

(27) All major Gifts accepted by the University will be administered via a Gift Agreement which is signed by both the delegated University authority as per the current Delegations of Authority Register and the Donor(s).

(28) No person representing the University is to provide advice and/or engage in speculation about the taxation implications or legal status of Donations with respect to the potential impact on the Donor. Donors are advised to seek their own independent advice about these matters.

(29) All Gifts accepted by the University will be recorded on the University's central Donor database and within the University finance system.

(30) All Gifts will be receipted and formally acknowledged by the Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office in a prompt manner where sufficient information has been provided to do so.

Management of Funds

(31) All funds will be invested and maintained in accordance with the relevant policies, procedures and practices of the University applicable to philanthropic funds. Funds will be held in an interest-bearing account.

(32) Philanthropic donations are exempt from the University’s overhead and infrastructure charges. Philanthropic contributions are allocated to the designated cause, program, or project in accordance with the Donor’s intent, unless the Donor has expressly authorised an alternative use. Indirect costs will only be charged to philanthropic grants if the Charitable Organisation allows this per their guidelines, otherwise the grant will be exempt.

(33) Gifted funds will be distributed to identifiable project accounts in the University’s general ledger according to the funding purpose and in accordance with the Project and Operations Ledger Account Policy.

(34) Endowed funds will be managed by the Vice-President, Finance and Resources in accordance with the University’s Investment and Treasury Risk Management Policy.

(35) Expenditure of funds received by the University from Donations is subject to the University’s Delegations of Authority Policy.

(36) The Philanthropy and Alumni Relations Office will advise Donors on the use of funds donated and the impact of their giving, through Donor reporting and giving impact communications.

Section 3 - Definitions

(37) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Bequest means a Gift of a monetary sum or property derived from the estate of a deceased individual through a will given into the permanent possession of the University.
b. Cultural Gift means gifts of culturally significant property, except property that is an estate or interest in land or in a building or part of a building. In Australia, cultural gifts are made under the Cultural Gifts Program administered by the Commonwealth Government. In Australia this gift type does not cover testamentary gifts made in a will.
c. Gift/Donation means any cash or in-kind Gift, or pledge to make such a Gift, that is given voluntarily with Philanthropic Intent.
d. Gift in-kind/Non-cash Gift means any non-cash Gift, or pledge to make such a Gift, that is given voluntarily with Philanthropic Intent e.g. personal and real property, shares, trading stock and Cultural Gifts.
e. Donor means any natural or legal person who provides a voluntary monetary or in-kind transfer to the University with Philanthropic Intent, whether this is for a specific purpose or not.
f. Endowment means a donation made in accordance with the University's Investment and Treasury Risk Management Policy whereby funds are provided with the intention to be invested in perpetuity to ensure ongoing support for beneficiaries from the investment earnings.
g. Gift Agreement means a signed agreement between the University and Donors outlining the agreed purpose and amount of the Gift.
h. Philanthropic Intent means all giving which does not confer full or partial ownership of a deliverable on the Donor in return for the funding i.e. there must be no material benefit to the Donor.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	27th March 2026
Review Date	5th June 2030
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	27th March 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	S. Bruce Dowton Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Officer	Hedda Paisley Executive Director, Philanthropy and Alumni Relations +61 2 9850 6132
Enquiries Contact	David Montgomery Director, Strategy and Advancement Operations

This document may be varied, withdrawn, or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) for the latest version.