

# Volunteer Alberta

## Finding Sponsors & Partners

**Regardless of what business a sponsor is in, or what size their company is, they want to:**

- Get a good return on their investment,
- Support a worthy cause,
- Strengthen their position in their market and distinguish themselves from their competitors,
- Develop future customers and build loyalty among existing customers, and
- Improve their image in the community.

### **How do You Find A Sponsor?**

- Who do you know? Brainstorm with your committee about businesses and organizations you can approach for help.
- Know what you want—do you need financial assistance, or would gifts in kind such as food or a volunteer recognition item be as good as money?
- Who will be participating in your event? What businesses support or would target that group?
- Be sure to offer current sponsors the right of first refusal before approaching others.

### **What Kinds of Sponsorship Opportunities Can Your Organization Offer a Potential Sponsor?**

- Give them exclusive or industry exclusive sponsorship of an event. *CAUTION:* ensure this does not conflict with any of your current sponsors or partners.
- Ask a company to provide or pay for volunteer recognition items for every volunteer who attends your event. Be sure you have sufficient quantities for everyone who will attend.
- Have a speaker, meal, or presentation sponsored by a business. Ensure they are recognized in pre-event advertising, signage, event programs, and during the event itself.
- Have your event at their location.

### **How Can You Recognize A Sponsor?**

- Invite them to attend your event and to make a brief statement about their support for volunteers. Be sure to designate a committee member to greet and accompany sponsors at the event.
- Signage or verbal recognition at an event.
- Mention, advertising or profile in your newsletter or event program.
- Include their name in newspaper or radio advertising for your event.
- Plaques or other tokens from your organization. Some sponsors like to receive this kind of recognition, others might dislike that you spent money recognizing their donation. Ask the sponsor what is meaningful to them.
- Write a letter of thanks on your organization's letterhead recognizing the sponsor's contribution. Tell them how their participation made a difference and how activities would have been affected without their support.

Have a written agreement confirming what the sponsor or partner will provide, and what your organization will provide in return. Be sure to include whether they are an exclusive sponsor, an industry sponsor, or one of a number of supporters. Nothing will sour relations with a sponsor faster than unmet expectations or finding out that a competing business is involved in your event. Ensure their experience with your organization is a positive one.