

Support from High Street Shops and Retail Stores

Stores often support community projects through giving cash, services or goods, allowing collections in store, encouraging staff support.

If you cannot find information, ask at your local store. The manager is often the best first contact. Use the web links and directions to find full details on their websites.



Who Are They?

Many high street shops and retail stores support the voluntary sector. How they do this varies.



Who Can Apply?

This varies. Some stores have organised and structured application procedures however most are less formal. Most like to fund things of local interest. If in doubt ask at your local store. Some support chosen national charities. Information on their policy is usually found on websites under corporate/company information or community pages.



What Do They Fund?

Many stores don't have published donation policies. Mostly they cover a wide range of good causes, or attempt to deal with each appeal on its own merits. There may be informal ways they can help or they may hold small pots of money to support the community that they hold that are not widely advertised.



How Do You Apply?

Personal contact can help. Find out about the store and what they offer either through looking at their website or by phone. Applications are usually made in writing. Use a personal letter. Find out who you need to write to by name.



How Much?

Stores vary considerably in the amount they will give. Some provide core funding of hundreds of thousands of pounds to national high profile charities and so avoid helping locally. Others only give small donations to projects in the communities where they have a presence. It is useful to know their giving patterns so you can avoid asking for an inappropriate amount. If it is not clear, ask.

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Pros:

- No bureaucracy – just ask
- Can often respond immediately
- Minimal monitoring required

Cons:

- May depend on personal contacts
- Usually small amounts
- Some causes more popular than others, e.g. children's toy appeals do better than work with offenders

Further Information:

• Why do stores give to voluntary and community organisations?

Giving is just part of what they now term 'Corporate Responsibility'. This also covers their impact on the environment and on the communities where they operate, their terms and conditions for suppliers and the working conditions for their workers.

• The give for a variety of reasons:

- Philanthropy
- To generate goodwill in the communities where they have a presence
- To develop a particular image for the company – association with helping schools or hospitals, funding sport and activity, sponsoring opera or theatre
- To help market their services – computers for schools tokens, low price or free software for charities, 2p for sport when you buy a chocolate bar
- To support their staff and develop their relationship with them – time off for charity activity, encouraging their collections for charity
- To take advantage of tax concessions – payroll giving, matching employee donations
- To pass on unsold goods or recycle - supermarkets donating perishable foods to those working with the poor or homeless, passing replaced office equipment to charities

Many stores are becoming pro-active in their support for good causes - setting their priorities well in advance and pro-actively choosing the causes they will support, rather than simply responding to requests.

• How do stores give?

As you see stores do not just give money, they give support in a variety of other ways. They also support their employees and their community interests.

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➔ Further Information: (Continued)

• Apart from organised funding, shops and stores may offer help such as:

- Donations
- Regular giving from staff salary
- Gifts in kind – Do-it-Yourself stores may give materials for repairing a community centre.
- Support for volunteers – community clean up events, painting the village hall
- Staff involvement - paid time for staff to give to voluntary work/projects
- Sponsorship of local events
- Providing premises for collections
- Giving surplus stock

• Why stores may not give?

Corporate image is very important. shops and stores do not like to court controversy. They like to be associated with causes that are simple to understand and universally popular. Sport for children is more likely to be supported than drug rehabilitation. They will probably avoid giving to animal rights organisations or for political ends. It is worth considering where you fit in the popularity stakes before you start. Unpopular causes may be better placed when applying to trusts and foundations.