

Complete Policy Title: Prospect Clearance Policy	Policy Number (if applicable)
Approved by: The President and Vice Presidents (PVP)	Date of Most Recent Approval: April 14, 2009
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Responsible Executive: Vice-President (University Advancement)	Enquiries: <u>University Advancement</u>

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PROSPECT CLEARANCE POLICY

Preamble. The purpose of a Prospect Clearance Policy is to optimize McMaster's fundraising efforts by ensuring that solicitations are made to donors that will ensure the most appropriate match of donor interests and University priorities, and maximize their giving to the University. A series of uncoordinated solicitations to the same donor by different individuals in a single institution is the most undermining threat to a successful fundraising campaign. The Prospect Clearance Policy protects against this problem.

No fundraising activity, event or sponsorship arrangement, regardless of the need for charitable receipts, should occur without the approval of the prospect clearance committee. Please note that the deposit of such funds should be coordinated through University Advancement who will determine whether or not we are able to issue tax receipts. The use of external fundraisers also requires committee approval. Furthermore when running a fundraising event please refer to the Fundraising Activities Policy (link) for further information.

Membership. McMaster's fundraising program is designed to obtain the maximum gifts for activities that are the institution's highest academic priorities. The membership of the Prospect Clearance Team, which is

chaired by the Vice-President of University Advancement, ensures that input regarding academic mission is coupled with the best advice of professional fundraisers to maximize fundraising success.

Principles for the Prospect Clearance Team. Several principles guide the decisions of the Prospect Clearance Team:

1. The purpose of the Prospect Clearance Team is to match solicitors and projects to potential donors to maximize gifts to the University for activities of greatest academic priority.
2. All individuals at McMaster soliciting gifts are subject to the same prospect clearance process. Similarly, all solicitations from McMaster, for the capital campaign or other fundraising initiatives (e.g., Canada Foundation Innovation), require prospect clearance.
3. The President identifies the highest academic priorities for fundraising. If an individual proposes to raise funds for items not identified as priorities, the Prospect Clearance Team will evaluate this request in consultation with the President and relevant academic officers, such as Faculty Deans. Similarly, if a donor proposes a gift to McMaster University that is not listed in the priorities, the Prospect Clearance Team, with appropriate consultation, (i.e. the President, relevant academic officers, such as Faculty Deans) will decide whether the gift should be accepted.

Prospect Clearance Database. The Office of University Advancement will maintain a database that lists prospects, who currently has clearance for these prospects, the projects for which these prospects are being cultivated, and the end date of the clearance approval. Information from this database is accessible to appropriate officers of the University. In addition, a database is maintained that catalogues the donor visits that have been made to each prospect, the results of these visits, etc. This database is searchable by prospect, solicitor and project. It is expected that all individuals working with cleared prospects report on activity through submission of regular Call Reports and updates.

Prospect Clearance Process. Requests for prospect clearance should be made on the [attached form](#) and forwarded to the Advancement Office, via the Faculty Dean or relevant senior administrator. The Dean, at his/her discretion, may elect to delegate this responsibility to another individual, such as the Faculty Advancement Officer. The Advancement Research Office will provide appropriate background information and context for each request prior to its review by the Prospect Clearance Team; the Research Office, Advancement Services will act as consultants to the Prospect Clearance Team. Applicants will be notified of the decision of the

Prospect Clearance Team within one week of the meeting in which the submission is considered. This decision will also identify the length of time for which clearance has been granted, typically two years from the date of approval, and the projects for which solicitations to a donor may be made. If, as a result of the original solicitation, the donor indicates a preference for other projects, it is expected that the solicitor will notify Advancement so that a solicitation targeted to the donor's stated preference can be constructed. Applicants who disagree with the decisions of the Prospect Clearance Team can appeal through the Chair to the Provost and President if necessary, although we anticipate few such appeals.

At the end of the clearance period, a request for an extension of prospect clearance can be made to the Prospect Clearance Team. The decision to grant an extension, and the period of any extension, will be assessed based upon the progress that has been made, or the state of discussions, with the prospective donor. In addition, given the dynamic and opportunistic nature of fundraising, the Prospect Clearance Team may, in limited occasions, need to review the status of any prospect clearance based upon an emerging opportunity or circumstance. This would only be done after consultation with all relevant parties.

The Prospect Clearance Team will meet monthly to review the current list of prospect clearances. The Prospect Clearance Team is also prepared to make more rapid decisions, within 48 hours of a request, when an opportunity with time sensitivity arises.

Violation of Prospect Clearance. As noted before, the most undermining event in fundraising is multiple, uncoordinated approaches to the same individual. Equally difficult are those situations in which we continually solicit a donor for a project in which she or he has expressed or indicated little interest or affinity. Because the purpose of prospect clearance is to eliminate this difficulty, identified violations of prospect clearance will be reviewed and appropriate sanctions will be considered in light of repeated violations.
