

Guidance on Cross - BBC charity fundraising initiatives

1. Background

The BBC has a tradition of mounting major pan-BBC charity fundraising initiatives such as BBC Children in Need, Red Nose Day (for Comic Relief), Sport Relief and more recently the BBC Wildlife Fund.

BBC Children in Need and the BBC Wildlife Fund are BBC charities and bear the BBC brand. Comic Relief is not a BBC charity and unlike BBC Children in Need and the BBC Wildlife Fund does not bear the BBC brand. It has been a major partner of the BBC for 21 years and together with the BBC has developed the Red Nose Day and Sport Relief appeals. The BBC maintains editorial control over all on air and BBC on line activities in relation to Comic Relief.

BBC Children in Need, Comic Relief and the BBC Wildlife Fund do not themselves run projects, but are charities which distribute money to a range of projects run by a range of charities, not for profit organisations and community groups. Therefore in raising money to be distributed by BBC Children Need, the BBC Wildlife Fund or Comic Relief the BBC is not seen to be endorsing one particular project or one particular charitable cause.

These cross-BBC appeals are reflected across the range of BBC services and in all media. A key aim is to get the public involved across the country to undertake activities to support the appeal. The initiatives are mounted on a major scale.

BBC charity appeal fundraising programming should normally fit within the on-air "appeal window". This usually begins about 2 months before the main Appeal Night and 1-2 months after. Any other charity related programming outside the window must be discussed with Editorial Policy and the BBC Charity Appeals Adviser.

Typically the initiative culminates in a major appeal night, where donations are pledged by the public and the results of their fundraising are reported.

In the build up to the main appeal night, the BBC broadcasts specially commissioned programmes or special strands within existing programmes to raise awareness of the appeal and to build audiences for the main telethon. The programming may be across the whole range of BBC outlets including network television and radio, regional television, local radio and BBC websites.

In addition, the public is given information about BBC-wide charitable appeals so they can find out how to get involved, raise money and generally support the charities and obtain fundraising materials and merchandise.

For each appeal a key executive figure is agreed by the BBC who is responsible for liaison between the BBC and the charity and to whom referral must be made as outlined in this Guidance. The relevant executives are detailed in the contacts, at the end of the Guidance. This liaison figure will ensure that all proposed fundraising activities and related programming fit with the values of the charity as well as according to BBC principles and standards.

2. Maintaining Impartiality

The BBC may reflect the work of these charities and any areas of their work that are being highlighted during a particular year's appeal for funds. For example, Comic Relief may wish to focus one year on projects which tackle the spread of malaria or BBC Children in Need may choose to highlight projects which tackle bullying. However, the BBC must not allow its programming to be used as a vehicle for political campaigning or lobbying. Very careful editorial decisions may have to be taken to ensure that this line is not crossed and Editorial Policy should be consulted at as early a stage as possible.

The use of politicians should be handled with great care. Politicians should not be allowed to use their inclusion in BBC charity programming or related on-air activities to promote controversial public policy or party political measures or initiatives. Any proposals to involve any party leaders on air must be referred in advance to the Chief Adviser Politics.

3. Fundraising merchandise and other corporate support for the charity appeal

For many years corporate and non-corporate supporters have helped the BBC's major charitable initiatives. These supporters, via their customers and staff, make a very significant contribution mainly through selling special fundraising merchandise and providing a focus for staff and public fundraising.

Much of this special merchandise is in the form of official charity products, which have been specifically produced for the appeal and are unique to the charity and sold by specific retailers who have agreed to help fundraise. For example Sainsbury's and Oxfam sell the Comic Relief Red Nose. Asda and Boots and other retailers sell Pudsey bears and other BBC Children in Need goods such as pens, Pudsey branded clothing and Christmas cards.

In other cases charity supporters may produce special versions of existing products with a percentage being donated to the charity during the appeal period, for example a special flavour of a confectionary product.

In addition, special records are often released, which raise money for the charity. Such releases may be mentioned on-air where editorially appropriate but any BBC trails will not normally give information about how to purchase.

Corporate support for cross BBC charitable appeals may also be in the form of considerable technical assistance to the charities, for example BT provides major technical support and services on the main appeal nights. In such cases the technical support is offered to the charity and not the BBC and is not part of the BBC television production. There is no contractual relationship between the BBC and technical supporters. The technical assistance offered to the charities enables them to set up, run and operate telephony and online donation mechanisms on the appeal night and in some cases across the year.

4. Planning a cross BBC fundraising initiative:

- All proposals for cross-BBC charitable appeals must be discussed with Chief Adviser Editorial Policy at an early stage to ensure that the appeal is appropriate, is in accordance

with all relevant guidance and regulation and does not undermine the BBC's impartiality or integrity

- The BBC Charity Appeals Adviser should also be informed of the overall plans and the advice of the Appeals Adviser must be sought about any new types of fundraising methods connected to these appeals
- Any proposal for a BBC programme or website to undertake fundraising activity for a cross BBC charitable appeal must also be discussed with the relevant Executive responsible for liaison with the charity to ensure that the activity is suitable and fits with both the BBC and the charity's objectives
- Any fundraising merchandise related to a BBC charity must be appropriate and not bring the BBC into disrepute
- Comic Relief is not a BBC charity however any merchandise which is to be trailed on-air must be discussed with the BBC at an early stage to ensure it is suitable for on-air trailing

5. Information Trails:

- Near the beginning of the appeal window Network television and radio will often run on-air trails to inform the audience of ways in which they can get involved in supporting the appeal and raising money
- These trails will typically give information about how viewers and listeners may obtain a fundraising pack about how they can get involved with the initiative and raise money in a variety of ways. In addition, the trails may include information about how the public can obtain special official charity merchandise such as Pudsey bears and red noses. All such trails must be referred well in advance to Editorial Policy and BBC Marketing for approval to ensure they do not contain undue prominence for commercial outlets and products. The trailing strategy on network, national and local radio channels where there may be no built trail slots must also be approved by the relevant Controller in consultation with Editorial Policy

For all trails the following will apply:

- **The frequency and content of television and radio trails must be discussed with Editorial Policy to ensure no undue prominence for retailers**
- We will only trail a limited agreed amount of official charity fundraising products which have been specially commissioned by the charity and approved for trailing by the BBC Editorial Policy; such as special T-shirts, red noses
- We will not trail on air other pre-existing products which were not specially commissioned for charity but which are giving a set percentage to the charity during the appeal period e.g. a special flavour of confectionary
- References to where charity merchandise may be purchased must be factual and non-promotional
- Commercial logos may not be used

- No element of commercial advertising or marketing may be reflected in BBC trails
- Care must be taken to ensure there is a range of outlets, and where possible ways to obtain official fundraising merchandise via the BBC.
There should be only one verbal and/or one visual reference per trail to outlets where merchandise may be obtained
- Any use of telephone numbers in trails must be referred to ITACU who will advise on any technical issue and wording in consultation with the charities (see also interactivity below)

6. Interactivity:

The role of ITACU

The BBC has set up a specialist unit to provide advice on all technical aspects of running a competition, vote or any other uses of Telephony. The Interactive Technical Advice and Contracts Unit (ITACU) oversees the delivery, management and contracting of all BBC's Premium Rate Telephony and other telephony relating to voting and competitions for all programmes, and charity events both independent and in-house, across all divisions and output.

Cross BBC charitable initiatives involve fundraising via telephony, online, red button, post and text donations. As appropriate, ITACU will work with the charity, Editorial Policy and the executive in charge of liaison with the charity, to ensure that all such uses are approved in line with regulation in terms of technical and legal issues. **ITACU must be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity by the BBC Executive responsible for liaison with the charity.**

In addition:

- All uses of interactivity must conform to the BBC 's Code of Conduct: competitions and voting and the BBC interactivity detailed guidance and approval forms [link to be added]
- Any proposals to raise funds (by telephony or other means) off the back of BBC programming must be referred at a very early stage to Editorial Policy, the Executive responsible for liaison with the charity, and ITACU.

With high level approval, Premium Rate Telephony may be used to raise funds for these BBC charitable appeals. Premium Rate telephony may only be used for a competition vote or other fundraising mechanism which is directly related to the charitable appeal. Such uses of Premium Rate Telephony may only be carried out with detailed advice from Editorial Policy and ITACU. Any proposal must be signed off by the Divisional Director and referred to Editorial Policy well in advance.

- Fundraising interactivity should be carried out within the agreed fundraising "window" for the charity. Any proposals to carry out fundraising interactivity outside this window must be referred to Editorial Policy at a very early stage.
- All proposals must conform to the BBC Interactivity guidance
- We do not use premium lines to raise money for charity in BBC children's programming

- Interactive activities may include:
 - charity auctions such as the Radio 2 BBC Children in Need Auction
 - special expeditions or sporting challenges undertaken by celebrities, such as the bike ride undertaken by Adrian Chiles and Alan Shearer for Sport Relief 2008, where the audience will pledge support by giving donations on line or via Premium Rate telephony
 - very carefully considered fundraising competitions and votes using premium rate text or telephony.

Specially commissioned “Feeder shows” may be produced which are designed to fundraise and/or build interest in the appeal before the main night. These shows usually run as a series in the weeks leading up to the main appeal night or stripped across the week before. They are often light entertainment shows specifically commissioned with a specific fundraising mechanic such as a vote, for example “Comic Relief: Let’s Dance “. The editorial connection or link to the charitable appeal must be made clear to the audience and the BBC Executive in charge of the production must retain editorial control of all content including any material relating to the charity.

7. Other charity related programming

We may broadcast special factual programmes, dramas, comedies or other programmes in the run up to the appeal night to showcase the work of the charity and highlight specific themes of that year, such as mental health and domestic violence. However, care must be taken to ensure that the BBC programming does not appear to campaign or lobby on any political issues or matters of public policy.

Particular care has to be taken when any drama, comedy, factual or other programme highlights matters of public policy. Programmes may consider or reflect issues such as poverty, social equality, environmental concerns and other major issues. However, it is essential when highlighting these areas that the BBC does not appear to be advocating any political solution or actively encouraging any public campaign or lobby.

The BBC should ensure the work of the charity and any projects they support is accurately reflected. The BBC must ensure that it maintains editorial control over all such programming.

The link with the charity appeal must be made clear on air immediately before the programme, or clearly within the programme. Early discussions should be held with Editorial Policy and the Executive responsible for liaison with the charity to ensure the suitability and editorial fit of such programming.

In some cases, with the agreement of Editorial Policy, it may be appropriate to give information at the end of the programme about how to donate to the charitable appeal.

8. The Main Appeal Night

Cross-BBC charity fundraising initiatives typically have a central on-air Appeal Night in the form of a telethon. The emphasis of the night is audience donations which are solicited through a range of donation mechanics, including telephone, post, online, red button and text.

For BBC Children in Need, Comic Relief and Sport Relief the main programme typically consists of suitably themed entertainment; appeal films which show how monies raised in previous appeals have been spent; where monies being raised in the current appeal will be spent and OB inserts from around the country. Throughout the evening the audience is regularly informed of the total and the different ways in which people have donated and raised money in the run-up to the appeal.

The following relates to the Main Appeal Night itself:

- The broadcast must be editorially overseen by a BBC Editorial Executive who takes overall editorial control of the live output.
- In particular, Appeal Night programming is often broadcast on several BBC channels and lasts for many hours. Children may fundraise and be encouraged to be involved in fundraising activities and may stay up late to watch the programme. The use of pop stars, comedians, celebrities and special items from very popular BBC programmes such as “Strictly Come Dancing” also gives the show a very broad appeal to a family audience. **Content broadcast up to 10pm must be broadly suitable for a family audience. When considering the tone and scheduling of items “on the night” care should be taken to ensure that audience expectations are met.**

Any proposals for on-air fundraising auctions, competitions, challenges, votes or other such activity on the night must in the first instance be referred to the Executive responsible for liaison with the charity and then to Editorial Policy and ITACU (see also interactivity above).

- All fundraising promoted on the Appeal Night must comply with the BBC Interactivity Guidance and Approval forms [insert link to relevant sections] and relevant external regulation. On-air promotions for the donation line must be under the BBC’s editorial control. Advice must be sought at an early stage from ITACU who will be in close liaison with the charity. In the event of any technical problems with the donation mechanisms on the night, the agreed contingency plans will be adopted. ITACU and the charity liaison Executive will consult the Executive editor of the programme and the charity to ensure the audience is kept appropriately informed.
- The Appeal night may highlight specific issues such as malaria or poverty, where the charity is focussing on specific themes that year. However great care must be taken to ensure that the BBC does not appear to campaign or lobby on any matters of controversial public policy
- The use of politicians should be treated with care and proposals to interview or involve any party leaders on-air must be referred to the Chief Adviser Politics at an early stage.

9. Appeal Films

- Care must be taken with the content, tone and scheduling of appeal films. These films inform the public of the work of the charity and of individual stories and projects. They aim to encourage viewers to donate. As such they will often be of a sensitive and sometimes quite hard hitting nature and very careful editorial decisions need to be taken

- The BBC must retain editorial control over all appeal films it broadcasts and the BBC Executive Editor and BBC Commissioner responsible for the live transmission of the appeal night will have final editorial sign-off and ensure the films comply with BBC Editorial Guidelines. Particular attention must be paid to issues of harm and offence, impartiality, consent, depiction of children and vulnerable people, accuracy and re-use of material. Chief Adviser and/or Senior Adviser Editorial Policy should also be consulted about the content and scheduling of the films and also their use in programming in the run up to the Main Appeal night
- In some cases it may be useful to consider whether there should be different versions of the same film so that we can ensure scheduling is appropriate to the audience throughout the evening
- In addition the charities must be involved and consulted about the content of the appeal films to ensure that they are appropriate in tone and content and accurately and appropriately reflect the work of the charity and projects which are appealing for or have previously received funding
- Any significant changes on the night about the placing of films which pose difficult issues or any other significant editorial issue will normally be discussed with Editorial Policy
- The BBC also broadcasts appeal radio packages on network, national, regional and local radio. The Executive responsible for charity liaison and Editorial Policy must be consulted about these

10. Saying "Thank You" on the night

The Main Appeal night programme will reflect the enormous range of fundraising activity throughout the country and the myriad of fundraising initiatives. We may thank members of the public and highlight the fundraising efforts of individuals, communities, organisations, companies their customers and their staff that have raised money and helped support the charity appeal.

These acknowledgements should highlight the range of ways in which people have raised money from a whole raft of activities from "bring and buy" sales and community initiatives, to buying Pudsey bears, red noses or other charity related merchandise. The money raised in this way is added to the "totaliser" on the night in a clear and transparent manner.

These "thank yous" may come in the form of special inserts from around the country showcasing the work of communities and individuals, cheque presentations on location and in the studio, crawling astons, announcements from presenters and short films reflecting significant fundraising efforts. The editorial purpose of such reflections should be to thank the public and to inspire viewers to donate and to continue with fundraising activities.

The following principles must be applied:

- Commercial organisations via their customers and staff may support the charitable appeal in a variety of ways. This support is reflected on the night. Examples of support which may be acknowledged include selling charity fundraising merchandise, and special packs of merchandise with a percentage being donated to the charity during the appeal period;

providing marketing support to help promote the campaign; providing technical support to help run the donation services, for example the mobile network operators who have waived their profits to facilitate donations via text messaging.

- **Whilst crediting fairly the role of supporters we must ensure that there is no undue prominence for commercial supporters or their products in line with the BBC Editorial Guidelines.** All such proposed reflections must be referred by the Executive Producer of the Appeal night well in advance to Editorial Policy, who will advise on the suitability of such acknowledgements for corporate supporters
- Commercial logos should not be used in graphics except:
 - Where we need to give information about “how and where to donate” when the use of the logos of banks, credit/debit cards etc on a graphic will be the simplest and clearest way of conveying information
 - Where we are acknowledging the help of a variety of technical supporters, when the most non promotional way might be to group them together on a still

Any such use of commercial logos in graphics must be approved by Editorial Policy

- There can be no contractual commitments between the BBC and charity supporters
- There will normally be only one scheduled “thank you” for any corporate supporter. Any exception must be for strong editorial reasons and referred in advance to Chief Adviser Editorial Policy.
- Typically for BBC Children in Need, community groups, schools, individuals and corporate supporters may wish to present the sum raised for the charity by their fundraising efforts and other donations with a cheque presentation on the night. Care should be taken to ensure that such presentations are appropriate and non promotional.

11. Film Packages

- In some cases significant fundraising efforts of the public, voluntary and community groups, charity partners or corporate supporters may be reflected in short film packages. These short films should be no longer than 3 minutes and are usually shorter.
- Films reflecting the work of the public, voluntary and community groups may be played several times during the night
- Films reflecting the work of corporate supporters must abide by the following:
 - They must focus on thanking the customers who have brought the merchandise or the staff who have sold it or undertaken other fundraising activities.
 - They must not be unduly promotional for the organisation itself
 - Great care must be taken over any reflections of signage
 - Corporate or brand logos may not be used in graphics in studios or in the films.
 - Any film relating to a corporate supporter may run only once in the Appeal Night

- The BBC Editorial Executive who takes overall editorial control of the live output must approve all such VTs in consultation with Editorial Policy

12. "Totaliser"

- The audience may be informed throughout the appeal night of the total monies raised. Totals given must be as accurate and as timely as possible and must not mislead the audience about the volume of donations coming in. Additional sums are added as they are announced on-air, for example: - the total from the Radio 2 auction or a Radio 1 challenge; as are any significant fundraising from staff and customers of corporate supporters.; the amount of charity merchandising sold by a particular retailer.
- Money received or pledged through call centres is added to the total in "bundles" as it is notified to the national totals team. The staff monitoring the totals in the studio should do appropriate checks on how totals have been calculated. Any unexpectedly large donations are verified at a high level.
- The BBC Editorial Executive who takes overall editorial control of the live output must approve on air updates in consultation with the appropriate representative from the Charity on the night. If there are any issues with the donation mechanisms for example severe congestion on phone lines then appropriate on air announcements should be considered and given where helpful. ITACU and Editorial Policy may be consulted.

13. Events run by Comic Relief:

Comic Relief is not a BBC charity. It will organise and set up its own events and challenges. These events may be designed to raise the profile of the appeal, showcase the work of the charity and highlight projects for which money is being raised.

During the main appeal period Comic Relief may mount special challenges and events to raise money. Such events have included celebrity endurance feats such as those undertaken by David Walliams; celebrity challenges such as the Kilimanjaro climb and the now well established Sport Relief Mile. In 2008 some 400,000 people across the UK took part in the Sport Relief Mile and raised millions of pounds for the appeal.

These are Comic Relief events, not BBC events. It would be very difficult to justify using the licence fee to pay for the organisation and administration of such events. Comic Relief undertakes the task of mounting events such as the Sport Relief runs all over the country with the help of a range of supporters.

Any proposals for the BBC to cover such events must be referred to Editorial Policy at the earliest stage.

- If these third party events are sponsored or have corporate supporters BBC coverage of the event will not include the sponsor in the title of the BBC programming
- Any proposals to reflect on air the enabling role of the sponsor or other supporters of the event must referred to Editorial Policy and must be in accordance with BBC Editorial Guidelines

- In line with the BBC Editorial Guidelines on coverage of third party events, “we aim to credit fairly the enabling role of sponsors”, but care must be taken to ensure that there is no undue prominence for sponsors
- Any credits should be fair without being unduly promotional
- BBC coverage should make it clear to the audience that it is a Comic Relief event and that the event is not run by the BBC
- The BBC will not enter into any contractual arrangements with sponsors of the Comic Relief events
- The BBC will receive no money from the event sponsors or supporters
- Any on air fundraising connected with the events - such as text donations or support - must be approved by Editorial Policy and ITACU and must be appropriate for the target audience

Referral Contacts:

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