



It is important to understand your legal status as a volunteer fundraiser

Friends of and other membership organisations

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IN AID OF

Many millions of people fundraise for charities in the UK every year as 'in aid of' volunteer fundraisers. This means that they do so as individuals. They are not representing the charity and they do not have any authority to speak or act on behalf of the charity. For thousands of charities this is a wonderful source of unexpected generosity.

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ON BEHALF OF

If you fundraise 'on behalf of' a charity then you do so with the authority of the charity. There are a number of reasons for wanting to carry out some fundraising activities as part of a formally constituted organisation:

- some activities can only be carried out as an organisation
- if you need a strong team spirit, it can help prevent an activity from seeming to be 'your' activity and encourage people to feel it is a shared one
- if you need to hire equipment, rent a venue or take out insurance, it may make more sense for this to be done by an organisation

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FRIENDS OF & OTHER ORGANISATIONS

A formally registered organisation has a legal status and must comply with certain requirements that are clearly set out on the [Charity Commission](#) website. Lots of charities have local supporter groups, some have 'friends of' organisations and most schools have 'parent teacher associations'. All of these are great mechanisms for running fundraising activities that will benefit a charity or cause.

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CHOOSING THE BEST STATUS

If you want to run your activity as an organisation, your first step should always be to contact the charity you are fundraising for and ask them whether it is possible to fundraise 'on behalf of' them, and work with them to deliver your activity.

However, there will be occasions when it is not possible to carry out your fundraising as part of an existing charity. It may be that the charity simply doesn't have the capacity to support your involvement with them or you may be fundraising on behalf of [an individual](#) or a charitable cause that is not delivered by a formally registered organisation.

If the first is true, and you are fundraising for a registered charity but not 'on behalf' of them, then you must remember to state on all your fundraising materials that you are fundraising '[in aid of](#)' your chosen charity. You must not use their logo without their permission. If they ask you not to carry out the activity you have selected you shouldn't. Ask them for ideas they would be pleased to be associated with.

If you are fundraising for [an individual](#) or a cause which is not being delivered by a registered charity, you must not use the words 'charity' or 'charitable' in such a way as to imply you are fundraising for a registered charity. You may decide that your fundraising target and the activities involved are significant enough to want to set up an organisation to work through. The Institute of Fundraising website contains information about the types of organisation you could establish.

Running an organisation is a very real responsibility and you should [carefully consider](#) the time commitment and legal obligations involved before you go down this path. The Charity Commission give guidance on setting up an organisation as well as the [reporting responsibilities](#) for 'friends of' and similar groups on their website.

There are thousands of charities registered in the UK. It is highly likely that one of them is involved in the very issue you are fundraising for. [You can find them](#) using a range of online search engines. You might want to contact one that is concerned with your issue and see if they will work with you, before you take on the responsibility of your own organisation.

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Related Links

- [Members or donors](#)

Information about the legal difference between members and donors (or supporters) from the Institute of Fundraising website

- [Guidance for 'In Aid of' Volunteer Fundraisers](#)

from the Institute of Fundraising website

- [Guidance for people involved in supporting volunteer fundraising](#)

from the Institute of Fundraising website

FORUM

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