



Fundraising & Sponsorship Policy

Summary

It is the intent of Illinois Fire Juniors, NFP to provide avenues for the organization and teams to raise funds from sponsors/fundraising activities for the following:

- To cover club expenses,
- As a means to fund capital improvements to club facilities,
- As a means to provide opportunities for player development, and
- As a means to fund “Special Events” as defined by, and within the parameters of this policy.

A “Special Event” is defined as: A player-focused, developmental athletic event or activity (including travel to the venue) for which a proposal has been presented to and formally approved by the Illinois Fire Juniors Board of Directors that involves:

- Student athlete participation in a domestic or international athletic event governed by a recognized accredited athletic agency/organization & involves:
 - A proposed group of formally rostered Illinois Fire Juniors athletes, or,
 - A proposed group of ad hoc Illinois Fire Juniors athletes that will be rostered specifically for the purpose of the “Special Event”, or,
 - A proposed group of Illinois Fire Juniors athletes and athletes from other area soccer clubs that will be rostered specifically for the purpose of the “Special Event”,
- Who would be collectively using the “Illinois Fire Juniors” name for the “Special Event” and,
- Who, during competition will be led by one or more Illinois Fire Juniors Director of Coaching Staff or Staff Coaches (to be selected by the DOC and approved by the Board of Directors).
- Illinois Fire Juniors student athletes will be given first priority for all “Special Event” proposals.

Examples are: Disney Cup (Florida, USA) Schwan’s Cup (Minnesota, USA) Gothia Cup (Sweden) Holland Cup (Netherlands) Costa Daurada Cup (España) Marne Trophy (France), etc.

A “Special Event” is considered formally approved when a two thirds (2/3) majority of active board members vote in favor of the proposal. The vote and approval will be recorded in the meeting minutes by the Board Secretary.

It remains the responsibility of the group of athletes and their parents/guardians to fully finance the “Special Event” – including any logistical, insurance or other expenses such as coaching related expenses - via means outlined in this policy.

Note: *Unapproved events or independent events are events coordinated and/or set up by an individual (or individuals) without formal approval by Illinois Fire Juniors, NFP. Monies paid for non-approved or independent events will be given directly to the coordinating individual(s), those hosting the event, or the venue where the event is taking place – without the involvement of Illinois Fusion, NFP. The individual or individuals coordinating the unapproved/independent event assume all financial & logistical liability for the event. Use of the Illinois Fire Juniors name and “not for profit” status is not permitted for “unapproved” or “independent” events.*

Opportunities outlined in this policy are divided into two sections; [Fundraising](#) & [Sponsorship](#).



Fundraising

Club Fundraising

- Each player will be responsible for participation in any authorized annual fundraiser, as determined by the Board of Directors. The board will take into account budget dollars needed and a reasonable amount of obligation given the nature of the event and timeframe provided. Players not wanting to participate in the fundraiser will be given the option to “opt out” of the fundraiser by contributing the equal value of the required annual amount prior to the fundraiser beginning. This amount will be determined by the Sponsorship Director and Treasurer, with approval from the Board of Directors.
- All monies received by the club from the annual fundraiser will be placed in the general fund by the Illinois Fire Juniors Treasurer unless otherwise identified by the Board of Directors prior to the fundraiser. The Sponsorship Director will, as designated in the sponsorship policy, manage the use of any “limited use” fundraisers for the club including any fundraisers that only allows a limited number of uses per organization per specified timeframe. The fundraising committee must approve any fundraisers prior to the activity being committed to by club entity. Failure to receive approval will result in forfeiture of the proceeds to the Club’s general fund.
- All revenues obtained by the sponsorship committee will be received by the Treasurer and deposited into the general fund with the exception of monies collected specifically for board-approved items. Any monies raised by a club fundraiser during hosted club related event such as league games, "friendlies" or other events would also go into the club’s general fund.

For example: Concession revenue earned during league games would be credited, after expenses into the club’s general fund.

Team Fundraising

- ☐ Each team may participate in fundraising activities pending approval from the Sponsorship Director and the Illinois Fire Juniors Board of Directors. The intent of the team fundraising policy is twofold; it will allow teams to raise funds to lower team costs or fund/allow for fun social events that will build club unity & team camaraderie. If a team chooses to participate in a team fundraising activity then each player will be expected to participate in the event. Players may be excused from events with prior approval from a team manager or team coach and communicated to the Board of Directors. Teams are able to initiate fundraising activities not restricted in the club fundraising section (limited use.) to cover individual fees, including those estimated fees for a “Special Event” as defined by this policy. Use of a limited use fundraiser must be approved by the Sponsorship Director and the Board of Directors prior to the event or the proceeds of said event will be forfeited to the general fund. Any monies raised by the team for the team must be evenly distributed amongst roster players up to the full amount of the dollars raised. Any dollars raised above the team’s full fees will be returned to the team manager. Each team is responsible for managing its own fundraising monies raised for future expenses. No refunds will be made back to individuals from the club or from the team account.

Special fundraisers for items outside of player’s fees will be allowed but must be pre-approved by the Sponsorship Director and the Board of Directors depending on the nature of the event. For example, a team may wish to raise money to attend a special camp, tournament or “Special Event” (as defined by this policy) not included in the fees. The team may also have to gain approval to use a limited use fundraiser if applicable. All players’ fees must be paid prior to fundraising for additional events or items. It is the Team’s responsibility to verify that all club financial responsibilities are met by all individuals before entering into additional obligations.



The intent of this rule is to insure that club fees will be satisfied before additional benefits (such as a “Special Event”) are received. It may be necessary for a player to pay fees ahead of schedule to allow for the team to raise proceeds for a “Special Event”.

“Special Event” Fundraising

Similar to the “Team Fundraising” guidelines, each team may also participate in fundraising activities for “Special Events” (as defined by this policy) and as approved by the Board of Directors. Player/Family participation in any “Special Events” and the associated fundraising for the “Special Events” are strictly voluntary. All participants in “Special Event” fundraising must be in good financial standing and current on all fees owed to the club. In the event of logistical challenges or other fortuitous events that prevent the “Special Event” from occurring, all funds raised will be earmarked for that event. If a replacement event is not scheduled within 1 year, those funds will be will be forfeited to the general fund, at the discretion of the Treasurer. Voluntary contributions by parents (such as travel costs, etc) provided outside of funds raised for the “Special Event” will be refunded to the individual family less any pro-rata shares of applicable cancellation penalty fees. Each team is responsible for managing its own “Special Event” fundraising. No refunds will be made back to individuals from the club or from the team account. Monies will be held in a “special events” escrow fund managed by Illinois Fire Juniors Treasurer. The intent of this rule is to insure that club fees will be honored before additional benefits related to the “Special Event” are received. It may be necessary for a player to pay fees ahead of schedule to allow for the team to raise proceeds for a “Special Event”.

Individual Level Fundraising

Any fundraising by an individual for the sole benefit to the individual to cover his or her fees will need prior approval of the Sponsorship Director and the Board of Directors. Any money received over the players’ fee would be deposited in the club general fund. No refunds over the amount owed to the club will be issued. It is not the intent of this provision to provide an individual with a means for personal gain. Fundraising on behalf of the club by an individual is limited to the policy stated in the Team and Club fundraising policy sections.

Fundraising Policy Deviations

It is not the intention of this policy to deny anyone the ability to donate money or raise money to benefit the club, team or individual. There may be situations that present themselves that fall outside of the provisions of this policy. In the event of these arising, the affected party may request a deviation from the policy. Requests for deviations from this policy will be addressed on a case by case basis and must be pre-approved by the Board of Directors by majority vote during an official board meeting. Teams or individuals seeking a deviation from the policy may provide a representative to the board meeting to state the case for the deviation. All deviation requests will be given careful consideration and handled in the strictest confidence to ensure fairness to all members of the club.



Sponsorship

Sponsorship policies are divided into the four categories; Club, Team, Individual and Company Grants/Matching Funds. The Illinois Fusion has a sponsorship committee comprised of parent members with a board member chairperson to identify and pursue corporate sponsors for the club, to aid in offsetting overhead expenses, to allow for continued growth and allow for financial stability outside of player's fees. The committee has primary responsibility for directing activities at the Club level. No member of the committee will receive any compensation for his or her role in the committee. The committee also oversees fundraising events and serves as the approver and coordinator for fundraising events

Club Sponsorship

At the Club level, the Sponsorship committee directs the pursuit of all sponsorship and fundraising. The group maintains a list of corporate sponsors and contacts that they are pursuing for contributions or who have made contributions to the club in past years. Any listed potential sponsor or current sponsor is not available for any other pursuit of sponsorship of any kind including team, individual or "Special Events" as defined by this policy. Depending on the dollar amount contributed, the sponsor is provided with certain benefits as part of the contribution, as well as, full support within the context of the 501(C)(3) not for profit status of the club.

Sponsorships are broken into the following levels:

Emerald (\$50,000 and above)

- Naming rights to Illinois Fire Juniors events
- Ability to initiate limited use of certain products at fields as approved by Illinois Fire Juniors NFP, PCSL & the City of Bloomington Illinois.
- Sponsorship showcased at Illinois Fire Juniors home and annex fields
- Logo of sponsor on team warm-ups and/or travel bags
- Recognition in all Illinois Fire Juniors Tournament Publications
- Plaque with Illinois Fire Juniors club photo
- Highlighted on Illinois Fire Juniors web site sponsor page
- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors Website

Diamond (\$10,000-\$49,999.99)

- Sponsorship showcased at Illinois Fire Juniors home and annex fields
- Logo of sponsor on team warm-ups and/or travel bags
- Recognition in all Illinois Fire Juniors Tournament Publications
- Plaque with Illinois Fire Juniors club photo
- Highlighted on Illinois Fire Juniors web site sponsor page
- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors Website

Platinum (\$5,000-\$9,999.99)

- Sponsorship showcased at Illinois Fire Juniors home and annex fields
- Logo of sponsor on team warm-ups and/or travel bags
- Recognition in all Illinois Fire Juniors Tournament Publications
- Plaque with Illinois Fire Juniors club photo
- Highlighted on Illinois Fire Juniors web site sponsor page
- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors Website



Gold (\$3,500- \$4,999.99)

- Recognition in all Illinois Fire Juniors Tournament Publications
- Logo of sponsor on club apparel as approved by board
- Plaque with Illinois Fire Juniors club photo
- Highlighted on Illinois Fire Juniors website sponsor page
- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors website

Silver (\$1000-\$3,499.99)

- Advanced offers for advertising and promotions
- Plaque with Illinois Fire Juniors team photo
- Highlighted on Illinois Fire Juniors web site sponsor page
- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors website
- Recognition in all Illinois Fire Juniors Tournament Publications

Bronze (\$500-\$999.99)

- Sponsorship link on Illinois Fire Juniors website
- Recognition in all Illinois Tournament Publications

Friend of the Club (Less than \$500)

- Recognition in all Illinois Tournament Publications

The sponsorship committee will have the ability to customize the levels as needed based on the needs of the sponsor within the costs of the request. It is intended that no less than 75% of any monies received go directly to club programs. The committee also has the ability to equate services performed or materials provided to dollar amounts to determine sponsorship level achieved.

It is the responsibility of the committee to review the contribution levels annually to determine they are in line with current costs and inflation levels.

Team Sponsorship

Teams may also pursue sponsorship. Teams must verify that any sponsors being pursued are not listed as current sponsors or have been identified as target sponsors by the sponsorship committee. Team sponsorship dollars will first pay for sponsor benefits as listed in the club sponsor section based on level with the balance divided amongst the roster players of the team to cover player fees. Any proceeds remaining after all player fees are paid in full will be transferred into the general fund. No refunds will be made to any individuals. Any logos or marking for the sponsor as provisioned in the levels of sponsorship must be approved by the board prior to application to any uniform or accessories.

Any monies received from current or target sponsors or based on use of unapproved limited use fundraisers and/or sponsorships will be forfeited to the club general fund.

“Special Event” Sponsorship

A potential sponsor may request that sponsorship funds donated be earmarked for a “Special Event” (as defined by this policy). Teams must verify with the Board of Directors, that any potential “Special Event” sponsors (voluntary or those being pursued) are not listed as current sponsors or have been identified as target sponsors by the sponsorship committee. Similar to the



Team Sponsorship guidelines, "Special Event" sponsorship dollars will be used to first pay for sponsor benefits listed in the club sponsor section, based on the sponsorship level - with the balance divided amongst the players of the team participating in the "Special Event". In the event proceeds remain after all "Special Event" fees are paid, they will be transferred into the general fund. No refunds will be made to any individuals. Any logos or marking for the sponsor as provisioned in the levels of sponsorship must be approved by the board prior to application to any uniform or accessories.

Individual Sponsorship

Individuals may seek sponsorship following the same rules as the team. Individual sponsors would not receive any levels of sponsorship benefits and will not receive the benefits of the 501 (c) (3) status for the donation. Each situation (including "Special Events" as defined by this policy) must be approved by the board prior to monies being awarded to the individual in order to protect the organization and the availability of future funds. No refunds would be issued for sponsorship over the fees and any remaining proceeds would go to the general fund.

Company Grants or matching awards programs

The intent of any grants or matching fund contributions from any corporation or individual is that monies will be placed in the Capital improvements fund of the club. However, proceeds may be dispensed to projects based on the intent of the grant. For example, monies donated for scholarships would be awarded with approval from the board to individuals needing financial assistance and meeting the club or grant guidelines. Many corporations put limits on the awards barring the individual who obtained the grant or award from personally benefiting from the grant. All grants must be handled within the policies of the grantor. Company Grants will be used in accordance with the terms of the Grantor's Corporate Citizenship (or other similar) policy; which may preclude their use for "Special Events" as defined by this policy.

Tournament Sponsorship

Tournament Sponsorship is subject to the policies set forth within this document. Contact of any current sponsor or identified contact must be approved by the sponsorship committee. The tournament committee will work with the sponsorship committee to obtain tournament sponsorships. Tournament sponsorship may include hotel agreements, programs, promotions, raffles, field sponsorship as design for the increased revenue of any club sponsored tournament.

All Tournament revenues will be credited into the Club tournament fund unless directed by the board for special use. For example, proceeds from the Spring Tournament could be slated to fund the lighting of the fields after expenses and could continue to be so slated until such a debt is retired.

Sponsorship Policy Deviations

It is not the intention of this policy to deny anyone the ability to donate money or raise money to benefit the club, team or individual. There may be situations that present themselves that fall outside of the provisions of this policy. In the event of these arising, the affected party may request a deviation from the policy. Requests for deviations from this policy will be addressed on a case by case basis and must be pre-approved by the board of directors by majority vote during an official board meeting. Teams or individuals seeking a deviation from the policy may provide a representative to the board meeting to state the case for the deviation. All deviation requests will be given careful consideration and handled in the strictest confidence to ensure fairness to all members of the club.

Illinois Fire Juniors, NFP will not assume responsibility for any loss, damages, claims or expenses of any kind whatsoever sustained or incurred by any individual resulting from any fundraising activities, approved "Special Events" or unapproved events as defined by this policy.