

PARTNERSHIPS GUIDE 2024/25





INTRODUCTION

Successful partnerships are key to running a sports club. They can ensure income via sponsorship, reduce costs for your members, and help raise awareness of important issues. Many clubs have social sponsors, but increasingly clubs are also looking further afield, partnering with local businesses, charities, and other sports clubs.

A partnership will benefit both parties and for sports clubs this will often be discounts/sponsorship payments in exchange for marketing the partner business to your members and wider audience. Other examples could be raising awareness and money for a charity, in exchange for the charity providing resources for your members, or coaching at a community club in exchange for facility use.

As a club you can have multiple partners across a range of areas. It is important to be honest with potential partners and inform them of other partnerships you have, but generally as long as there is not a conflict of interest, there should be no issues.

GETTING STARTED

Step 1: Review existing partnerships your club has. Are these still mutually beneficial to both your club and the partner?

Step 2: Establish potential new partners. Make a list of businesses that could be beneficial to your club and reach out to them - social sponsors, equipment sponsors, facility providers or charities.

Step 3: Draft up a partnership agreement and submit it to the Partnerships and Alumni Officer.

You can use a template agreement produced by the Sports Union here

Step 4: Share your new partner on social media so that your club members and wider community are aware.

Keep in mind:

Think about your club values and how they fit the image of the prospective partners; partnerships should not contradict your club values.

Partnerships take time and building them should be an ongoing process; ensuring a good relationship with partners can be crucial to future agreements.

YOUR OFFER TO PARTNERS

When negotiating with potential partners, keep in mind what you can offer them.

Physical and digital branding + marketing opportunities reaching over

X number of student members

X number of matches/events/games

X numbers of social media followers

Edinburgh is 1st in Scotland for Sport and 5th in the UK.

Contact with club partners should be completed using your club email address - this is more professional, and makes it easier to hand over partnership information at the end of the year.

Marketing smaller clubs positively

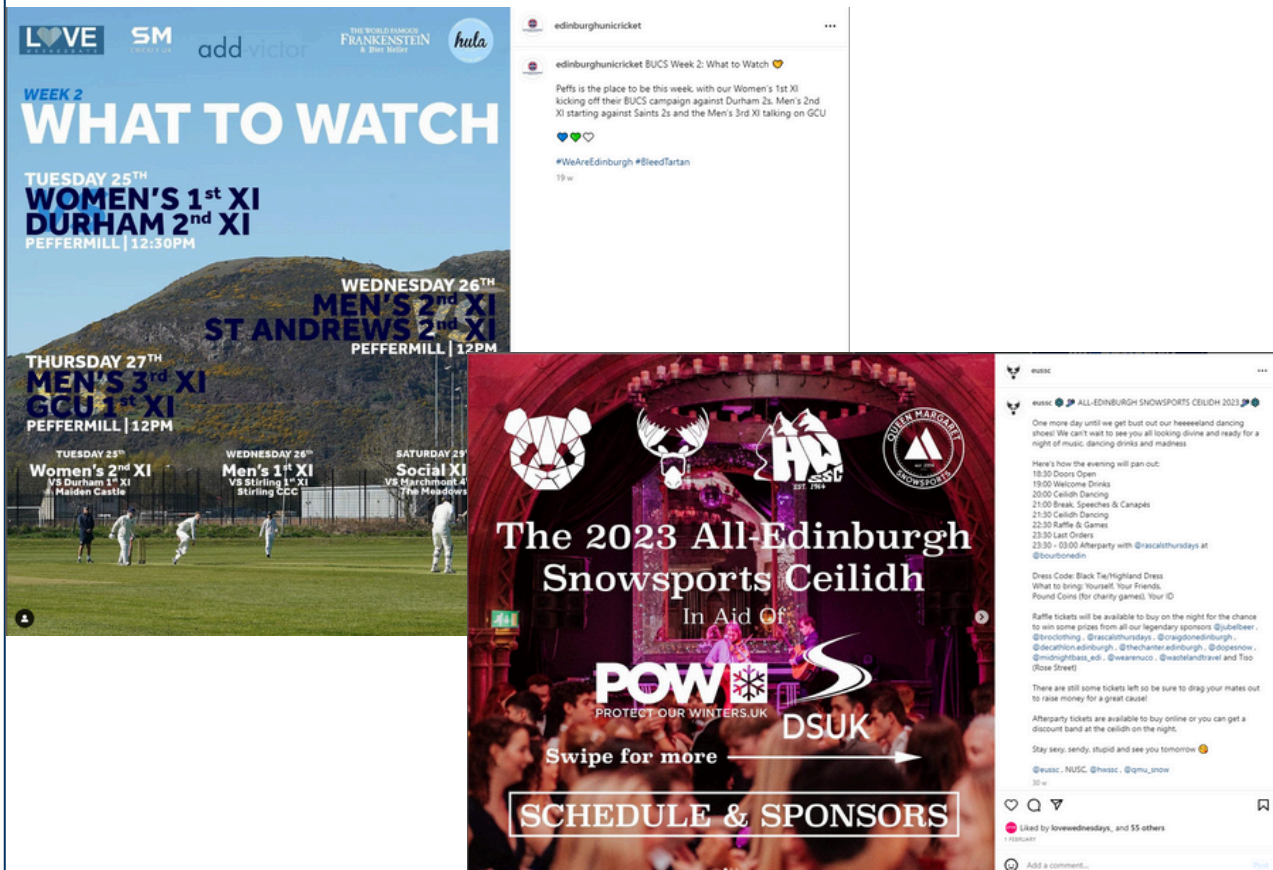
As a smaller club, it can be more difficult to sell yourself to potential partners, due to your smaller audience. There are certain ways you can increase your appeal to partners; team up with other similar clubs to increase the size of your 'club' or if you are in contact with alumni, use them to increase the scale of your audience.

DIGITAL PARTNER PROMOTION

Social media is likely the main way that you will engage your partners; it is, therefore, important that your social media reflects your club well and is on-brand. Incorporating partners' logos into posts allows them to see them more easily and will help boost their perception of your club.

Whilst meeting with partners, it is important to discuss social media and what their expectations are from you with regards to posting and engagement.

Below are some examples of where clubs have advertised their sponsors logo really well.



BEYOND SOCIAL PARTNERS

Social sponsors are brilliant and often get good engagement from club members, however your club will be of interest to a much wider audience...

- **Student targeted organisations;** a graduate recruitment company, hairdressers, or stationary suppliers.
- **Charities;** particularly those who support a cause your members are passionate about or can educate your members on an important issue.
- **Local community groups;** schools/young people organisations will often look for coaches and can offer facilities for your club in some cases. Getting involved with these groups can allow you to spread your passion to others, and may even inspire school-aged children to join your club at university.
- **Other university sports clubs;** sometimes strength is in numbers and there will be projects and events that multiple clubs can work on together. Although many agreements will be ongoing throughout the year, it is also possible to partner for one-off events.

CHARITY PARTNERS

Partnering with charities is a great way to promote a cause which is important to your members; members will get the chance to make a difference, whether that is raising money, awareness, or volunteering for the charity.

Some charities that work with students and young people (such as mental health charities) will want to reach your club's demographic and may be willing to come in and do a talk with your members or run events.

If you are running an event in support of a charity, check their website or get in touch with them; they may be able to provide resources or provide social media exposure for the club.

CASE STUDY

Club: Edinburgh University Cricket Club

Size: 120+ club members

Edinburgh University Cricket Club Partnership examples:

- AdVictor agreement was to post quarterly promos. We try to include our sponsor logos on as much of our social media content as possible e.g. teamsheets during the season
- Equipment partnership: agreed kickback on all equipment purchased measured using discount code.
- Also including sponsors in as much club output as possible: social media and the weekly email were our main instruments
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Top tips from EUCC:

- We can all help each other! AdVictor in particular were really keen to explore more uni partnerships so we also shared their details with other clubs.
- They have worked to have flexible and open relationship with both: last year's Sponsorship Sec kept in contact with them throughout, and tried to avoid the perception that we were just taking their money and then forgetting about them

CONTACT

If you have questions regarding the content of this guide or are unsure where to start, please contact the Partnerships and Alumni Officer.

Any questions relating to wider EUSU partnerships or community engagement, please contact Emily Roxbee Cox.

A template for Club Partnership agreements can be found on the EUSU Website.

Please ensure that all partnership agreements are sent to the Partnerships and Alumni Officer so that they can be checked before being finalised with your partner.

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