



Environmental Funders Network

Partnerships Policy

Introduction

EFN has an obligation to work with others in order to maximise the delivery of its objectives – to make environmental funding more effective, and to grow funding for environmental causes. At the same time, we will not accept funding, membership requests or partnerships with individuals or organisations that conflict with our aims and values, or that could potentially impact negatively on our integrity or reputation.

This policy is largely focused on our engagement with corporate entities, but recognises that many of the individuals and foundations we work with have close links to companies. We currently engage with companies in three main ways (excluding service providers):

- Individuals, foundations and advisors that are linked to companies participate in EFN activities, and some of those give us a membership subscription or grant. Individuals may have made their wealth through a company; foundations might be directly linked to a company; and advisors work for banks, law firms, wealth management companies, family offices etc.
- We regularly partner with companies to support their clients to give to the environment, either directly, through the provision of resources, or through supporting advisors. Examples of previous activities include:
 - Organising events for the clients of private banks.
 - Giving advice to philanthropy and wealth advisors, so that they can better advise their clients.
 - Giving advice directly to the clients of banks and wealth managers, to support them as they start to give to the environment.
 - Supporting resources that banks develop for their clients to guide their environmental philanthropy.
- Staff from companies may be on our [Board of Trustees and Advisory Group](#).

Not being able to work with this range of organisations would curtail our activities and reach, especially in terms of growing environmental philanthropy.

We are grateful to the RSPB, Marine Conservation Society, WWF, Ashden and Impatience Earth for sharing with us their policies and/or stances on engaging with corporates as we developed this policy.

Who will we work with?

We will engage with individuals, foundations and companies who are seeking to improve the effectiveness of environmental philanthropy or increase the amount of funding, either directly or by supporting and influencing others.

Who does this exclude?

In order to protect our reputation and integrity, EFN will not enter into relationships or accept financial contributions from companies whose core activities are incompatible with our goals and progress towards a fair and sustainable future – please see the appendix. This includes individuals and foundations with active links to companies engaged in these activities.

We will not accept financial or other contributions from any collaborative partners or members if there are conditions attached which seek to influence the delivery of our aims. We will retain our independence at all times.

Our position on banks

We recognise that many banks are causing a lot of environmental damage by funding the fossil fuel industry – see [Banking on Climate Chaos](#). However, it is vital that environmental philanthropy grows, and banks give us access to a very important group of prospects: their clients, who have the wealth and the commitment to philanthropy to make a significant difference. We have therefore placed banks on the ‘caution’ list, so that we will have to carefully consider if and how we work with them. If appropriate, we will enter into partnerships with these entities consciously and with eyes open, and not to endorse their practices except when they make significant pro-social and pro-climate and nature decisions. When working with staff or clients of banks, we will share a copy of this policy with them.

Implementation

Staff will be responsible for assessing whether current and new members, funders and partners fit with our Partnerships Policy.

- For companies falling into the exclusion list: the staff member will confirm with EFN’s Director that the offer of working together should be declined, and the company will be sent this policy.
- For companies falling into the caution list: the staff team will decide how to proceed, referring the matter to the Finance & General Purpose (F&GP) Committee of the Board when they consider it necessary. It is likely that advising bank clients about their philanthropic journey is unlikely to need to be referred to trustees, but anything other than this is likely to require an internal conversation.
- For matters that are referred to the F&GP Committee: the staff member and Director will recommend a course of action. Staff can recommend different courses of action depending on the request to work together and the risk/opportunity this creates. For example, we may have decided to work with a bank on the caution list to privately provide advice to one of their clients which is likely to significantly increase their environmental giving, but may decline to co-host an event with that bank, theoretically giving them the opportunity to publicly improve their reputation

by associating with us. When we decline to work with an organisation on the caution list, the company will be sent this policy.

- We will share the policy annually in our newsletter, and it will also be available on our website.

Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed as needed. In particular, we align with the [Climate Safe Lending Network](#), which has a target that by 2025, bank lending globally is consistent with staying below a 1.5°C global temperature increase. This means that all banks that are not rapidly decarbonising their lending by 2025 will be moved to the exclusion list.

APPENDIX

Exclusion list

Companies that are involved in:

- Activities that are illegal, fraudulent, or in violation of environmental, planning or international conventions
- Activities causing adverse human rights impacts
- Activities resulting in the infringement of the rights of indigenous and/or vulnerable groups
- Animal testing for cosmetic and other non-medical products
- Armaments (offensive armaments and weapons systems)
- Deforestation or the burning of natural ecosystems for land clearance relating to the establishment of large-scale agricultural plantations
- The growing of tobacco and manufacturing of tobacco products
- Medical testing on endangered species
- Oil, gas, and coal
- Pornography
- Producing, processing and/or trading materials from the exploitation of animals (e.g. fur), where this is unsustainable or detrimental to animal welfare
- Trading of flora or fauna species in violation of CITES

Caution list

Companies that are involved in:

- Aviation
- Banking and investments
- Gambling – whereby company poses a high risk of problem gambling
- Genetic engineering
- Hazardous chemicals and plastics
- Internal combustion vehicle manufacture and motor racing

(cont.)

- Large-scale hydropower generation

- Mining and retail of metals and minerals
- Nuclear power production
- Ozone depleting chemicals
- Pesticides and agro-chemicals
- Production or trade in alcohol
- Shipping
- Tourism that is not working towards becoming more sustainable, to ensure communities and the environment thrive