

Nonprofits and Commercial Content: Requesting Donations on Open Signal Channels

Open Signal community media policies allow for public benefit, nonprofit organizations to request donations on Open Signal cable channels. Following are the guidelines to ensure a request for donations does not violate our non-commercial policy, our Grant Agreement with the City of Portland, our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, and that it aligns with the mission and values of Open Signal, Portland Community Media center.

Nonprofit Status

Nonprofits requesting donations on Open Signal cable channels must be tax-exempt, registered, certified and active as a **public benefit nonprofit organization** by the Oregon Secretary of State, and **registered and in good standing** with the Oregon Department of Justice. The nonprofit's federal tax ID number is required for Open Signal to consider the request.

Public Benefit corporations are tax exempt and are organized for public or charitable purposes.

Mutual Benefit and *Religious* corporations are tax exempt, but are typically organized for the benefit of the organization's membership, or exclusively for religious purposes.

Mutual Benefit and Religious nonprofit organizations may apply with Open Signal to request donations on Open Signal cable channels, however, donations requested must be dedicated for public or charitable projects or programs that align with Open Signal values: to build digital inclusion and equity, to elevate diverse culture and art, and to honor all people regardless of ethnicity, religious beliefs, political affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or physical/mental ability or illness.

Disclosure of Intent to Request Donations Prior to Airing on Cable Channels

The community producer of record must disclose to staff if a **public benefit nonprofit** being featured on their program will be requesting donations **before the program airs on Open Signal cable channels**. Requests must be submitted by the community producer of record and may be submitted to the Media Services Director by email, or to front desk staff in person during public business hours. The nonprofit's **federal tax ID number is required**.

Staff will conduct online searches: 1) at the Oregon Secretary of State website to ensure the nonprofit is an active, public benefit nonprofit, and 2) at the Oregon DOJ website to ensure the nonprofit is registered and in good standing.

Mutual Benefit and Religious nonprofits must submit their request **at least two weeks prior to recording or live cablecast**. Requests must be submitted by the community producer of record

and may be submitted to the Media Services Director via email or to front desk staff in person during public business hours. Information provided must identify: the project or program to receive the donations, how the donations will be spent, and the intended outcome/impact in the community. Links to website info, promotional content and press releases are encouraged. The nonprofit's **federal tax ID number is required.**

Noncommercial Language

It is important to ensure the language used in the request for donations does not violate our noncommercial content policy. Yes, you can request donations, but you may not include specific pricing for the exchange of goods or services, commercial calls to action, or statements of value. Here are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable language:

Say:

- We are in need of donations for the canned food drive.
- We're also happy to accept cash donations!
- Please visit our website to make a cash donation to the food drive!
- You can drop off donations in barrels located at a variety of businesses around town. For a complete list of businesses please visit our website.
- We have donation barrels at every Fred Miller grocery store in Portland.
- We want to give a big thanks to Fred Miller for their sponsorship of our canned food drive.
- Your participation in our fund drive, or your cash donation will help build the foundation of our new community center.
- Our goal is to raise \$1,500 to help feed the hungry in Portland. We are \$500 away from our goal! Visit our website or call to donate to this effort.

Do NOT say:

- Tickets to the festival cost \$15 per person plus 2 cans of food.
- For \$10 we'll send you this awesome mug!
- The "save the turtles" t-shirt is available for sale at our website!
- Powell's is one of our amazing sponsors - you should buy their books!
- We encourage you to shop at Fred Miller!
- Buy a brick for \$200 to help build the foundation of our new community center.
- \$25 per month provides you with unlimited access to our members only gym at the new community center.

Questions?

If you have additional questions that are not answered by this document please get in touch with Distribution Manager, Emily Roland: distribution@opensignalpdx.org.