



Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC),  
Halifax Centre  
Dedicated to the Advancement of Astronomy and Allied Sciences

## **G14: Policies Regarding Donations to the RASC Halifax Centre**

(Adopted: October 30, 2023; Revised October 1, 2024)

### **Background:**

RASC Halifax Centre welcomes donations – both financial and equipment donation made by members or by their families posthumously. Their donations were and continue to be greatly appreciated; however, a consistent method for determining whether or not to accept the donation has not been determined. It has been at the discretion of the Board elected at that time.

### **Rationale:**

There is the need for a consistent approach to accepting donations to the Centre.

Transparency is a cornerstone of nonprofit bookkeeping, which is why the Centre should share detailed information on the restricted funds raised, the way they are spent, and the outcomes our Centre achieved with them. Donors, board members, and other key stakeholders want to know how our Centre spends its funding and what impact their support was able to make! This information can be shared on the website, annual reports and social media posts, or create a dedicated financial report with an overview of restricted and unrestricted funds.

### **Policies:**

1. Evaluating donations for acceptance or rejection shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors.
2. Potential donors must understand and accept that RASC Halifax Centre is not a registered charity; therefore, it cannot offer tax receipts for monetary donations or for the equivalent value of in-kind donations.

### **Re: Financial Donations:**

3. Financial donations are welcome.
4. The RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors are to determine if the funds received are for unrestricted or restricted purposes.
5. The Centre may choose to decline a donation (restricted or unrestricted) if it would incur additional unfunded expenses, if it did not meet the operational requirements of the Centre at the time of donation, or if the donor or donating organization objectives are disparate from those of the Centre.
6. The funds received are be used for any legal purpose appropriate to the RASC Halifax Centre.

### **Re: Unrestricted Donations:**

7. These funds are free from any external restrictions.
8. The RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors shall determine how the funds are to be used in fulfilling the Centre's Objectives.

### **Re: Restricted Donations (Bequests, Endowment, Legacy):**

9. Restricted donations can be made to the RASC Halifax Centre as a result of designated giving.
10. The Board of Directors must determine in partnership with the donor(s) if the funds are permanently or temporarily restricted:
  - a- *temporarily* due to a specified time limit or by the completion of the project.
  - b- *permanently* restricted for projects or activities ongoing and have no time limit.
11. Once determined the funds are restricted, that restriction is permanent. The Centre has a duty to abide by any restrictions set by the donor(s). The funds cannot be redirected for other purposes.
12. Restricted funds must be recorded in the RASC Halifax Centre's accounting system in its Income Statement, Statement of Activities and Statement of Financial Position in the year that commitment for the funds is received. This is regardless of when related expenses occur.
13. Should a situation arise that necessitates re-purposing restricted funds, obtaining permission in writing from the original donor(s) (or from the designated person(s) or entity should the original donor be deceased) to remove the restriction. Should the donor(s) refuse(s), the Centre will refund any unused portion of the donation if it cannot be used for its original intended designation.

### **Re: Equipment Donations**

14. Donations of astronomical equipment, while appreciated, may be accepted if the equipment is determined to be suitable to the purposes of the Centre. It may be declined depending on the resources available to the RASC Halifax Centre at the time of the intended donation. Those resources include volunteer availability, storage and physical plant/utilities availability, applicable funding, and the operational requirements of the RASC Halifax Centre and its members.
15. The RASC Halifax Centre cannot guarantee to any donor how the donated equipment may be used. Nor can the Centre consider buying such equipment or selling it on the donor's behalf.
16. Maintenance and repair of donated equipment shall be at the sole discretion of the RASC Halifax Centre.
17. Donors must also understand and agree that the RASC Halifax Centre is under no obligation to keep donated equipment in perpetuity. Centre resources, finances, and operational conditions change over time, and the Centre must be free to sell or otherwise dispose of astronomical equipment it can no longer house, support, or utilize.
18. It will be the responsibility of the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors to maintain a record of donated equipment, including the donor and their contact information.

### **Re: Donation Recognition**

19. Donations made shall be recognized and the donors acknowledged. The method of recognition, such as through a certificate, a thank you letter, an article in *Nova Notes*, or other form shall be at the discretion of the RASC Halifax Centre Board of Directors.

#### Resources used:

- <https://www.501c3.org/kb/what-are-restricted-funds/>
- <https://www.501c3.org/misappropriating-nonprofit-funds/>
- <https://www.nonprofitpro.com/post/restricted-giving-the-legal-requirements-nonprofits-should-consider-before-accepting-restricted-donations/>
- <https://recharity.ca/restricted-funds/>
- <https://propelnonprofits.org/resources/managing-restricted-funds/>