

# Fundraising Guidelines

How we raise money, what we will accept, and what we will not.

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|----------------|---------------|
| DOCUMENT ID    | LS-FIN-004    |
| DELIVERABLE    | F-04          |
| VERSION        | 1.0           |
| EFFECTIVE DATE | July 23, 2026 |
| OWNER          | Founder       |
| REVIEW CYCLE   | Annual        |
| STATUS         | Adopted       |

## 1 Purpose & Fiscal-Sponsorship Context

These guidelines govern how LinkScape raises and accepts funds. LinkScape is not a separate legal entity: it is a fiscally sponsored project of The Hack Foundation dba Hack Club, a 501(c)(3). Every dollar we raise flows through Hack Club Bank (HCB); we hold no independent bank account and cannot issue our own tax receipts. Donors give to Hack Club for the benefit of LinkScape, and Hack Club provides the tax-exempt status and receipting (see G-06 HCB Fiscal Sponsorship).

Fundraising is owned by the Founder (Thomas Wu, CEO). Because we are youth-led and steward significant donated compute, our default posture is modest, transparent, and mission-aligned fundraising rather than aggressive solicitation.

## 2 Acceptable Funding Sources

We accept funding that advances our mission of expanding AI access for students and communities with limited exposure, and that does not compromise our independence, our open-source default, or the safety of our members (some of whom are minors).

| Source                                  | Status                     | Notes                                   |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Individual donations                    | Accepted                   | Processed through HCB donation link     |
| Foundation / education grants           | Accepted                   | Follow grant process in §4              |
| Corporate sponsorship (events, compute) | Accepted with review       | No exclusivity over research direction  |
| In-kind (GPU credits, software, cloud)  | Accepted with review       | Track value per F-03 / F-07             |
| Restricted / large gifts                | Accepted with HCB approval | See §3 threshold                        |
| Anonymous large gifts                   | Case-by-case               | May require source verification via HCB |

- Declined by default: funds contingent on closing our source code, gifts that require us to compromise research ethics (E-03) or responsible-AI commitments (E-01), and any source that creates a conflict of interest under G-05 without disclosure.
- Any funder relationship that could steer research or messaging is reviewed against E-01 and I-05 External Comms Strategy before acceptance.

### 3 Large & Restricted Gifts — HCB Approval

Large or restricted donations require Hack Club Bank approval before we commit to accepting them, per G-06. A restricted gift is any donation earmarked for a specific purpose, carrying donor conditions, or requiring a grant agreement signed by Hack Club as the legal entity.

1. Confirm whether the gift is large (per the threshold in F-02 Expense Policy / G-07 Decision Authority Matrix) or restricted.
2. For any restricted gift or grant agreement, route to Hack Club via HCB for review and signature — LinkScape leadership cannot sign on behalf of the 501(c)(3).
3. Record the donor conditions and the approving parties in Notion before funds are drawn down.
4. For unrestricted gifts under the threshold, the CFO confirms the funds land correctly in HCB; no separate approval needed.

LinkScape members may never sign contracts or grant agreements that legally bind Hack Club. All such instruments go through HCB. When in doubt, treat a gift as restricted.

### 4 Grant Application Process

1. Identify a fit: the funder's goals align with G-01 Mission/Vision/Values and a current or planned program.

2. Draft a concept note; the Founder (or delegate) reviews for mission fit and capacity — do not commit to deliverables we cannot staff (~10 members).
3. Confirm eligibility: many grants require a 501(c)(3) applicant. Apply as a fiscally sponsored project of Hack Club, and coordinate any required entity signature through HCB early.
4. Build the budget in F-01 Budget Template, including realistic compute costs allocated per F-03.
5. Internal review by CFO for financial accuracy and by CEO for strategic fit before submission.
6. Submit; log the application, amount, and decision date in the fundraising tracker.
7. On award: route the agreement through HCB (§3), set up reporting obligations in the compliance calendar (G-10), and report funds in F-05.

## 5 Sponsorship Guidelines

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We accept event and program sponsorship (hackathons, workshops, Kaggle-related activities, the AI-music project) where it extends our reach without buying influence over our work.

- Sponsors receive acknowledgment (logo, thanks) — not editorial control over research, curricula, or open-source decisions.
- No sponsor gains exclusive rights to LinkScape outputs; our default remains open-source (E-06).
- Youth-safety first: sponsors do not get unsupervised access to members who are minors, nor to their personal data (E-02).
- Compute or cloud credits offered as sponsorship are onboarded under F-03 (usage) and F-07 (asset tracking).
- Sponsorship tiers and benefits are documented per event; monetary sponsorships flow through HCB like all other funds.

## 6 Donor Acknowledgment Procedures

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1. Tax receipts are issued by Hack Club through HCB — LinkScape does not issue receipts and never promises deductibility on its own authority.
2. Send a LinkScape thank-you (email from the linkscope.app domain) within one week of a gift being confirmed in HCB.
3. Honor anonymity requests; do not publish a donor's name without explicit consent.
4. Maintain a donor record in Notion (amount, date, restrictions, acknowledgment sent) consistent with E-02 Data Privacy.
5. Recognize significant supporters in the annual impact report (I-07) where they have consented.

## 7 Ethics, Transparency & Review

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- No fundraising claim may overstate our size, status, or impact; external messaging follows I-05.
- Conflicts of interest in any funder relationship are disclosed per G-05.

- All raised funds are reported transparently through F-05 and reconciled monthly against HCB (per G-10).
- These guidelines are reviewed annually by the Founder and CFO, and whenever HCB or Hack Club policy changes.

### Approval and Adoption

Adopted upon signature by the officers below. Pending ratification at Sprint 0 (see LS-REG-001).

### Document Maintenance Log

| Version | Date          | Author               | Changes         |
|---------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1.0     | July 23, 2026 | LinkScape Leadership | Initial release |

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LinkScape operates as a fiscally sponsored project of The Hack Foundation dba Hack Club, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Hack Club holds the charitable status and every dollar moves through Hack Club Bank.

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