



Donor-Student Engagement Guidelines

Fostering Meaningful Connections with Respect and Purpose

ArtCenter College of Design is committed to fostering meaningful, respectful connections between donors and the students who benefit from their generosity. These guidelines are designed to support thoughtful engagement while protecting the privacy, comfort and well-being of everyone involved. To ensure appropriate boundaries, the Advancement office is available to facilitate contact between donors and the student beneficiaries of their gifts.

Student Participation Is Encouraged, Not Mandatory

- Students are warmly encouraged—but never required—to meet with donors and to provide updates about themselves and their work that demonstrate the impact of donor gifts. We are grateful for student participation, as these connections help donors see the importance of their generosity and often inspire continued support for future students.

College Representative Involvement

- Any meeting between donors and students should be planned in advance and will include a College representative from the Advancement team or identified with the Advancement team. This helps create a comfortable, well-supported space for both students and donors. The representative's role is to help ensure the interaction is aligned with the College's mission and values.

Respectful Communication Boundaries

- To maintain clear and respectful boundaries, students are asked not to reach out to donors independently, including for meetings, networking or requests for support. Likewise, donors are asked to coordinate all communication with student beneficiaries through the Advancement office.
- We encourage meetings that take place in a shared, public space on campus or at a College-approved off-campus location. Private, one-on-one meetings in unmonitored settings are not permitted.

Confidentiality, Privacy and Conduct

- All donor-student interaction is expected to be respectful of personal privacy. Any sensitive or personal information shared should remain confidential; student privacy is protected under FERPA. Similarly, student stories and images provided to donors through reports will be kept in confidence and not used for other purposes or shared publicly without student permission.

If Issues Arise

- If a student or donor does not follow these guidelines—particularly around direct, unsanctioned communication—the College will thoughtfully review the situation and respond appropriately.

***Thank you for your commitment to empowering students
through responsible and ethical philanthropy.***

*For questions about engagement or to connect with the ArtCenter Advancement, please reach out to
Melanie Burzynski, Senior Vice President, Advancement at melanie.burzynski@artcenter.edu*



ORGANIZATION

- ✓ Spend money according to donor intent
- ✓ Give gratitude to donors
- ✓ Provide accountability (reporting)
- ✓ Manage donor expectations and set healthy boundaries
- ✗ Accept money with illegal, unethical restrictions or that are contrary to their mission
- ✗ Allow donor to control money after it has been given
- ✗ Force donor/beneficiary interactions



DONOR

- ✓ Provide gifts without illegal, unethical, or unnecessary restrictions
- ✓ Understand the relationship is with the organization, not the beneficiary
- ✓ Maintain realistic expectations of organization and donor
- ✗ Expect quid pro quo treatment or influence on organizational decisions
- ✗ Demand interaction with beneficiaries
- ✗ Feel ownership over beneficiaries



BENEFICIARY

- ✓ Partner with organization in sharing impact
- ✓ Participate in ethical storytelling
- ✗ Expect relationship with donor
- ✗ Required to thank donor
- ✗ Participate in any unwanted interaction with donor
- ✗ Feel indebted to donor