

Donor Thank-You Kit

Everything you send after the yes - a thank-you letter template, a short email version, a written acknowledgment a company can keep for its records, a note for the companies that declined, and a recognition plan you can actually deliver.

Templates & Letters · ultimatedonations.org/resources/donor-thank-you-kit

The thank-you is the part of a donation request that decides what next year looks like. A group that thanks well is asking a warm contact the following season; a group that goes quiet after the yes is starting from zero again, writing to a person who already helped once and never heard how it went.

This kit is everything that goes out after the answer: a letter to copy, a short email version, a written acknowledgment a company can file, a note for the companies that declined, and a plan for the recognition you promised. Use it with the [donation request letter workbook](#) for the original ask and the [donation request tracker](#) for keeping the list, and browse the rest at [free fundraising resources](#).

The thank-you timeline

Four moments, and each one has a different job.

When	What goes out	Why
Within a few days of the yes	A short thank-you to the person who approved it, confirming what is coming and when you will collect it	Confirms the commitment landed with a human, and settles the logistics while they are still fresh.
When the item arrives	A one-line acknowledgment that it is in hand, plus the written acknowledgment for their records	Closes the loop for the person who arranged it and gives their office the document it needs.
After the event	The result, and what the money paid for	This is the note that converts a one-time donor into next year's first yes.
Alongside all of it	The recognition you promised, delivered exactly as promised	An unkept promise here is remembered longer than the gift.

The thank-you letter

Copy this, replace every [bracketed placeholder], and keep it to a few short paragraphs. Longer is not warmer.

[Date]

[Contact Name] [Company Name] [Street Address] [City, State ZIP]

Dear [Contact Name],

Thank you for donating [the specific item] to [Organization Name] for [Event Name] on [Event Date].

[One sentence on what the event supports and who it serves - the classroom, the team, the families.]

[If the item has arrived: "It arrived on (date) and will be part of our (raffle, auction, prize table)." If it has not: "We will collect it on (date), as arranged."]

[Organization Name] is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, EIN [number]. No goods or services were provided to [Company Name] in return for this donation. [If anything was provided in return, describe it here instead.] What the donation is worth for your own records is yours to determine with your advisor.

As promised, [describe the recognition you committed to and will deliver].

We are grateful. I will write again after [Event Name] to tell you how it went.

Sincerely, [Your Name] [Your Role], [Organization Name] [Phone] and [Email]

This letter is informational, not legal advice - what a company may claim for a donated item, and what documentation it needs, is a question for its own advisor.

The short email version

For a local manager who agreed in person and does not need a formal letter.

Subject: Thank you from [Organization Name]

Hi [Contact Name],

Thank you for the [specific item] for [Event Name] on [Event Date]. It goes straight onto our [prize table / auction], and it helps us [one specific thing the money funds].

I have attached a written acknowledgment for your records. I will follow up after the event to let you know how it went.

Thanks again,

[Your Name] - [Organization Name] - [Phone]

The written acknowledgment

Companies file this. Keep it factual and keep it separate from the warmth of the thank-you letter - it exists to be a record, not a message.

Line	What to put
Organization name and address	Your legal name, exactly as it appears on your paperwork
Tax status and EIN	Your 501(c)(3) status and number, or an honest description if your group does not hold one
Donor name	The company as it should appear in its own records
Description of the donation	What it was, in plain words - never a value you assigned to it
Date received	The day it actually arrived
Goods or services in return	Either "none were provided" or a plain description of what was
Signature	A named person, with a role and a date

The one line groups most often get wrong is the value. Describe the item; do not price it. What a donated item is worth for the company's records is determined by the company with its own advisor, and a figure asserted by the recipient helps nobody. *This is informational, not legal advice.*

The note for a company that declined

Short, unresentful, and sent anyway.

Hi [Contact Name],

Thank you for getting back to me about [Event Name] - I appreciate you taking the time, and I understand completely.

If it is useful, we hold [Event Name] each [season], and I would be glad to reach out earlier next time if that fits your process better.

Thanks again for considering it,

[Your Name] - [Organization Name]

The recognition plan

Only promise what you will deliver, and write down who delivers it. An unmet promise of recognition does more damage than never offering it.

Promised	To whom	Who delivers it	Delivered

Recognition worth offering is recognition you control: a written thank-you, a named mention in the event program, a note in your group's newsletter, a photograph of the item in use sent to the manager who approved it. Offer nothing that depends on someone else's decision, and nothing you would have to chase a volunteer to complete on the day.

After the event

The follow-up note is the one that pays for itself, and it is the one nearly everyone skips.

- 1. **Write within a week or two of the event.** While the result is fresh and the person still remembers approving it.
- 2. **Say what happened, specifically.** What the item did on the night, what the event raised in the plain terms you would use with a neighbor, what it funds.
- 3. **Name the thing it bought.** The equipment, the trip, the supplies. Concrete beats grateful.
- 4. **Say you would love to ask again.** Then ask again next season, with the tracker open so you know exactly who to write to.

Keep every answer, including the noes, in the [donation request tracker](#), and look each company up in the [donor directory](#) before the next round - we track 4,000+ companies, and each page describes what that program has historically offered and where to check its current status.

Common questions

When should you thank a donor?

Twice. Once within a few days of the commitment, so the person who approved it knows it arrived, and once after the event with the result. The second note is the one almost nobody sends, and it is the one that makes next year's ask easy.

What should a donation acknowledgment letter include?

The organization's name and tax status, a description of what was donated, the date it was received, and a statement of whether anything was given in return. Deliberately absent is a value for a donated item - that figure is the donor's to determine with their own advisor, not yours to assert. This is informational, not legal advice.

Should you thank a company that said no?

Yes, briefly. A program that declined this year has told you it exists, who handles it, and what it does not give - and a group that answered a no gracefully is one a coordinator remembers warmly when the circumstances change.