

Exterior Donor Recognition Signage

Effective Date: 8/25/17

Application

- These guidelines are intended to assist the Office of the University Architect, Development and Alumni Relations, Schools/Centers, and other stakeholders in evaluating the design and placement of exterior recognition of individual donors and class gifts across the campus, for building and/or landscape projects, or any exterior donor signage even if the recognition is not for a capital project. They are also intended to assist Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) and the development staff within Schools/Centers in managing donor expectations about such signage.
- These guidelines are posted on the Facilities and Real Estate Services (FRES) website, in its “Standards and Polices” section.

Basic Principles

- There is not, and nor should there be, a definitive style “cookbook” for donor recognition signage, any more than the University imposes specific stylistic requirements on the design of its buildings. However, signage should be consistent with and appropriate to its immediate building and landscape context, while maintaining reasonable consistency in approach (materiality, font, supports, etc.) across the campus.
- There is no direct connection between the financial amount of a gift and the size and/or quantity of the recognition signage.
- Per the Corporate Donor Naming Policy, which is created and maintained by the Office of the VP for Development and Alumni Relations, corporate donors are not eligible for naming opportunities that will be recognized on the exterior of buildings or structures.
- The term "exterior signage" applies to any signage placed on the exterior of a building or structure, or on/in any campus space that is outdoors.

Basic Guidelines

- All exterior donor recognition signage must be in English.
- All signage must be compatible with the overall style of the building at which it is located, and generally consistent with such recognition signage across the rest of the campus.
- No exterior donor recognition signage shall be internally illuminated or backlit, as generally consistent.
- All proposed donor signage requires the approval of the University Architect, who retains sole discretion over whether such signage needs to be reviewed by the Design Review Committee and/or its Cultural Resource Subcommittee.
- No signage proposals shall be shared with any donor without prior coordination among the involved university entities, always including the University Architect, central DAR, and, if and as appropriate, appropriate School or Center representatives.
- If donors have particular design requests, the University requires a written description of their design input within thirty (30) days of project approval for consideration. A letter of agreement will be created outlining the basic parameters of the project (parameters include but are not limited to: timeline, project scope, budget, reporting schedule, design input.)
- For approved class reunion capital projects, one member of the class shall be designated as the “project liaison” to work with a designated representative from DAR on project status.

Design Review

- The Trustees have created a Design Review Committee (DRC) to provide guidance to the Trustees and the President regarding all major University design projects, including those that have campus-wide visibility, and/or that affect a significant historic building. Committee members include the Dean of Penn Design and the University Architect (Co-Chairs), the Vice President for Facilities and Real Estate, University Trustee(s), faculty members of Penn Design, staff members of the Office of University Architect, and private sector practitioners.
- Designs for campus projects are developed by the design consultants selected by the University and managed by Facilities and Real Estate (FRES). In exercising this responsibility, FRES is charged with stewardship of the campus as a whole, and with the establishment and maintenance of the high standards of design that have consistently characterized the University campus. While donor input into the design is welcome at a project’s inception, it is FRES that has the responsibility to develop each project throughout all phases of its design to the level at which it can be presented to appropriate university stakeholders, including but not limited to the DRC, to finalize it, and then to construct it.
- The requirement that any particular design must be presented to the DRC is at the discretion of its Co-Chairs. Presentations are always made by the design consultants that the University has selected to design them. To the extent that

class gifts typically improve an open space on campus, those consultants in general will be the project Landscape Architect, who will present the project to DRC. Multiple presentations to DRC may be required before DRC is willing to recommend the project and/or their representatives.

- Donors do not attend DRC meetings. This applies to all donors.
- The University does not have explicit or specific design or graphic standards for donor recognition, either for individual or class gifts. This is consistent with the overall approach to campus design, which rather than specific design requirements follows general design aspirations articulated by the Trustees and overseen by FRES. This general design expectation is outlined in the University's "Design Guidelines," which are incorporated by reference in all University contracts with design professionals, and which are available on the FRES website, under [Standards](#).
- Despite the absence of explicit design standards for signage, the University requires that the design of the exterior donor recognition elements be elegant in material, modest in scale, limited in number and reasonably consistent across the campus. For landscape projects, especially the typically more modest class gifts, a further expectation is that donor recognition element(s) will be placed horizontally, contiguous with paving surfaces, and that a minimum donation level will be established so as to limit the overall number of names on a recognition sign. Typically, the minimum would be an individual gift of \$25,000 or more (one time or over five years) to either the Penn Fund (TPF) or a TPF-coded endowed scholarship in a reunion year.