

Why are donations towards domestic event program fees not tax deductible?

Reliant does not offer tax deductible giving for donors towards any student participants attending a domestic event with fees (such as Leadership Training (LT)) that is *inside* of the U.S. However, tax deductible receipts are issued to donors for donations for an overseas Reliant fundraising events

Why?

After seeking extensive legal counsel, Reliant determined that unfortunately, it cannot allow participants to raise support for a domestic event through Reliant. This was in agreement with what our legal counsel was advising. It is Reliant's interpretation of IRS Tax Code that domestic LT programs (usually 10 weeks in length) inside of the U.S. results in the participant receiving tangible personal benefits, like significant leadership education and training along with the requirement to work full time while attending the LT event. Since Reliant, and our legal counsel determined that these were considered tangible personal benefits, we decided that following IRS Tax Code (which prohibits a donation receiving tax deductible status if it results in tangible personal benefit) meant not allowing domestic LT participants to raise financial support for their LT program fees through Reliant. We realize this is a conservative decision, but we feel it is in the best interest of Reliant Mission and its donors.

What does that mean?

Domestic event participants may still fundraise on their own and ask donors to give a financial gift (out of the kindness of their heart to go towards something they believe in), but it cannot be considered a taxable deductible gift for their donors since they giving to an individual and not a 501(c)(3) organization. All checks need be made payable to and sent directly to the participant (not collected by Reliant) with no tax deduction allowed. All domestic LT payments will be made directly by the participant to Reliant (Reliant will not accept any payment from donors (other than from a church) for an LT participant fees). There is no way for donors to give electronically through Reliant to help support a student attending a domestic LT, however they could send an electronic check directly to the participant's bank account. (See [Support Raising Guidelines](#).)

Can a domestic event participant support raise on their own through an outside fundraising online site such as GoFundMe?

Depending on how the online giving sites like GoFundMe are set up it may be possible for a domestic event participant to use them. They would need to specify that the gifts are not tax deductible, but simply a gift given out of the kindness of their heart to go to something that they want to support. The students would also obviously need to follow the instructions outlines in our fundraising integrity commitment they signed in their application. Since fundraising for domestic program fees are not considered tax deductible by Reliant, all financial support must be given directly to the student and not to Reliant. The supporters of domestic event participants could not therefore receive tax deduction through another online giving site.

Fundraising Integrity Commitment

Reliant is committed to the highest standard in financial integrity and professional excellence. Reliant has been a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability since 1992.

Among the essential characteristics of a Participant are integrity, honesty, and stewardship. Since you may be asking others to financially support the Program, it is particularly important that you demonstrate these characteristics in your relationships with potential supporters and in your stewardship of any funds raised towards the Program. Similarly, Reliant Mission, as a Christian ministry, seeks to maintain complete financial integrity and faithful stewardship in all of its activities and donor relationships.

In consideration for Reliant allowing me to participate in the Collegiate LT Program, and as a condition of my continued participation, I hereby agree that I will not attempt to raise any more financial support from others than is necessary to pay for:

- The Reliant fees for my participation in the Collegiate LT Program
- The reasonable cost of my travel to and from the site of the LT Program
- Any cost directly associated with my support raising activities (e.g. postage, printing, envelopes, etc.)

If I do inadvertently raise more funds than are required to pay the reasonable fees, costs, and expenses identified above, I agree that I will return the balance to one or more of the original donors, or donate the balance to the Reliant general Collegiate LT Program fund, or contribute to other Collegiate LT participants in financial need.

I also agree to not begin raising financial support for the until after I have received an acceptance email for the program.

Provided Materials.

For accountability purposes we ask that each event participant wanting to raise their own financial support, to complete and upload to their online registration, the fundraising integrity commitment to say they will not collect more funds than needed to cover the cost of their specific program.

We ask that all participants wait until they have been officially accepted into the program before they begin their support raising for the program fees. Reliant will send an acceptance email and also provide these (See [Support Raising Guidelines](#)) attached to the acceptance email for the event with fees to help those choosing to raise support on their own to know a few steps to help with the process.