

Policy Type: Core Governance Practices

Policy Title: Conflict of Interest

Members of the Board are expected to reveal any personal, family or business interests that they have, that, by creating a divided loyalty, could influence their judgment and hence the wisdom of decisions. A conflict of interest may exist wherever an individual could benefit, disproportionately from others, directly or indirectly, from access to information or from a decision over which they might have influence, or, where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such a benefit and influence.

Examples of possible conflict of interest situations with respect to our Association include:

- A Director has a personal or business relationship with the Association as a supplier of goods or services or as a landlord or tenant
- A staff member has a personal or financial relationship with a client of the Association outside of the workplace
- The Association is employing someone who is directly related to a Director or other staff member

Conflicts of interest (real and perceived) are unavoidable and should not prevent an individual from serving as a director or staff member unless the extent of the interest is so significant that the potential for divided loyalty is present in a large number of situations.

Procedure for Handling a Conflict of Interest

1. Members of the Board and staff have a duty to disclose any personal, family, or business interests that may, in the eyes of another person, influence their judgment.
2. The Board as a whole has a duty to disclose specific conflicts of interests to Association members, staff and external stakeholders where that interest may, in their judgment, affect the reputation or credibility of the organization, and to disclose the Board's procedure for operating in the presence of such conflicts.
3. Directors and staff have a duty to exempt themselves from participating in any discussion and voting on matters where they have, or may be perceived as having, a conflict of interest. Such exemptions should be recorded in minutes of meetings.
4. Any business relationship between an individual (or a company where the individual is an owner or in a position of authority) and the Association, outside of their relationship as a Director or staff member must be formalized in writing and approved by the Board.
5. If one Director believes or perceives that a fellow Director may have a conflict that has not been disclosed, they are requested to speak directly with the Chair in order to have the situation reviewed.
6. In the event that it can be shown that a Director has benefitted either personally or financially based on information they garnered as a member of the Board, after their term is completed, they may be subject to removal from the membership.