

THE AUSTRALIAN CERAMICS ASSOCIATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Introduction

The standard of behaviour at The Australian Ceramics Association (TACA) is that all staff, volunteers and board members scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest between the interests of TACA and personal, professional, and business interests. This includes avoiding potential and actual conflicts of interest, as well as perceptions of conflict of interest.

If you are unsure as to whether you have a conflict of interest in relation to a matter, you should consider these six points:

1. Do you have a personal interest in a matter you are officially involved with?
2. Is it likely you could be influenced by a personal interest in carrying out your public duty?
3. Would a reasonable person believe you could be so influenced?
4. What would be the public perception of whether you have a conflict of interest?
5. Do your personal interests conflict with your official role?
6. What steps do you need to take that a reasonable person would expect you to take to appropriately manage any conflict of interests?

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the TACA decision making process and business judgements, to enable our members and stakeholders to have confidence in TACA's integrity and to protect the reputations of volunteers, staff and board members.

It is also to help board members of TACA to effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest to manage risk.

Definitions

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the organisation. Personal interests include direct interests as well as those of family, friends, or other organisations a person may be involved with or have an interest in. It also includes a conflict between a board member's duty to TACA and another duty that the board member has (for example, to another organisation). A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial.

These situations present the risk that a person will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the organisation and must be managed accordingly.

Policy

This policy has been developed because conflicts of interest can arise, and do not need to present a problem to the organisation if they are openly and effectively managed.

Upon or before election, hiring, or appointment, staff, volunteers and board members must make a written disclosure of interests and relationships, and holdings that could potentially result in a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file at TACA and be updated annually.

During meetings or activities, any conflict of interest must be disclosed including any decision where (including business or other non-profit affiliations), a family member and/or spouse/partner, employer, or close associates will receive a pecuniary or non-pecuniary benefit

or gain. After disclosure, the member will be asked to leave the room for the discussion and will not be permitted to vote on the question.

Responsibility of the board

The board is responsible for:

- establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across the organisation,
- monitoring compliance with this policy, and
- reviewing the policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

Identification and disclosure of conflicts of interest

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest is identified it must be entered into a register of interest, as well as being raised with the board. The register of interest must be maintained by the Executive Officer and record information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflict of interest and any steps taken to address it).

Confidentiality of disclosures

Access to the information disclosed is restricted to board members and the Executive Officer.

Conflicts of interest of board members

Once the conflict of interest has been disclosed, the board must decide whether the conflicted board member/s should:

- vote on the matter,
- participate in any debate, or
- be present in the room during the debate and the voting.

What should be considered when deciding what action to take

In deciding what approach to take the board will consider:

- whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented,
- whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making,
- alternative options to avoid the conflict,
- the organisation's resources, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidences in, or reputation of, the organisation.

The action and result will be recorded in register of interests.

Managing TACA conflicts of interest

1. Board Members and staff are unable to apply for the TACA biennial members' exhibition.
2. Board Members and staff are unable to apply for member opportunities.
3. Board Members and staff can be profiled in The Journal for Australian Ceramics, however cannot be featured on the front cover of the magazine. TACA board members are not involved in any decision-making process with regard to JAC content.
4. TACA has/will develop and make transparent its selection process for the member's exhibition and other opportunities, and draw together a selection panel from TACA board and independent professionals from the broader ceramic and arts community. These processes will be accessible on TACA's website and available to all members.

Relevant Documents

Board Members Annual Statement Concerning Possible Conflict of Interest
Staff Members Annual Statement Concerning Possible Conflict of Interest
Conflict of Interest Register