



ABN 50317924321

THE HERALDRY & SOCIETY OF CANBERRA INC

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Name of Policy

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Drafted by	Neville Morrison	Approved by Council:	28/10/2020
Responsible person	Treasurer	Scheduled review date	

The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. Conflict of interest policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to help members of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc., including Councillors and any members who might represent the Society, to effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in order to protect the integrity of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. (HAGSOC) and to manage risk.

2. Objective

The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. Council (called the 'Council' in this policy) aims to ensure that Council members and any members who represent the Society, are aware of their obligations to disclose any conflicts of interest that they may have, and to comply with this policy to ensure they effectively manage those conflicts of interest as representatives of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- a) the Council members of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc; and
- b) any member of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc who represents, or acts as an agent of, The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Public Officer
 - b. Engagement Sub-Committee
 - c. Membership Management Team
 - d. Library Management Team
 - e. Finance Team
 - f. Education and Events Team
 - g. Bookshop Management Team
 - h. Convenors of any Special Interest Group or Computer User Group.

4. Definition of conflicts of interests

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests' conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. 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 (for example, having an interest in a commercial enterprise that is engaged to perform work for The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.). It also includes a conflict between a Councillor's or a member's duty to The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. and another duty that the member has (for example, to another charity). 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 Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. and must be managed accordingly.

5. Policy

Conflicts of interest are common, and they do not need to present a problem as long as they are openly and effectively managed.

It is the policy of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc., as well as a responsibility of the Council and representatives of the Society, that ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest be avoided as far as practicable, and that any such conflicts (where they do arise) do not conflict with their obligations to The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.

The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. will manage conflicts of interest by requiring Councillors and members who represent the Society to:

- avoid conflicts of interest where possible,
- identify and disclose any conflicts of interest,
- carefully manage any conflicts of interest, and
- follow this policy and respond to any breaches.

5.1 Responsibility of the Council

The Council is responsible for:

- establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.
- ensuring that all members and volunteers with the Society are aware of the intent of this policy;
- monitoring compliance with this policy; and
- reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

All Council members must be aware of the ACNC governance standards, particularly governance standard 5, and disclose any actual or perceived material conflicts of interests as required by governance standard 5.

5.2 Responsibility of members representing the Society

Any member of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. who represents the Society is responsible for:

- ensuring that they always act in the best interests of the Society; and
- ensuring that they disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of the potential for a conflict of interest.

5.3 Identification and disclosure of conflicts of interest

Once an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it must be entered into The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.'s Register of Interests, as well as being raised with the Council.

Where all the other Council members share a conflict, the Council should refer to the ACNC governance standard 5 to ensure that proper disclosure occurs.

The Register of Interests must be maintained by the Executive Committee, 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).

5.4 Confidentiality of disclosures

Any information disclosed will be restricted to Council members, the Public Officer, the Society's Auditor, and other people nominated by Council from time to time.

6. Action required for management of conflicts of interest

6.1 Conflicts of interest of Council members

Once a conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the Council (excluding the Council member disclosing and any other conflicted Council member) must decide whether or not those conflicted Council members should be able to:

- vote on the matter (this is a minimum),
- participate in any debate, or
- be present in the room during the debate and the voting.

In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a Council member from regularly participating in discussions, it may be worth the Council considering whether it is appropriate for the person conflicted to resign from the Council.

6.2 Conflicts of interest of members representing the Society

Once a conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed by a member, the Council must decide whether or not those conflicted members should be able to:

- continue their involvement with the activity giving rise to the conflict of interest, or
- continue in the role which has led to a conflict of interest.

6.3 What should be considered when deciding what action to take

In deciding what approach to take to any conflicts of interest, the Council 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 and/or to represent the Society,
- alternative options to avoid the conflict,
- the Society's objects and resources, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of a majority of the Council (excluding any conflicted Council member/s) who are present and voting at the meeting. The action and result of the voting will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and in the Register of Interests.

7. Compliance with this policy

If the Council has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, Council will investigate the circumstances.

If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the Council may take action against them. This may include asking the person to step down from Council or seeking to terminate their relationship with the society.

If a person suspects that a Councillor or member has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they must take relevant action such as discuss the matter with the person in question, notify the Council or the Executive Committee.

Contacts

For questions about this policy, contact the Council or Executive Committee by contacting the Society's Secretary.