



Conflict of Interest Policy

Panel Members have an obligation to act in the best interests of their community and in accordance with the Panel's Terms of Reference.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the Panel or the broader community interest. Such conflicts can

- inhibit free discussion;
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of the Panel or the community; and
- risk the impression that the Panel has acted improperly or made a biased recommendation.

The purpose of this policy is to avoid the above scenarios and protect both the Panel and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

- **"Interests"** includes your financial interests, your non-financial interests and the interests, financial and non-financial of other persons who are related to you or connected to you by means of close friendship, an employer/employee relationship or similar. There are also different types of 'interests'.
- A **Direct** interest is one in which you, a direct family member or your employee/er, or the committee you serve on may benefit materially from the decision.
- An **Indirect or Potential** Interest is where the connection is less evident, but could be construed to influence decision making. (For example being a Member of an organisation which is applying for funds, or living beside a property which the panel is considering a decision on.)

Declaration of Interests

All members will complete a **Declaration of Interests Form** listing organisations in which they have a **direct** interest. A direct interest means any of the following:

- i) they/or a family member^[1] is a Committee or Board member of the applicant organisation

^[1] A family member is defined as the Panel Member's spouse, civil partner, any person with whom the Panel Member lives as a partner in an enduring family relationship, a child or stepchild of the Panel Member, a child or step-child of a Panel Member's partner, or the Panel Member's parents.

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- ii) they/ or a family member is likely to benefit financially from the grant, e.g. is employee of an organisation that hopes to receive a grant from the Fund (whether it will contribute towards their own salary or expenses or not)
- iii) they/ or the family member can reasonably be expected to become a supplier to the project.

Declared interests will be recorded on a Register of Interests, which will be maintained by the Sunart Community Company and reviewed by the Panel at least annually.

Panel Members are expected to declare any new interests as and when they arise using the Declaration of Interests Form. Declarations of Interests will be a standing agenda item at meetings and recorded in the minutes.

Panel meetings: What to do if you face a conflict of interest

Members will not participate in decisions regarding any application in which they have a **direct** interest. Any member of the Panel who has a direct interest in a matter under discussion should declare the nature of his/her interest and withdraw from the room prior to any discussion on the matter.

If a Panel Member has an indirect or potential interest in matters being discussed he/she should declare the nature of the interest and the Panel should then agree one of the following courses of action:

- i) The Panel Member may remain in the room and participate in the discussion and decision-making.
- ii) The Panel Member may remain in the room and participate in the discussion but not in decision-making.
- iii) The Panel Member must withdraw from the room prior to any discussion on the matter.

For the avoidance of doubt, Panel Members may provide support to applicants in developing their proposals, where the above procedure is followed. If a member is in any doubt about the application of these rules, he/she should raise this with the Panel. The majority view of the Panel Members present should determine the appropriate course of action. The outcome of the Panel's decision should be recorded in the minutes.

This policy was adopted by the Sunart Common Good Fund at their meeting on 16th September 2016 as per the minutes for that meeting.