

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

### **What is a conflict of interest?**

A conflict of interest occurs when someone's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity. 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, as an employee). It also includes a conflict between a board member's duty to the organisation and another duty that the board member has elsewhere.

Conflicts of interest may be ongoing, for example a trustee who is related to a service user or who is also a trustee for another local organisation or grant-maker; or they may be one-off for example a kitchen needing fitting and a trustee is a plumber.

Conflicts of interest can be common; they just need to be managed well to prevent anything interfering with an ability to make a decision in the best interest of the charity.

### **Policy**

The Della Fish foundation is committed to ensuring its decisions and decision-making processes are, and are seen to be, free from personal bias and do not unfairly favour any individual connected with the charity.

It is the policy of The Della Fish foundation to:

- Ensure every trustee/director/member of the management committee understands what constitutes a conflict of interest and that they have a responsibility to recognise and declare any conflicts that might arise for them.
- Have a register of interests for any trustee/director/member of the management committee and this is to be reviewed annually.
- Document the conflict and the action(s) taken to ensure that the conflict does not affect the decision making of the organisation

### **Procedure**

When a trustee/director/member of the management committee identifies that they have a potential conflict of interest they must:

- Declare it as soon as they become aware of it;
- Ensure it is entered in the conflict of interest register (ongoing conflicts), and/or documented in board minutes;
- Not take part in any discussions relating to the matter;
- Not take part in any decision making related to the matter;
- Not be counted in the quorum for decision making related to the matter.

In the interests of open discussion, a trustee/director/member of the management committee affected by a conflict of interest must leave the room while related discussion / decision making is taking place, unless there is good reason for them to stay.

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### **The minutes should state:**

- The declared conflict;
- Whether the trustee/director/member of the management committee left the room, or the reason they were asked to stay;
- That the trustee/director/member of the management committee took no part in discussion or decision making on the matter;
- That the meeting was quorate (not counting the affected trustee/director/member of the management committee);
- Any other actions taken to manage the conflict

***If a trustee is unsure what to declare, they should err on the side of caution and discuss the matter with Linda de Cossart - Chair for confidential guidance***

**Policy agreed 27.10.24  
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