



## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY** **World Scout Committee**

### **Definitions**

An “Actual” conflict of interest exists when there is a direct conflict between a member’s personal interests and their official duties.

A “Potential” conflict of interest exists when a member’s personal interests could lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the future, but has not yet.

A “Perceived” conflict of interest exists when there is a reasonable belief or perception by others that a member’s personal interests could improperly influence their professional decisions or actions, whether or not this is actually the case.

### **About Conflict of Interest**

The purpose of this Conflict of Interest Policy is to ensure the institutional or personal interests of the World Scout Committee (WSC) members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) do not interfere with the performance of their duties. It also ensures that no member gains personally, professionally, or politically at WOSM’S expense due to any conflict of interest whether actual, potential or perceived. Conflict of interest also includes any adverse consequences or potential losses and detriment to a WSC member.

This Policy is not designed to eliminate relationships and activities that may create a duality of interest, but to require the disclosure of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and to ensure, where a conflict of interest is confirmed, the decision relating thereto is documented properly. A copy of this Conflict of Interest Policy shall be furnished to each WSC member who is presently serving this organization.

Under WOSM’s Constitution, WSC members have a duty to act in the best interests of WOSM as a whole above all other roles and responsibilities carried on by WSC members when making decisions in their official capacity. If a decision is to be made where the WSC members have a personal or other vested interest in relation to an issue before the WSC, this is regarded as a “conflict of interest” and the WSC member may not be able to comply with his or her responsibilities unless certain steps are followed.

In particular, a WSC member has a conflict of interest if the WSC is considering making a decision that would mean either:

- a WSC member, the respective close family member (as defined under the Related Party Transactions Policy) or the WSC member’s NSO could benefit or detriment directly or indirectly otherwise from that decision,
- or
- a WSC member’s duty to WOSM competes with a duty or loyalty through another appointment that the WSC member has to another organization, Scout committee or individual.

Conflicts of Interest are common in voluntary, public and commercial dealings. Having a conflict of interest does not mean that a WSC member has done something wrong or that he or she must always stand down from involvement in that decision. However, a WSC member needs to act with prudence to prevent conflicts of interest from interfering with the WSC’s ability to make an objective decision in the best interests of WOSM. By declaring an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, the Policy also aims to document and protect WSC members from any retaliation as a result of such disclosure.

This process involves three steps - Identify, Prevent, Record - so that WSC members are able to comply with their duties and avoid:

- making decisions that could be challenged or overturned on procedural grounds,
- risking the WSC member or WOSM's reputation, and
- having to deal with financial, compliance, legal or audit consequences.

### **Related Party Transactions Policy**

Reference is made to the Related Party Transactions Policy approved by the WSC in July 2023. In the event of any potential related party transactions, WSC members are also required to declare conflict of interest immediately as they become aware of any possibility that their personal or wider interest could influence their decision making. In addition to this Conflict of Interest Policy, all related party transactions shall comply with procedures set forth in the Related Party Transactions Policy, including but not limited to, additional approval from the WSC Audit Committee.

#### **Step 1: Identifying a Conflict of Interest**

WSC members must declare a conflict of interest immediately they become aware of any possibility that their personal or wider interests are, could or could appear to influence their decision-making. Conflict of interest declarations are to include any interests of close family members, such as an immediate family member that includes a person's spouse, parents, stepparents, children, stepchildren, siblings, mothers-and fathers-in-law, sons-and daughters-in-law, and bothers-and sisters-in-law and anyone residing in such person's home that may affect decision making. A good guideline is: "If in doubt, declare it.

To remind WSC members of their duties, the WSC has a standard agenda item at the beginning of each meeting to allow members to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest.

The Secretariat of the WSC keeps a register of declared interests, which is open to inspection. This is updated if WSC members' circumstances change and when new members are appointed.

It is the personal responsibility of each WSC member to declare an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, either their own or in relation to another member at the point where it arises in the work of the WSC or its sub-committees, task forces or working groups so that it may be dealt with.

If the WSC has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. Such discussion should be documented in accordance with the procedure outlined in Step 3 below.

#### **Step 2: Dealing with a Conflict of Interest**

Once a conflict of interest is identified, the remaining non-conflicted members of the WSC must discuss the conflict of interest and prevent it from affecting decision-making by:

- finding an alternative way forward which remedies the conflict of interest, taking into account the various factors in each specific case.
- or
- taking appropriate steps to manage the conflict, such as (but not limited to) the person affected shall either not be present in discussions or decisions regarding the issue and/or shall not be permitted to vote on such issue. Further any affected member shall refrain from exerting or attempting to exert any personal influence (including making any comments or statements or otherwise) with respect with the matter.

It is important to declare an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, even though a WSC member may believe it is irrelevant or unimportant, to allow the WSC to decide the consequences.

### **Step 3: Recording a Conflict of Interest**

The WSC keeps a written record of each declared conflict of interest and how the WSC dealt with it in the minutes of its meetings. This record must detail:

- what was the conflict of interest.
- which WSC member or members were affected.
- whether any conflict of interest was declared in advance.
- the discussion surrounding the conflict of interest.
- whether anyone withdrew from the discussion.
- how the WSC made the decision in accordance with the WOSM Constitution.