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### **Conflict of Interest** (v 1.0.0.2017)

Council members are duty bound to make decisions that accord with the best interests of the National Award Operator and any situation in which a council member's personal interests or loyalties might influence or affect the way in which he or she makes a decision may be described as a conflict of interest.

Many council members will have personal and professional connections which positively benefit the work of their National Award Operator. These connections are often part of the rationale for recruiting a council member to become a member of the board of a National Award Operator and as a consequence it is likely that conflicts of interest may arise from time to time.

Conflicts of interest would only reflect upon the integrity of the council member if not declared to the board but an undeclared conflict could result in decisions being made which are not in the best interests of the National Award Operator and ultimately lead to reputational damage as well as breaches of the law in some countries. Potentially harmful repercussions can be avoided by putting in place appropriate procedures to identify, declare and manage conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of interest arise in situations where:

- **a council member could gain a direct financial benefit** – e.g. through a payment made to a council member or a company with which a council member is financially associated for a service provided for the National Award Operator or as a result of him or her being a member of the governance board but for the avoidance of doubt reimbursing a council member for actual expenses incurred on behalf of the Operator does not constitute a conflict of interest.
- **a council member could gain an indirect financial benefit** – e.g. if a spouse or close relative of a council member is employed by the National Award Operator or its subsidiary trading company and such an arrangement might increase the council member's household income.
- **a council member's activities could conflict with his or her loyalty to another organisation or person** – e.g. if a council member is employed by a subsidiary company of the National Award Operator this could affect the way in which the subsidiary organisation operates and therefore might possibly be to the council member's advantage.

It is the responsibility of each council member and the collective governance board to identify and appropriately manage as well as declare all conflicts of interest.

Management of conflicts of interest can be achieved by the council member concerned ideally avoiding the situation in the first place and in every case he or she must opt out of discussions where there is a conflict of interest.

Where a council member declares he or she has a conflict of interest and then withdraws from a board meeting there must still be a quorum for the board to continue the discussion.

Conflicts of interest should be documented in the minutes of the relevant board meeting by stating the nature of the conflict, the name or names of the conflicted council member or council members, the

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**Chairman of Council members** Sir. Trevor Carmichael KA, LVO, SCM, QC

**Patron** HE Sir Elliott Belgrave GCMG KA  
**Chairman of Council** Mr. Stephen Smith



precise nature of the declared conflict, an outline of the discussion held, details of any decisions made and the period for which the conflicted council member or council members withdrew from the discussion.

Where a conflict cannot be avoided any and all benefits received by the conflicted council member or council members must be lawful within the country in which the National Award Operator operates.