



Conflict of Interest / Confidentiality Policy for Peer Reviewers

Peer Reviewers (PRs) assess the grant applications submitted to the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund (RWAf), and are paid for their efforts. PRs have a duty to act in the best interest of RWAf rather than in their own self-interest; however, since it is required that PRs be active in the arts community, from time to time, potential conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts will inevitably arise.

The purpose of this policy is to enable RWAf to deal with such conflicts in as open and appropriate a way as possible. As noted in the Peer Reviewers Terms of Reference, PRs will declare any conflicts as soon as they become known. A PR must not have a personal or organizational grant application in the granting round under consideration, nor a conflict within the subset of applications assigned for review. This policy also sets out procedures by which the individual PR and the RWAf Board will address and resolve issues of conflict of interest as declared, if and when they arise.

It is understood from the outset that anyone who agrees to be a PR will perform their duties in such a way as to promote public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of their review.

Definitions

- “Immediate family members” means individuals related by blood, adoption, or marriage within one family unit (father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter).
- “Business partner” means individuals in a formal partnership or shared ownership of a for-profit company or enterprise.
- “Staff” and “staff member” mean an individual who is employed for pay by an organization or company.
- “Volunteer” means any individual involved in any aspect or program of an organization on a non-paid basis.
- “Region of Waterloo Board of Directors” means individuals who are formally elected to the board of the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund and serving as directors.
- “Applicant” means any individual applying for funding from RWAf.
- “Applicant organization” means any group or organization (more than one individual), applying for funding from RWAf. This includes partnerships, alliances, collectives, cooperatives and corporations.

Conflicts

Conflicts arise when a PR may benefit, directly or indirectly, financially or otherwise, from their role as an assessor. Such involvements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- PRs serving as directors, officers or members of applicant organizations;

- Immediate family members and business partners of PRs serving as board members of applicant organizations;
- PRs or their immediate family members being employed by or doing business with applicants or applicant organizations;
- PRs with a close personal association with directors or staff of an applicant or applicant organizations, such that a reasonable inference may be drawn of a lack of impartiality towards an application, applicant, or applicant organization.

A conflict of interest may be “real,” “potential,” or “perceived”; the same duty to disclose applies to each. The pecuniary interests of immediate family members or close personal or business associates of PR’s are considered to also be the pecuniary interests of the PR. Full disclosure in itself does not remove a conflict of interest.

A PR may not participate in a round of funding if they or their organization has applied for funding.

A Peer Reviewer may not participate in a round of funding if they will be benefiting financially from any application in that round of funding.

If there are any applications in which the PR may not benefit financially but has connections to the applications (but not limited to) by way of Immediate Family members, business partners, staff or for which they volunteer, the PR will still be eligible to review applications, but will not be permitted to review that application OR participate in the deliberations of that application, if applicable.

Principles and Procedures

It is important that PRs be sensitive to appearance and perception, and to err on the side of transparency. In the case of conflicts or appearance of conflicts, PRs are expected to fully disclose any potential conflict as soon as they receive the list of applications to review. This means making a full disclosure prior to accepting the task of sharing expertise and discussing any related grants.

It is the responsibility of Board Members and other PRs who are aware of real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest on the part of a fellow evaluator to raise the issue for clarification at the earliest possible opportunity, first with the PR themselves and, if still unresolved, with the Chair of RAAF. All PRs must review the Peer Reviewers Terms of Reference. and complete the Contact Information and Credentials Form, providing a current list of all “Arts Affiliations.”

Confidentiality

Peer Reviewers will be entrusted with confidential information and must be prepared to make recommendations for grants based upon the merits of each application. PRs will not disclose their participation in an evaluation round until after the Arts Fund Board has made its final granting decisions and a media advisory has been released. PRs will not discuss or reveal in any manner or at any time the confidential details related to the grant applications.

Agreement and Signature

I have received, read, and understand the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund Peer Reviewers Conflict of Interest / Confidentiality Policy in its entirety. I agree to be bound by the terms of the policy.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____