



MELBOURNE CAMERA CLUB

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Policy

The Melbourne Camera Club (MCC) shall engage in open, transparent and ethical decision-making processes. MCC Members must declare potential, perceived and/or real conflicts of interests. Members must not use club status or position or allow these powers to be improperly used. Any conflict should be resolved in favour of the MCC. This Policy aims to ensure that both ordinary and board members are aware of their obligation to disclose any conflicts of interest that they may have, and to comply with this policy to ensure they effectively manage those conflicts of interest as representatives of MCC.

This policy applies to all members of the MCC but especially to Board members and those in leadership roles (such as committee Chairs, and interest group Coordinators).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to help board members of MCC to effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in order to protect the integrity of MCC and manage risk.

Definitions

A conflict of interest occurs when a member's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the Melbourne Camera Club. When there is a conflict, it may influence the outcome of the decisions they are required to make. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial.

A personal interest occurs when a decision a person makes directly or indirectly affects themselves or associates including (but not limited to):

- immediate and extended family members or other persons with a strong personal bond (e.g. husband, wife, children, brothers, sisters, parents, cousins, aunts, uncles and friends)

- other organisations in which the person is actively involved (e.g., another photographic club, Church, Sporting club)
- business partner/s.

A personal or material interest occurs when a person and/or their associates may indirectly or directly stand to profit personally, financially or by reputation from the decision made by the decision maker.

Members will not engage in behaviour that in any way conflicts with the goals or policies of the MCC without seeking specific Board permission. For example, using the club database to advertise private events; advertising external workshops, courses or events, using MCC facilities for private enterprise; or any other personal or public activity which is in conflict with MCC policies, events, activities and/or services.

Procedures

Where any actual or perceived conflict of interest exists for any MCC member, the member must disclose it to the Board as soon possible after becoming aware of it.

- If the MCC member believes they have a potential or real conflict of interest in a matter that requires a decision to be made, the member should disclose the personal interest at an MCC committee, interest group or Board meeting.
- If a member of the MCC believes they have a personal interest that may result in their financial gain or reputational gain at the expense of the MCC, the member must declare the interest.
- If the Chair believes that a potential or real conflict of interest may exist, then the Chair is required to disclose the matter to the MCC Board.

Disclosure of conflict of interest:

- When an MCC member declares a potential or real conflict of interest, the disclosure should be recorded in the meeting Minutes.
- When the member discloses a conflict of interest, the responsibility for resolving the conflict rests with the person to whom the disclosure is made, usually the meeting Chair.
- If the conflict of interest is a minor issue, the Chair may decide that disclosure and registering the conflict of interest is a sufficient course of action.

- If the conflict is significant, the Chair must decide whether or not those conflicted members should:
 - vote on the matter (this is a minimum),
 - participate in any debate, or
 - be present in the room during the debate and the voting.
 - Refrain from the activity causing a conflict with the MCC

In deciding what approach to take, the Board or Chair will consider:

- whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented
- whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making
- alternative options to avoid the conflict
- the MCC's objects and resources, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, the MCC.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of at least a majority of the board (excluding any conflicted board member/s) who are present and voting at the meeting. The action and result of the voting will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Compliance with this policy

If the board has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, it will investigate the circumstances.

If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the board may take action against them. This may include seeking to terminate their membership with the MCC. If a person suspects that a board member has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they must discuss with the person in question, and notify the board.

Approved by the Board: February 2020

Reviewed: March 2023

For Review: March 2025