

SOFT UK Conflicts of Interest Policy

Introduction

All staff, volunteers, and Trustees of SOFT UK will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of SOFT on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

Purpose

The purposes of this policy is to protect the integrity of SOFT's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and Trustees.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

1. A Trustee who is also a user who must decide whether SOFT services should remain free to all users.
2. A Trustee who is related to a member of staff and there is decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions.
3. A Trustee who is also on the committee/Trustee Board of another organisation that is competing for the same funding.
4. A Trustee who has shares in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.

Procedure

Upon appointment each Trustee will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. Staff and volunteers with delegated purchasing or decision-making authority will also be required to make a full disclosure. This written disclosure will be kept on file and will be updated as appropriate.

At the beginning of each meeting or in the course of activities, Trustees will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between SOFT's best interests and the Trustee's best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that the Trustee is involved with. The Trustee concerned may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be able to take part in the decision depending on the judgement of the other Trustees present at the time. Where disagreement exists, the Chair will be allowed two votes.

Any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes.

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and staff, volunteers and Trustees should respect its spirit as well as its wording.