

## Cork International Film Festival

# Conflict of Interest Policy

### a) Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assist Trustees, Board Committee Members, employees, volunteers and contractors of Cork International Film Festival (CIFF) to identify, disclose and properly manage any conflicts of interest. This protects the integrity, reputation and decision-making of CIFF and ensures that all actions are taken in the best interests of the charity.

### b) Objective

The CIFF Board of Trustees aims to ensure that the Trustees, Board Committee Members, employees, volunteers and contractors are aware of their obligations 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 CIFF.

### c) Scope

This policy applies to:

- Charity Trustees
- Board Committee Members
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors and consultants
- Any person acting on behalf of CIFF

### d) Definition of conflicts of interests

A conflict of interest is any situation where a person's personal, financial or other interests could, or could be seen to, interfere with their duty to act in the best interests of CIFF.

Conflicts may be:

- **Actual** – a real conflict exists
- **Potential** – a conflict may arise in the future
- **Perceived** – others may reasonably think a conflict exists

Conflicts may include, but are not limited to:

- A trustee or staff member awarding a contract to a family member or business associate.
- A volunteer involved in selecting a supplier they have a financial interest in.

- Accepting gifts or hospitality from potential funders, sponsors or suppliers.
- Using CIFF information or resources for personal gain.

## e) Policy

### i) Policy

CIFF recognises that conflicts of interest can arise and do not necessarily present a problem if they are properly managed. All persons covered by this policy must:

- Avoid conflicts of interest where possible
- Identify and disclose conflicts promptly
- Record conflicts in the Register of Interests
- Manage conflicts transparently and ethically

### ii) Responsibility of the board of charity trustees

The Board is responsible for:

- Establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across the charity;
- Monitoring compliance with this policy
- Ensuring a Register of Interests is kept and updated
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

### iii) Identification and disclosure of conflicts of interest

“Conflicts of interest” is a permanent item on the Board Meeting Agenda, trustees are invited to disclose any possible conflict of interest during the allocated time during the Board Meeting.

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it must be entered into CIFF’s register of interests. The register of interests must be maintained by the meeting secretary and record all information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflict of interest and any steps taken to address it).

#### **Confidentiality of disclosures:**

In order to support charity trustees and senior staff members to disclose their conflicts of interest, the level of confidentiality associated with any disclosure should be set out. Include details of who will have access to the information disclosed, such as restricting this to the Board of charity trustees and the secretary to the Board. It may also be necessary to provide for an alternative disclosure mechanism if additional restrictions on disclosure are required.

All disclosures will be handled in confidence and in line with GDPR guidelines.

## **f) Action required for management of conflicts of interest**

### **i) Conflicts of interest of members of the Board of charity trustees, Executive, and senior staff members.**

Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the Board of charity trustees (excluding the disclosing charity trustee and any other conflicted person) must decide whether or not a conflicted charity trustee should:

- Vote on the matter
- Participate in any debate, or
- Be present in the room during the debate and the voting;

In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a charity trustee from regularly participating in discussions, it may be worth the Board of charity trustees considering whether it is appropriate for the person with the relevant conflict to resign from the Board of charity trustees.

### **ii) What should be considered when deciding what action to take:**

- In deciding what approach to take, the Board of charity trustees 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 charity's objects and resources, and
- The possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, the charity.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of at least a majority of the Board of charity trustees (excluding any conflicted charity trustees) who are present and voting (if applicable) at the meeting. All details regarding the conflict of interest, including the action arising, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **g) Compliance with this policy**

If the Board of charity trustees has a reason to believe that a person subject to this 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 of charity trustees may take action against the person. This may include seeking the person's resignation from the charity or other appropriate action.

If a person suspects that a charity trustee has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they must notify the person responsible for maintaining the register of interests and the item might be subject to discussion at a Board meeting.

### **h) Training & Awareness**

All Trustees, staff and volunteers will:

- Receive this policy during induction.
- Receive training or guidance on conflicts of interest if requested.
- Sign a declaration of understanding.

### **i) Relationship to other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- CIFF Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Gifts & Hospitality Policy

### **j) Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board and updated as required.

**Approved by the Board:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_