

U3A Benalla – Policy Guidelines

Conflict of Interest Policy (approved 8 August 2024)

Introduction

This policy will apply to situations where the personal interests of an individual or group of individuals directly conflict with the best interests of U3A Benalla, its members or clients or where the decisions or actions of individuals may be influenced by their personal interest rather than those of the organisation.

This will include situations in which:

- Close personal friends or family members are involved, such as decisions about employment, discipline or dismissal, service allocation or awarding of contracts
- An individual or their close friends or family members may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage
- An individual is involved with another organisation that is in a competitive relationship with U3A Benalla and therefore may have access to our plans or financial information
- An individual is bound by prior agreements or allegiances to other individuals or agencies that require them to act in the interests of that person or agency or to take a particular position on an issue.

Purpose

Actions and decisions taken at all levels in U3A Benalla need to be informed, objective and fair. A conflict of interest may affect the way a person acts, decisions they make, or the way they vote in group decisions. Conflicts of interest need to be identified and action taken to ensure that personal or individual interests do not affect the services, activities or decisions of U3A Benalla.

Policy

1. U3A Benalla is committed to ensuring that personal or individual interests that conflict with the interests of the organisation are identified and managed so that they do not affect the services, activities or decisions of the organisation.
Specifically, we will:
 - (a) Require those members with a conflict, or those who think they may have a conflict, to disclose the conflict/potential conflict, and
 - (b) Prohibit those members from voting on any matter in which they are in conflict.
2. Often people are unaware that their activities or personal interests are in conflict with the best interests of the organisation so a necessary goal is to simply raise awareness, encourage disclosure and discussion of anything that may be a conflict, and constantly encourage a 'culture of candour'.

Procedures

3. U3A Benalla will make it a regular practice to take time at a Committee Meeting at least once a year to discuss the types of hypothetical situations that could result in a conflict of interest, and then discuss how the Committee would manage that potential conflict so that when a

real issue arises, the Committee will be ready to handle it with more ease. The minutes of that Committee Meeting should briefly indicate that the matter of conflict of interest was raised and discussed.

4. All members will be made aware of this policy.

Responsibilities

5. The Committee of Management of U3A Benalla will establish, implement, publicise and review this policy.

Authorisation

6. The Committee of Management of U3A Benalla confirmed its adoption of this policy and minuted as such on 8 August 2024.
7. This policy is published by the Committee of Management of U3A Benalla on its website.