

The Bee-Leaf Academy Social Media Policy

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Drafted By	Roni McCorkle	Review Date	01/07/2022
Person Responsible	President		

INTRODUCTION

Local, state, national and international media are vital partners in achieving the goals of the Bee-Leaf Academy (“the Academy”).

In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation, it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts will be conducted.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The organisation welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to broaden awareness in the public arena.

In dealing with the media, Directors, employees and volunteers should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of the Academy.

PURPOSE

The Bee-Leaf Academy will work with the media in order to:

- Advocate for the goals of the organisation and the interests of Australians with life challenges;
- Promote the work of the organisation;
- Inform the public of the details of the organisation; and
- Assist in fundraising for the organisation.

In order to ensure that these purposes can be fulfilled, this policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak for the Academy.

The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the community in holding the Academy to account for its policies and actions. It is important they have access to officers and members and to background information to assist them in this role.

To balance this, the Academy must have the capacity to defend itself from any unfounded criticism, and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts.

POLICY

The Academy's interaction with the media shall be consistent with the following principles:

- **Honesty:** The organisation will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story;
- **Transparency:** The organisation will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate;
- **Clarity:** All communications with the media will be written in plain English;
- **Balance:** Information provided to the media by the Academy will, as far as possible, be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

The Academy will seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media. It is important that the organisation works with the media to communicate important public information messages about its work and its goals.

However, contact concerning any significant matter in the name of or on behalf of the Academy should only be made by Directors, employees and volunteers where:

- They have consulted the Communications Officer nominated by the Board; and
- They have the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion.

Where any of these criteria do not apply, all inquiries are to be referred to the Academy President and/or Communications Officer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board to appoint the Communications Officer of the organisation. The role of Communications Officer may be an adjunct to a Director's, employee's or volunteer's substantive position.

The Communications Officer and Academy President are authorised to speak on behalf of the Academy.

Other Directors, employees and volunteers are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the Communications Officer or Academy President before talking to the media on any subject related to the Academy.

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the Communications Officer shall determine the most appropriate person to respond.

Directors, employees, volunteers and members are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss the Academy's work and its goals, provided they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All Directors, employees and volunteers must observe the Academy's Privacy Policy in relation to members' records.

PROCESS

Significant statements on behalf of the Academy shall be made as authorised by the Communications Officer or President as detailed above.

It should always be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward regarding any subject relating to the Academy are those of the organisation or of an individual. At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of the Academy.

Any significant media contacts with the Academy's employees, volunteers or members on any issue likely to prove contentious shall, where possible, be video-recorded.

Any video recordings on the Academy's property or of the organisation's proceedings by the media is subject to prior permission of the Communications Officer or Academy President.

Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial employee or volunteer work to produce, such work must be authorised by the Academy President. It will usually be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context.

Requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, should be referred to the Communications Officer.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Privacy Policy
- Social Media Policy

AUTHORISATION

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