

	Media Relations Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-MDA
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	1 of 4	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

INTRODUCTION

Local, state, national and international media are vital partners in achieving the goals of Multicultural Council of Tasmania. 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 debate issues in the public arena.

In dealing with the media, staff, Board members and other volunteers should be conscious that they may be representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of Multicultural Council of Tasmania. All media enquiries should be directed to the CEO.

PURPOSE

Multicultural Council of Tasmania works with the media in order to:

- advocate for the goals of the organisation
- promote the work of the organisation
- inform the public of the details of the organisation
- 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 Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

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

To balance this, Multicultural Council of Tasmania 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 (if necessary, using other channels of communication).

It is the responsibility of all staff, board members and volunteers to ensure that effective media relations are maintained in order to achieve the aims of Multicultural Council of Tasmania. Naturally, in doing this, certain legal constraints might apply (eg. not making comment on current court cases, especially those before a jury).

This policy deals with the day-to-day relationship between Multicultural Council of Tasmania and the media and does not address how the organisation will work with the media in a crisis, for which the separate Crisis Response Policy should be referred to.

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POLICY

Multicultural Council of Tasmania operates on the values of

- **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 Multicultural Council of Tasmania will as far as humanly possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania should 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 Multicultural Council of Tasmania should only be made by the CEO in the first instance and by the Chair where appropriate. They should have:

- the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion
- extensive experience in media relations.

For all media related enquiries, the CEO should be informed asap.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CEO shall coordinate Multicultural Council of Tasmania's relationships with the media.

The CEO and the Board Chair are authorised to speak on behalf of Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

Other staff, Board members and volunteers are advised to contact the CEO in the first instance for any media related enquiries. If the CEO is uncontactable, the Board Chair should be contacted before talking to the media on any issue related to Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the CEO shall determine the most appropriate person to respond and the CEO's absence, the Chair.

Staff, Board members and other volunteers, and third parties, are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss Multicultural Council of Tasmania's work and its goals, if they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All staff, Board members and other volunteers must observe Multicultural Council of Tasmania's Privacy Policy in relation to client records.

The CEO will maintain administrative control over all social media platforms.

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PROCESSES

Significant statements on behalf of Multicultural Council of Tasmania shall be made as authorised by the CEO or Board Chair as detailed above.

It should always be made clear whether the views put forward regarding any issue relating to Multicultural Council of Tasmania 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 Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Producing and updating a list of key contacts for distribution to local press and radio and TV stations. The CEO can also be contacted for preliminary discussions on any story or if a journalist or researcher is unsure who to approach for a comment.
- Producing the organisation's annual public relations plan, which shall be consistent with the organisation's business plan and marketing plan.
- Coordinating all media conferences for Multicultural Council of Tasmania.
- Authorising all media releases from Multicultural Council of Tasmania, and for mounting them on the organisation's website. All media releases must also be checked and approved by the CEO before distribution.
- Being involved in any approaches to the media to feature Multicultural Council of Tasmania's work.
- Receiving and coordinating a response to all approaches from all national press, radio or TV stations or specialist press.

All staff, Board members and volunteers are responsible for:

- Providing advice (preferably before the issue becomes public knowledge) to the CEO on any issues that are likely to be complex or contentious or to be sustained for any length of time. In such a situation the CEO will work with the relevant staff and Board members to produce a communications plan which will ensure that balanced, timely information is provided to keep all parties informed.
- Ensuring that no photos of clients, patients, employees, or students shall be released to the public via advertising, news media, or internet, or by any other means, without the approval of the CEO, who shall satisfy themselves that the organisation's Privacy Policy has been observed.
- Notifying the CEO of any contact made in the name of Multicultural Council of Tasmania to the media and providing the name of the reporter or writer and the media outlet they represent.

Any significant media contacts with Multicultural Council of Tasmania's staff or members on any issue likely to prove contentious shall, where possible, be videotaped.

Any filming or taping on Multicultural Council of Tasmania's property or of the organisation's proceedings by the media is subject to prior permission of the CEO or Board Chair.

Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial staff work to produce, such work

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must be authorised by the CEO. 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 CEO.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania reserves the right to withhold certain sensitive information concerning, say, commercial transactions or governmental negotiations. Any such information will be clearly labelled and clearly notified to relevant staff.

If any unauthorised releases of confidential information do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action will be taken.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct policy
- Privacy Policy

AUTHORISATION

Signed by CEO:Date: 20 June 2019

Signed by Chair: Date: 20 June 2019