

INL – Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedures



Conflicts of Interest.

Ensuring Integrity, Fairness, and Trust in INL Operations

Introduction

A Conflict-of-Interest Policy is essential for maintaining transparency, integrity, and trust within any organisation, including a netball league. Such a policy ensures that decisions are made in the best interest of the league and its members, without undue influence or personal gain affecting judgement or actions. This document outlines the principles, procedures, and responsibilities regarding conflicts of interest that may arise in the operation, management, and participation within the INL.

INL Policy Statement

“INL acknowledges and accepts that occasionally conflicts of interest may arise. There is no right or wrong approach to handling conflicts of interest, most cases the issue is about application of common sense.”

“Officials of INL are required to act in the best interests of INL and in accordance with INL’s aims and objectives. For that reason, committee members and others acting on behalf of INL must be free from conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment, objectivity or loyalty to INL in conducting INL activities.”

INL is committed to maintaining high standards and conducts its activities in an open and transparent manner. The aim of this policy and process is to protect both INL and the individuals concerned from any appearance of improper behaviour.

Such conflicts may create problems and can:

- Inhibit free discussion;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of INL; and
- Risk the impression that the INL has acted improperly

The aim of this policy is to protect both the INL and the individuals involved from any appearance of wrongdoing. Even the appearance or suggestion of a conflict of interest can damage the reputation of INL.

“Committee members and others acting on behalf of INL must be free from any conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their judgment, objectivity or loyalty to the league.”

This policy explains what is viewed by INL as a conflict of interest and the procedure to follow where a conflict of interest arises. Implementation of this policy and procedure must be clear and transparent and not subject to any unfair discriminatory practices. This policy and procedure will be implemented alongside INL's code of Conduct policy.

Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal interests, relationships, or activities interfere, or appear to interfere, with their duties or responsibilities to the INL. This includes situations where personal gain or gain by a family member or other close associate, could influence or be perceived to influence decisions or actions taken in an official INL capacity.

Examples of conflicts of interest include (but are not limited to):

- A committee member awarding a contract to a business owned by a relative.
- A coach making team selections that favour relatives or close friends.
- A board member accepting gifts or hospitality from a supplier bidding for an INL contract.
- An official who has a financial interest in a company providing goods/services to the INL.
- Any situation where an individual's loyalty to INL is compromised by outside interests.

A Connected Person is anyone with whom the individual in question has a relationship which is likely to appear to a reasonable person to influence the individual's objectivity including but not limited to close family, their partner and personal friends.

If an individual has a Conflict of Interest, they are expected to disclose it under the procedure set out below.

All INL committee members and INL Club Representatives and other officials are asked to declare any conflicts before the start of INL committee meetings, and anyone must declare their interests in connection with their role in INL. A written declaration can also be provided by an individual prior to a meeting also if required.

Any declaration of interests needs to be revised or updated at least annually and immediately if any changes occur.

If anyone is not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please contact the INL Chair for confidential guidance.

Interests will be recorded on the INL's register of interests, which will be maintained by the Secretary. The register will usually be accessible by INL Club Chair and INL committee officers.

Where it is subsequently discovered that one or more persons involved in a decision had not declared their conflict of interest to the meeting or equivalent, the Chair will decide whether the matter needs to be reconsidered and may so direct.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed only to ensure that the best interests of INL are maintained. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

Managing Conflict

The INL Chair shall be responsible for reviewing the declaration of interests and advising on any action required to manage any conflict. If a conflict can be managed the process must be clear as set out below.

Conflict of Interest can arise in various ways; the most likely is in a meeting situation, therefore INL has set up the following process to be followed:

At every meeting:-

The INL Chair of the meeting is required to ask those attending to declare any interest(s) linked to any item on the agenda. All notifications (including

“none”) must be reported in the minutes of the meeting along with the actions taken by the Chair to manage the conflict.

If a conflict decision is challenged all information must be referred to the INL Chair & INL Safeguarding officer who will be responsible for reviewing the decision and providing written recommendations for any action.

INL Chair may take the following actions with the person the conflict occurs at a meeting:

- not taking part in discussions of certain matters
 - either staying in the room or
 - vacating the room until the particular agenda item is finished;
- not taking part in decisions relating to certain matters
 - either staying in the room when the decision is made or
 - vacating the room until the decision is made having stayed for the discussion;
- if the conflict relates to the Chair of the meeting, he/she must vacate the chair and the room until the particular agenda item is finished; in this instance the Vice Chair will then chair the meeting for this agenda item.
- stepping aside from any involvement in a particular task or selection decision;
- declaring an interest linked to a particular sponsor or third party

Where a conflict of interest is known of prior to a meeting taking place INL Chair may take the following actions with the person the conflict occurs

- asked not take part in the meeting

Commitment to Fairness and Transparency

INL is committed to ensuring that:

- Decisions are made objectively and in the best interests of the league.
 - Personal interests do not unduly influence INL operations.
 - Members feel confident in the integrity of INL leadership and processes.
- Conflicts That Cannot Be Managed

Situations may arise where the INL Chair decides it is not possible to manage the conflict; in these circumstances the INL Chair will request a meeting with the individual concerned to discuss and agree the way forward. The register should be noted accordingly with the date of the agreement; the full details may or may not be included as determined by the agreement and level of confidentiality.

INL's Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures will be reviewed every 2 years.

Declaration of Interest Form –

Declaration of Interest

Name:

I hereby declare an interest as set out below and undertake to abide by INL policy on such matters and to comply in any decisions of the Chair with regard to the management of my conflict(s).

Signed:

Dated:

Nature of Interest(s)

Interest:	Financial	Non-Financial
Self: <i>Name</i>	<i>Please write NONE if nothing applies</i>	<i>Please write NONE if nothing applies</i>
Connected Person: <i>Name(s)</i>	<i>Please write NONE if nothing applies</i>	<i>Please write NONE if nothing applies</i>

Notes

A **Conflict of Interest** is a situation in which a person has an Interest (defined below) which may compromise that person's obligations to INL or to any other person or body with which INL has a relationship. A Conflict of Interest includes perceived and potential conflicts as well as actual conflicts of interest. A *perceived* conflict of interest is one which a reasonable person would consider likely to compromise objectivity. A *potential* conflict of interest is a situation which could develop into an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

An **Interest** is a financial or non-financial interest involving the person, or a Connected Person (defined below). A *financial interest* refers to anything of non-trivial monetary value including but not limited to salary, commission, consultancy fees, contractual interest, discounts, property and royalties. A *non-financial interest* refers to any non-financial benefit or advantage including but not limited to access to privileged information or services, property or intellectual property rights and enhancement of a career, education or professional reputation.

A **Connected Person** is anyone with whom the individual in question has a relationship which is likely to appear to a reasonable person to influence the individual's objectivity including but not limited to close family, their partner and personal friends.

- I acknowledge that I have read and understood the INL policy on Conflict of Interest.
- I confirm that I have completed the answers to the best of my knowledge and that the information supplied is true and correct.
- I confirm that I will update INL with any changed or new information.
- I understand that some or all this information may be used by INL to compile a conflict register.

Signed:		<u>INL use only</u> Form checked by INL Chair and details transferred to Conflict Register
Dated:		
Appended Note	Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>	Conflict Decision: Date Decision confirmed to individual:

This information is collected **only for the purpose of managing conflict**, it may in certain circumstances be deemed sensitive personal information and shall be managed accordingly.