



Public Relations & Social Media Policy

Details

Policy & Procedure Owner	CEO Office/ERFA Board	
Approved by	ERFA Board of Directors	
Date Approved	Date of Last Revision	Next Review
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Abbreviations

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
ERFA	Edmund Rice Foundation Australia
NGO	Non-government organisation

Definitions

ACFID Member	A not-for-profit organisation that has obtained accreditation with ACFID
Board Members	Voluntary directors of ERFA's Board
Donor	Members of the public including individuals or organisations who contribute to ERFA in cash or in-kind
Partner	Any organisation which has an MOU or contract with ERFA
Program	Programs are overarching development approaches and initiatives that set priorities and guide project outcomes, results and activities. Programs can comprise ministries or entities
Project	Projects are the development activities of a Program
Primary Stakeholder (beneficiary)	Children and adults who participate in and are directly impacted by ERFA partner projects
Staff	Employees, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, volunteers and any other person who performs work for ERFA or ERFK
Stakeholder	Anyone who interacts with ERFA/ERFK and its Partners including but not limited to suppliers, contractors, volunteers, donors, etc.

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1.0 Introduction

This policy has been developed to provide ERFA Staff with standards of use as they engage in conversations or interactions externally which may result in digital media coverage and exposure.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that an informed and consistent message is maintained when Staff distribute or publish content related to ERFA that may attract media attention. These guidelines are especially important for public materials distributed through internet channels and social media, where audience scale is unpredictable and there is an increased risk of ERFA losing control of the intended message. This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the ERFA Code of Conduct and Employment Contract.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all ERFA Staff, Board Members and ERFA Partners. All staff and Board members are responsible for ensuring ERFA's communications are timely, accurate and ethical.

4.0 Public materials

Public material comprise any content related to ERFA disseminated through a media channel that has the potential to reach members of the public. Offline media channels may include newsletters, brochures, public addresses, appeals and interviews. Online media channels may include ERFA's website, social media content, blog posts and television advertisements.

5.0 Fundraising through informal channels

The solicitation of donations through informal channels includes communications disseminated from an unofficial source, such as a Staff member's personal social media channel. For example, Staff may wish to share official ERFA material, fundraising campaigns or links to donation landing pages to their private social network, or to use informal communication channels to promote ERFA and acknowledge their role within the organisation. The solicitation of donations through formal channels includes communications disseminated from an official ERFA channel. This Public Relations & Social Media Policy is concerned with fundraising through informal channels. Solicitation of donations through formal channels is treated differently, as is addressed in ERFA's Fundraising, Donations & Refunds Policy.

ERFA Staff are permitted to solicit donations through informal channels by sharing or referring to official ERFA public materials or an active fundraising campaign. ERFA Staff are not permitted to solicit donations through an informal channel without referring to official ERFA public materials or an active fundraising campaign. In situations where a Staff Member is unsure whether their activities comply with these requirements they are encouraged to liaise with ERFA's Chief Executive Officer. To be compliant with the ACFID Fundraising Charter ERFA requires that public materials that solicit donations through informal channels:

- correctly identify ERFA (including name, address, ABN and purpose);
- are factually accurate, truthful and not likely to deceive or mislead any person;
- accurately represent the context, situation, proposed solutions and intended meaning of information provided by affected people;
- clearly state if there is a specific purpose of each donation;
- avoid material omissions, exaggerations, misleading visual portrayals and overstating the need or what the donor's response may achieve; and
- form a part of a positive campaign to build public awareness, understanding and support for the objects and vision of ERFA.

6.0 Interacting with the Media

6.1 Guidelines

ERFA supports constructive engagement with the media that maximises transparent communication and reduces the risk of inaccurate information being disseminated.

6.2 Staff Role

All staff have a role in identifying issues and events that can potentially promote or damage ERFA through media coverage. These should all be brought to the attention of the CEO.

6.3 CEO Role

All staff engaging in public comment through the media should do so with the approval of the CEO. The CEO will generally manage all media inquiries. On other matters, and where an enquiry comes from the media, advice should be sought from the local subject matter experts. At this point an approval may be granted to a subject matter expert to undertake a media interview.

6.4 Informed consent

Prior, free and informed consent must be obtained if program participants are to be photographed, filmed, interviewed or otherwise identified by the media. Informed consent and release forms are available from the CEO Office. If television crews are to be involved, the CEO or a designated member of Staff will accompany the crew.

6.5 Emergencies

Safety and welfare is always the top priority in an emergency situation. If possible, the Chief Executive Officer, or nominated representative, should attend the emergency site to assist with media inquiries. Any comment on an emergency should be limited to an expression of concern for the safety of all involved, an indication of what has been done to ensure people are safe, an outline of communications that have been put in place, and a comment on what is being done to provide assistance, counselling and other support. In emergency situations, it is not appropriate to comment on the cause of the problem, the extent of damage or the extent of injury. It is also inappropriate to comment on matters currently under police investigation, likely to be part of a police investigation or subject to legal proceedings.

6.6 Portrayal of other NGOs

Any communication regarding another NGO will be factually accurate and will not intentionally or otherwise mislead. ERFA is respectful of other ACFID members and all other NGOs generally in their public materials. No statements about other NGOs are to be made with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage for ERFA.

7.0 Social media guidelines

ERFA supports its employees' participation in public relations activity by using social media online applications such as social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites and message boards that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content.

7.1 Benefits of social media usage

Traditional and social media provides an opportunity to:

- engage and interact with our supporters and various audiences;
- provide information on the programs ERFA supports;
- promote staff expertise; and
- use of web technologies/social media is increasingly part of everyday online activities.

7.2 Standards

The following standards apply to employees' work use and personal use of social media at any time, when it has a clear and close connection with ERFA or could be perceived as having a connection with

ERFA. ERFA will enforce these standards as and when appropriate:

- Always follow relevant ERFA policies as outlined in staff employment contracts, in particular Image & Story Use Consent and the Child Protection Policy for any content or stories that contain children.
- Do not act unlawfully (such as breaching copyright) when using social media.
- Make sure your personal online activities do not interfere with the performance of your job.
- Be clear that your personal views are yours, and not necessarily the views of ERFA.
- Do not disclose confidential information obtained through work.
- All statements are to be respectful.
- No statements about other NGOs are to be made with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage for ERFA.
- Consult the Ethical Decision Making Framework for guidance on whether it is ethical to publicly disclose stakeholder's personal information and/or images where there is latitude for interpreting the disclosure as a breach of ethics.

7.3 Responsibilities and delegations

- Senior executive and line managers are required to ensure this policy is understood by staff working within their area of control.

8.0 Related ERFA Policies and Documents

Related policies

- Fundraising, Donations & Refunds Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy

Related documents:

- Image & Story Use Consent Form
- Ethical Decision Making Framework