

HAY2TIMBUKTU

Conflict of Interest Policy

Approved by the Trustees on 23 August 2021

Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose

H2T starts from the position of trusting the integrity and professionalism of trustees and assumes that trustees will act in the best interests of H2T. There will, however, be times when a trustee has more than one legitimate interest and these different interests may conflict. To protect themselves and H2T, trustees should always disclose a conflict of interests as outlined below.

2. Defining Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest arise when the interests of trustees (their family, friends, or other organisations with which they are involved) are incompatible with, or in competition with, the interests of H2T. Such situations present a risk that trustees could make a decision based on these external influences, rather than the best interests of H2T. Or that others, outside H2T (such as the press) could allege that trustees might have made decisions based on their external interests or influences.

Conflicts of interest may come in a number of different forms:

- Direct financial gain or benefit, such as:
 - payment to a trustee for services provided to H2T – such as legal, accountancy or consultancy services.
 - The award of a contract to another organization in which the trustee has an interest – such as a contract to deliver a project.
- Indirect financial gain, such as employment by H2T of, or awarding a contract to a partner or relative of a trustee.
- Non financial or personal conflicts where trustees receive no financial benefit but may be influenced by external factors – such as awarding contracts to family members or friends.
- Conflict of loyalties, such as where a trustee is appointed to, or associated with, a partner organization.

3. Dangers of Conflicts of Interest

There are circumstances when possible conflicts could arise that might give rise to any of the following:

- risk the impression that H2T has acted improperly.
- impact negatively on the reputation of H2T or individuals by attracting adverse publicity.
- damage effective decision making.
- inhibit free discussion.

This policy is designed to stop this happening. The most important point is that trustees should always disclose an activity if there is a doubt whether it represents a conflict of interest.

4. Disclosing Conflicts of Interests

The first point of disclosure is the Register of Interests Form (attached). The form should be completed at the point of becoming a trustee, thereafter annually so that a register of interests is kept and processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

A second point of disclosure is at the appointment of sponsoring trustee of a H2T project. Those that are aware there is a conflict of interest should take the opportunity to make it known that there is a possible conflict. This will help to ensure transparency and avoid accusations of impropriety.

A third point of disclosure is at each trustees meeting. Those that are aware that there is a conflict of interest relevant to the business for discussion should make it known that there is a possible conflict to ensure transparency and the avoidance of possible accusations of impropriety.

If a conflict of interest is declared the trustee may take part in discussion relating to the area under discussion providing:

- attention has been drawn to the trustee's "other interest" that results in the conflict of interest arising.
- any information gained during the discussion could not be used to advantage the trustee's "other interest". If privileged and preferential information could be gained during the discussions then the trustee must withdraw from the discussions.
- a trustee with a declared conflict of interest is not be part of the decision making, or any voting, process on the issue concerned and must withdraw when this is being undertaken. Those who withdraw from the decision making process cease to count for quorum purposes.

5. Managing Contracts

Trustees may not be involved in managing a contract on behalf of H2T in which they have an interest.

6. Conflicts with potential donors

This policy principally relates to conflicts between the interests of H2T and those of trustees. Conflicts may also arise between potential donors and the trustees of H2T.

For example, conflicts of interests may arise where a trustee of H2T has a personal, family, professional or organisational connection to a potential donor (e.g. as a staff or board member). Such conflicts may create problems for the potential donor as they can:

- result in an unfair advantage over other applicants to the potential donor.
- risk the impression that the potential donor has acted improperly with regard to funding decisions.

Trustees should disclose any such potential conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware that an application to the relevant donor is being considered. The trustees should consider disclosure of the potential conflict of interest in the application for funding.

Register of Interests Form

This form should be completed annually and whenever a new trustee is appointed.

New conflicts of interest should be declared as soon as a trustee becomes aware of them.

In declaring any conflicts of interest trustees confirm that they have considered H2T's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Date Declared	Person declaring	Nature of conflict of interest	Actions taken to mitigate conflict of interest