Scottish Beekeepers Association SCIO

POLICY ON EXTERNAL PROMOTIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND EVENT PRESENCE

1. Purpose

This policy defines how the Scottish Beekeepers' Association (SBA) considers, approves and manages promotional activity by external organisations or individuals. It ensures that any such activity:

- Advances the SBA's charitable purposes
- Protects the SBA's independence, integrity and reputation
- Complies with charity law and good governance
- Avoids conflicts of interest, including trustee financial gain

2. Scope

This policy applies to all requests for external promotion through:

- SBA-organised events (including stands, displays, talks, materials)
- SBA communication channels (including website, newsletters, social media, email communications)

It applies equally to:

- Not-for-profit organisations
- Commercial organisations
- Trustees, volunteers and staff involved in decision-making

3. Legal and Governance Framework

This policy is informed by:

- OSCR guidance on trustee duties
- The SBA constitution
- The SBA's Trustees' Code of Conduct

Trustees must act solely in the best interests of the SBA and ensure that the charity's resources are used appropriately.

4. Principles

In considering external promotions, the SBA will apply the following principles:

- Charitable alignment – activity must support or be consistent with the SBA's purposes
- Public benefit – promotional activity must provide benefit to SBA members or the wider public
- Independence – the SBA must not appear to endorse external organisations without explicit approval
- Transparency – relationships must be open, clear and properly documented
- Fairness – opportunities must be offered consistently and without preferential treatment

The SBA reserves the right to refuse, restrict or withdraw promotional opportunities at any time.

5. Categories of External Organisations

5.1 Not-for-Profit Organisations

Includes charities, voluntary organisations, community groups and educational bodies.

These organisations may be offered promotional opportunities where:

- Their aims align with those of the SBA
- Their activities do not conflict with the SBA's values or objectives
- The promotion is proportionate and appropriate

Opportunities may be free or offered at a reduced rate at the Board's discretion.

5.2 Commercial Organisations

Includes businesses, suppliers, retailers and for-profit service providers.

Commercial organisations may be offered promotional opportunities where:

- Their products or services are relevant to the SBA's work or audience
- Any commercial arrangement is clearly identified as such
- The SBA's independence and reputation are protected

Commercial promotions will normally be subject to an agreed fee or sponsorship arrangement.

6. Approval Criteria

All external promotions must be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Relevance – Is the organisation relevant to the SBA's aims and audience?
2. Ethical Fit – Are their practices consistent with the SBA's values?
3. Reputation Risk – Could the association harm the SBA's reputation?
4. Benefit – Does the arrangement provide benefit to the SBA or its beneficiaries?
5. Transparency – Is the nature of the promotion clear to the public?

6. Fairness – Is the opportunity offered on a fair and consistent basis?

Approval decisions must be recorded and stored for audit and governance purposes.

To assist with this process, a checklist and decision flow chart have been provided in Appendices 1 and 2. The checklist should be followed by the relevant trustees/subcommittees for all organisations looking to be promoted by the Scottish Beekeepers' Association.

7. Use of SBA Communication Channels

External content may be shared through SBA communication channels only where:

- It is accurate, appropriate and non-misleading
- Commercial content is clearly identified, relevant and non-misleading
- It does not dominate or detract from the SBA's own messaging
- Commercial promotions are clearly identified
- No exclusive or preferential access is given without Board approval
- Communications do not overwhelm or detract from the SBA's own messaging

The SBA will not:

- Sell mailing lists
- Share personal data
- Provide direct access to members or supporters

8. Conflicts of Interest and Trustee Benefit

8.1 Trustee Duties

Trustees must avoid situations where personal interests conflict, or may be perceived to conflict, with the interests of the SBA.

Trustees must not:

- Gain financially from the promotion by the SBA of external organisations
- Use their position to secure advantage for themselves or connected persons

8.2 Declaration and Management

- All actual or potential conflicts must be declared
- Declarations must be recorded in the Register of Interests
- Conflicted trustees must withdraw from discussions and decisions

8.3 Trustee-Connected Organisations

Organisations connected to trustees (including businesses, partnerships or family interests) will not normally be offered promotional opportunities.

Exceptions only where:

- The arrangement is demonstrably in the SBA's best interests
- No financial gain is received by the trustee
- The decision is approved by non-conflicted trustees
- The decision is fully documented

9. Fees, Sponsorship and Donations

- All financial arrangements must be agreed in advance
- Payments must be made directly to the SBA
- Acceptance of payment or donation does not imply endorsement

10. No Endorsement Statement

The provision of promotional opportunities, event presence, or inclusion within the SBA's communications does not constitute endorsement, recommendation or approval by the Scottish Beekeepers' Association of any organisation, product, service or viewpoint.

Unless explicitly agreed in writing by the Board of Trustees:

- External organisations must not imply that the SBA recommends or guarantees their products or services.
- Use of the SBA's name, logo or branding must not suggest partnership, accreditation or endorsement.
- Promotional participation does not create an ongoing relationship with the SBA.

The SBA reserves the right to require amendment or withdrawal of any material that may reasonably be interpreted as implying endorsement. All external exhibitors and partners may be required to agree to this condition as part of event booking or participation.

11. Right to Appeal

The SBA aims to ensure that decisions relating to external promotions, event presence, sponsorship or use of communication channels are fair, transparent and consistent.

External organisations may request a review of a decision where they believe:

- the policy has not been applied correctly; or
- relevant information was not fully considered at the time of the decision.

11.1 Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be submitted only on one or more of the following grounds:

- New information has become available that was not previously considered
- A procedural error occurred in the decision-making process
- A conflict of interest was not properly identified or managed

Appeals will not normally be considered solely on the basis of disagreement with the outcome.

11.2 Submission of an Appeal

Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing within 28 days of the decision being communicated
- Clearly state the grounds for appeal
- Provide any supporting information or evidence

Appeals should be sent to:

The General Secretary via email secretary@scottishbeekeepers.org.uk

11.3 Consideration of Appeals

Appeals will be considered by trustees who were not involved in the original decision. Where appropriate, the Board may appoint a small review panel of non-conflicted trustees. The review will assess whether the decision was reasonable and made in accordance with this policy. The appeal process is a review of the decision-making process, not a re-application.

11.4 Outcome

Following review, the trustees may:

- Uphold the original decision
- Amend the decision
- Refer the matter for reconsideration under this policy

The decision following appeal is final.

Timescales

The SBA will aim to acknowledge appeals within 7 days and provide an outcome within 28 days, where reasonably practicable.

12. Review

- This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required
- The Board is responsible for monitoring compliance
- Breaches will be addressed promptly and recorded

Appendix 1 - Trustee Decision Checklist

To be used when considering external promotions, stands or communications.

Organisation Name: _____

Type: ☐ Not-for-profit ☐ Commercial

1. Charitable Alignment

- Does this activity support or align with our charitable purposes?
- Is it appropriate for our beneficiaries and audience?

2. Reputational and Ethical Risk

- Are there any ethical concerns?
- Could this association harm the SBA's reputation?

3. Benefit to the SBA

- What is the clear benefit (financial, educational, community, reputational)?
- Is the benefit proportionate to the exposure offered?

4. Transparency

- Is the nature of the relationship clear (especially if commercial)?
- Will the public understand whether this is promotion, sponsorship or partnership?

5. Conflicts of Interest

- Have all trustees declared relevant interests?
- Is any trustee or connected person likely to benefit?
- If yes, has the conflicted trustee withdrawn?

6. Fairness and Consistency

- Would we offer similar terms to a comparable organisation?
- Is this consistent with previous decisions?

7. Financial Arrangements (if applicable)

- Are fees or sponsorship agreed in advance?
- Are payment terms documented?

Appendix 2 – Decision Flow Chart

