

	Communications Policy and Procedure	
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the principles, strategies, and responsibilities guiding all communication efforts for Our Rainbow House. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our communication is clear, consistent, and aligned with our mission to support education and community development.

Effective communication is essential to building trust, fostering collaboration, and ensuring transparency with all stakeholders, including students, staff, donors, partners, and the broader community. This policy provides a framework for both internal and external communication, detailing how we share information across various channels, uphold our values, and adhere to local and international legal and ethical standards.

By following this policy, Our Rainbow House aims to strengthen our relationships, promote accountability, and support the long-term success of our educational programs and initiatives.

2.0 REFERENCE

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)
Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Fundraising Charter
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Spam Act 2003 (Cth)
Our Rainbow House Child Protection Policy and Procedure
Our Rainbow House Code of Conduct
Our Rainbow House Confidentiality Policy and Procedure
Our Rainbow House Copyright Policy and Procedure
Our Rainbow House Ethical Decision-Making Framework for Communications
Our Rainbow House Fundraising Policy and Procedure
Our Rainbow House Partnership Agreement Template
Our Rainbow House Partnership Policy and Procedure
Our Rainbow House Permission to Photograph Form
Our Rainbow House Privacy Policy
Our Rainbow House Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy and Procedure

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Board means the governing body of Our Rainbow House.

Board Member a volunteer elected to the governing body at an Annual General Meeting of Our Rainbow House.

Child shall mean any student of Our Rainbow House School, any sponsored high school student under the age of 18, any former student of Our Rainbow House under the age of 18, or any other person under the age of 18 years that has any form of contact with Our Rainbow House activities.

Member shall mean any paid member of Our Rainbow House who has voting rights at a Business or Annual General meeting.

Our Rainbow House community shall mean all representatives of Our Rainbow House, students, guardians and family members, caregivers, sponsors, donors and visitors, i.e., anyone directly or indirectly involved in Our Rainbow House activities.

Representative shall mean any board member, staff member, volunteer, student placement, apprentice, contractor, sub-contractor or any other person who is caused to undertake tasks or duties on behalf of Our Rainbow House.

Stakeholder means a person or group having an interest in the performance or success of our organisation.

4.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all representatives of Our Rainbow House involved in communication activities.
- external communications with the public, media, donors, and other stakeholders.
- internal communication within our organisation.
- the use of social media platforms, digital tools, and websites.
- ethical considerations for all communications including AI-powered communications and content generation.

5.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- establish clear guidelines for all internal and external communications related to Our Rainbow House's operations, values, and activities.
- ensure that communication is consistent, respectful, culturally appropriate, and aligned with our mission and values.
- provide a framework for representatives of Our Rainbow House and stakeholders to communicate effectively and responsibly, fostering trust and transparency within our organisation and with the wider community.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Board: It is the responsibility of the Board to provide strategic oversight, ensuring that this policy aligns with the mission, values, and legal requirements of both Australia and Zambia.

Director: The Director is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring that communication strategies are effectively executed in line with our organisation's goals and objectives.

Australian Staff: The Australian team of staff handle the day-to-day responsibilities for executing this policy. They are responsible for drafting content, managing social media, handling media communications, and ensuring the consistency and clarity of our organisation's messaging.

Project Coordinator (Zambia): The Project Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that communication with the local community, staff, and students is effective, as well as liaising with the Australian office for any reporting or updates needed.

Student Sponsorship Coordinator: The Student Sponsorship Coordinator is responsible for communicating with sponsors. They ensure that communications are aligned with fundraising goals and that the school's activities are effectively communicated to donors and other stakeholders in both Australia and Zambia.

Compliance Officer: The Compliance Officer ensures that this policy complies with legal requirements in both Australia and Zambia, such as data protection laws or any local regulations that apply to schools or non-profits.

Partners: Partners play a key role in supporting and amplifying the mission and messaging of our organisation. This policy encourages open, respectful, and transparent communication between Our Rainbow House and our partners, ensuring alignment in public messaging and shared values. Partners are

expected to uphold the principles outlined in this policy when representing Our Rainbow House or engaging in joint communications.

7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Core Principles

All communications, whether internal or external, must reflect the following core principles:

- **Transparency:** Providing accurate, honest, and timely information.
- **Respect:** Communicating in a respectful and culturally sensitive manner, especially with respect to our work in Zambia.
- **Confidentiality:** Protecting the privacy of individuals, students, and partners.
- **Consistency:** Maintaining a unified voice and message across all platforms.
- **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the information shared.

Our Rainbow House is committed to using images and messages in communications in a way that:

- Portrays the affected people (including children) in a manner that respects their dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture, and protects their safety and rights.
- Is consistent with ACFID's *Fundraising Charter* where they relate to fundraising.
- Requires free, prior and informed consent and acknowledges people's right to information.
- Requires that the collection of information, images and stories does not harm people or the environment.
- Does not negatively impact any individual or organisation (including other ACFID members), with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage to Our Rainbow House.
- Applies to all information, stories and images collected for research, evaluation, and donor and supporter purposes.

8.0 PROCEDURE

Collection of information, images and stories

All information, images and stories collected by Our Rainbow House representatives or partners must be:

- collected only after obtaining free, prior and informed consent from any individuals or organisations. This can be done verbally or in writing (see *Permission to Photograph Form*).
- obtained according to ethical principles and related Our Rainbow House policies, (such as the *Our Rainbow House Child Protection Policy and Procedure, Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy and Procedure, Fundraising Policy and Procedure, Ethical Decision-Making Framework*).

Publications and Written Materials

All publications and written materials (newsletters, reports, brochures, videos, social media posts etc.) produced by Our Rainbow House must:

- be clear, concise, and align with our mission and values.
- accurately describe the nature and scope of our work.
- acknowledge the role of partners.
- be consistent with ACFID's *Fundraising Charter*

- be fact-checked for accuracy, especially when sharing statistics, student stories, or financial data.
 - uphold a tone that is respectful and culturally sensitive to the communities we serve and other organisations.
 - not include content that would constitute discrimination, harassment of any kind, defamation, threats, profanity or similarly inappropriate language.
 - not violate copyright or trademark law or promote illegal activity.
 - include proper attribution for any quotes, images, or content sourced from others.
 - abide by all Our Rainbow House policies relating to the use of images (as listed above).
 - use simple, inclusive language, ensuring materials are understandable for a wide range of audiences.
 - go through a review and approval process by the Australian Office before dissemination.
 - use culturally appropriate images and stories, particularly when featuring the students and community members in Zambia.
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Social Media

Social media is an important tool for engaging with our community, raising awareness, and sharing updates. All representatives involved in managing social media accounts must:

- be approved to manage social media accounts by the Board and receive training in this, and any other relevant policies.
- follow Our Rainbow House's social media guidelines below.
- ensure that all posts align with our organisation's values and objectives and abide by Our Rainbow House policies.
- be mindful of the potential impact of posts on the reputation of Our Rainbow House, other organisations and the communities we serve.
- abide by the Terms of Service of each social media platform.
- ensure any new social media accounts created using the Our Rainbow House name or logo, are only done so with explicit written permission from the Board.

Guidelines

- **Content Sharing:** When sharing content related to Zambia, ensure that it portrays the community and students with respect and dignity. Avoid sensationalizing or misrepresenting situations.
 - **Engagement:** Encourage positive, respectful engagement with followers, responding to comments and messages in a timely manner.
 - **Privacy:** Obtain free, prior and informed consent before posting photos or personal information of students, staff, volunteers or community members. This applies especially to vulnerable individuals and children.
 - **Branding:** Ensure that all posts, images, and videos are consistent with Our Rainbow House's branding guidelines (e.g., logos).
 - **Monitoring:** Regularly monitor social media platforms for inappropriate comments or posts and remove content that violates our values or Code of Conduct. Abusive comments should be documented, removed and reported.
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Media Relations

Effective media relations are key to enhancing our organisation's public image and promoting our work. All media inquiries should be handled by the Director, or designated spokesperson as decided by the Board.

Guidelines

- **Spokesperson:** Only designated spokespersons authorised to speak to the media on behalf of Our Rainbow House.
 - **Press Releases:** All press releases must be approved by the Director, or designated spokesperson, and reflect our goals and messaging. They must include accurate, verifiable information and avoid exaggeration.
 - **Media Outreach:** When engaging with the media, ensure all communications align with our mission and message. Approach outreach with transparency, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity.
 - **Confidentiality:** Do not disclose sensitive or confidential information about Our Rainbow House students, donors, or internal operations without prior consent. As per the *Our Rainbow House Confidentiality Policy and Procedure*
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Partnerships and External Content Gatherers

Our Rainbow House values its partnerships and recognises the important role external content creators—such as photographers, videographers, journalists, and social media collaborators—can play in sharing our story. By working collaboratively and ethically, our partners and content creators help to ensure that stories are shared with authenticity, sensitivity, and impact.

Guidelines

- **Partnership Agreements:** Before any content is created or published, clear Partnership Agreements must be established regarding the purpose, messaging, and intended use of materials. These Agreements ensure clear goals and timelines are documented and ensures adherence to all Our Rainbow House policies and procedures.
 - **Respect:** All external parties engaging in communications or content creation on behalf of or in collaboration with the organisation must respect the dignity, privacy, and cultural context of the communities we work with.
 - **Consent:** Free, prior and informed consent must be obtained particularly when content involves students, families, or community members.
 - **Review and approval:** Final content should be reviewed by the Director, or designated officer, to ensure it aligns with our values and mission.
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Responsible Use of AI in Communication

As part of our commitment to ethical practices, Our Rainbow House supports the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in communication. AI tools should be used with caution, ensuring they align with our values and ethical standards.

Guidelines

- **Content Creation:** When using AI tools (e.g., for writing, content creation, or data analysis), ensure that AI-generated content is accurate, aligned with our mission, and does not mislead or misrepresent any information.

- **Transparency:** Clearly communicate when AI-generated content is used, particularly in public-facing communication, to avoid misleading stakeholders about the source of the information.
 - **Privacy and Data Protection:** Ensure that AI tools comply with privacy regulations and do not collect or misuse personal data without proper consent.
 - **Bias:** Actively monitor and address any bias that may arise from AI tools, ensuring the content is inclusive and culturally sensitive.
 - **Human Oversight:** AI-generated communication should always undergo review by a human team member to ensure it meets our ethical standards before publication.
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Organisational Email Use

Organisational email addresses are an official communication tool of Our Rainbow House and must be used responsibly and professionally at all times.

Guidelines

- **Professionalism:** All emails sent using an Our Rainbow House email address must reflect our organisation's values, tone, and commitment to respectful, accurate, and culturally sensitive communication.
 - **Authorised Use:** Organisational email addresses are to be used only for official Our Rainbow House business. They must not be used for personal matters, political activity, or any purpose that may harm the reputation of the organisation.
 - **Management:** All organisational email accounts are created, managed, and overseen by the Our Rainbow House office. Accounts may be monitored to ensure compliance with organisational policies.
 - **Confidentiality:** Sensitive information must only be shared with authorised recipients and handled in accordance with Our Rainbow House's *Confidentiality Policy and Procedure*.
 - **Security:** Users must follow best practices for password protection and email security. Any suspected breaches must be reported immediately to the Director or designated officer.
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Internal Communication

Internal communication should foster a transparent, collaborative, and supportive work environment. It is essential to ensure all team members are well-informed and aligned with our organisation's goals.

Guidelines

- **Clarity and Timeliness:** Ensure that internal communications are clear, timely, and easy to understand. All representatives should be aware of important updates, organisational changes, and key decisions.
 - **Respect and Inclusion:** Communications should promote an inclusive, respectful workplace, valuing the contributions of all team members.
 - **Confidentiality:** Maintain confidentiality for sensitive organisational information, respecting the privacy of colleagues, donors, and stakeholders.
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Crisis Communications

In the event of a crisis or emergency, Our Rainbow House must respond quickly, effectively, and responsibly. The Director or designated spokespersons (as decided by the Board) will handle all external communication.

Guidelines

- **Preparedness:** Ensure that all representatives are familiar with the crisis communication protocol, including the key messages to be communicated.
 - **Clear and Accurate Information:** During a crisis, only verified information should be shared with the media, stakeholders, and the public.
 - **Empathy:** Communications during a crisis should be empathetic and sensitive to the emotions and needs of the affected communities.
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Approval Processes

To maintain consistency and uphold the integrity of Our Rainbow House's messaging, all external communications and content—whether produced by representatives, partners, media outlets, or content creators—must go through an approval process before being published or distributed. This ensures that all materials accurately reflect our organisation's mission, values, and cultural sensitivities, helps protect our reputation, ensures accurate messaging, and fosters responsible communication with external audiences.

Guidelines

- **Submissions:** Any content, including articles, social media posts, videos, or promotional materials, must be submitted for review to the Director or another designated representative. The content will be assessed for alignment with our organisational standards, messaging, and any legal or ethical considerations, including child protection and privacy guidelines.
 - **Approval:** Approval must be obtained before content is shared publicly, and any revisions requested during the review process must be implemented. For urgent or time-sensitive materials, expedited review processes can be arranged, but approval is still required.
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Training and Awareness

To ensure effective and consistent communication, all representatives and relevant stakeholders will be provided with appropriate training in this policy. Regular reviews, inductions, and periodic refreshers will be conducted to maintain awareness of communication standards.

This commitment to ongoing education supports honest, clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive communication within the organisation and with external partners.

9.0 REVIEW

Date of next review: 22/09/2026.

This Communications Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up-to-date and reflects the evolving needs of our organisation. Any changes or updates will be communicated to all relevant parties.