Conflict of Interest Policy

Te Maeva Nui O Aotearoa New Zealand Charitable Trust

Charities Registration Number: CC63023

Plain English | Charities Act 2005 | Companies Act 1993

Version	1.0
Effective Date	15 August 2026
Review Date	Annually at the first Board meeting of the year
Policy Owner	Board of Trustees / Chairperson
Legislation	Charities Act 2005 | Companies Act 1993 | Incorporated Societies Act 2022

Why this policy matters:
As a charitable trust, we are accountable to our community. Our decisions about money, contracts, and activities must be made honestly and in the best interests of the Trust — not for personal gain. This policy makes sure that happens.

🎯 1. Why we have this policy

A conflict of interest happens when a trustee, officer, or staff member has a personal interest — financial or otherwise — that could influence (or appear to influence) a decision they are making on behalf of the Trust.

This policy is here to:

- Protect the integrity and reputation of the Trust
- Make sure decisions are always made in the best interests of the community we serve
- Meet our legal obligations as a registered charity
- Build trust with our donors, funders, members, and the public

Having a conflict of interest is not automatically wrong — it is human. What matters is that it is declared openly and handled properly.

👥 2. Who does this apply to?

This policy applies to everyone involved in governing or managing the Trust, including:

- All trustees and board members

- The Chairperson
- The Treasurer and Secretary
- Any paid staff involved in decision-making
- Volunteers in positions of trust or authority

This policy applies at board meetings, committee meetings, grant panels, procurement decisions, and any other situation where Trust resources or decisions are involved.

🤔 3. What counts as a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest exists when your personal interests — or those of someone close to you — could influence how you act on behalf of the Trust. This includes:

Financial interests:

- You (or a close family member) would receive money, a contract, or financial benefit from a decision
- You have shares, ownership, or a financial stake in an organisation the Trust is dealing with
- You would personally profit from a decision — directly or indirectly

Personal and professional interests:

- You are a trustee, officer, or employee of another organisation that has a relationship with the Trust
- A close friend or family member would benefit from a decision
- You have a personal loyalty to someone involved in a decision
- Your employer or business partner has a relationship with the Trust

Perceived conflicts:

Even if there is no actual conflict, there may be a perceived conflict — where a reasonable person looking from the outside might think your judgment could be affected. Perceived conflicts must be declared too.

Real-life examples:

Situation	Why it is a conflict
A trustee's family business applies for a grant from the Trust	The trustee has a personal financial interest in the decision.
A trustee is also on the board of an organisation the Trust is considering partnering with	Their loyalties could be divided between the two organisations.
A trustee is involved in selecting a supplier — and that supplier is their employer	They could personally benefit from the contract being awarded.
A trustee recommends hiring someone who is their close friend or relative	Personal relationships could influence an employment decision.

A trustee votes on their own remuneration or reimbursement	They have a direct personal financial interest in the outcome.

✅ 4. What to do when you have a conflict

The process is simple — identify it, say it, step back:

1	**Identify** Before any meeting or decision-making, ask yourself: Do I have any personal, financial, or professional interest in what is being discussed?
2	**Declare** If yes — speak up at the start of the meeting, or notify the Chairperson in advance. It does not matter how small the interest seems. Declare it.
3	**Record** The Chairperson ensures the declaration is noted in the meeting minutes and the Register of Interests is updated.
4	**Step back** Unless the Board decides otherwise, the person with the conflict should leave the room for the discussion and not vote on the decision.
5	**Proceed** The remaining trustees make the decision without the person with the conflict. The outcome is recorded in the minutes.

When in doubt — declare it.
It is always better to declare something and have the Board decide it is not an issue, than to stay silent and risk the Trust's reputation. Declaring a conflict is not a sign of wrongdoing — it is a sign of integrity.

📋 5. The Register of Interests

The Trust keeps a Register of Interests — a written record of any interests declared by trustees and staff. This is a standing document updated throughout the year.

How the register works:

- All trustees complete and sign a Declaration of Interests form when they join the board
- The register is reviewed and updated at the first board meeting of each year
- Any new interests must be declared and recorded as soon as they arise — not just at annual review
- The register is maintained by the Chairperson or Secretary
- The register is available for inspection by any trustee on request

A blank register template is provided below for the Board's use:

Name	Nature of Interest	Organisation / Relationship	Date Declared

🎁 6. Gifts and hospitality

Receiving gifts or hospitality from people or organisations connected to the Trust can create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Our rules on gifts:

- Trustees and staff must not accept gifts of significant value (over $50) from any person or organisation connected to Trust business
- Minor gifts (e.g. pens, chocolates, small tokens of appreciation at events) may be accepted but should be declared
- Invitations to events or hospitality should be assessed — accept only where there is a legitimate Trust purpose and declare it
- Cash or cash-equivalent gifts must never be accepted
- Any gifts received should be recorded and reported to the Chairperson

If you are unsure whether accepting something is appropriate, check with the Chairperson before accepting.

🏦 7. Transactions with connected people

A related party transaction is when the Trust does business with — or makes a payment to — someone connected to a trustee or officer. For example, hiring a trustee's company to provide services.

These are not automatically prohibited, but they must be handled carefully:

- The conflict must be declared before any discussion or negotiation begins
- The trustee with the connection must not be involved in the decision
- The Trust must be satisfied the arrangement is in its best interests and represents fair value
- All related party transactions must be recorded in the minutes and the Register of Interests
- Significant related party transactions may need to be disclosed in the Trust's annual report

Reminder:
Charitable trust funds must only be used for the Trust's charitable purposes. Any payment that primarily benefits a trustee personally — rather than the Trust — may be unlawful.

⚖️ 8. What happens if this policy is not followed?

Taking part in a decision when you have an undisclosed conflict of interest is a serious matter. It can:

- Damage the Trust's reputation and public trust
- Result in a decision being challenged or reversed
- Constitute a breach of a trustee's legal duties
- Potentially expose the Trust and individual trustees to legal liability
- Be reported to Charities Services or other regulatory bodies

Trustees who repeatedly fail to disclose conflicts, or who act in bad faith, may be asked to step down from the Board.

Staff who fail to disclose conflicts of interest will be dealt with through the Trust's standard employment or disciplinary processes.

📝 9. Annual declaration

At the first board meeting of each year — and when any new trustee joins — each person covered by this policy must complete a Declaration of Interests. The declaration confirms:

- Whether they have any interests to declare
- That they have read and understood this policy
- That they commit to declaring any new conflicts as they arise throughout the year

A signed copy of each declaration is held on file by the Secretary or Chairperson.

Annual Declaration of Interests

Te Maeva Nui O Aotearoa New Zealand Charitable Trust

Full name: ______________________________ Date: ____________________

Role / Position:

____

Please tick one:

☐ I have NO interests to declare at this time.

☐ I wish to declare the following interests (please list below or attach a separate sheet):

____

____

____

I confirm that I have read and understood the Conflict of Interest Policy and commit to declaring any new conflicts as they arise.

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ____________________

🔄 10. Keeping this policy up to date

This policy will be reviewed at least once a year by the Board of Trustees, or sooner if:

- The law or regulatory guidance changes
- A conflict of interest situation arises that is not covered by this policy
- Feedback from trustees or staff suggests a change is needed

The Chairperson is responsible for making sure this policy remains current and that all trustees are familiar with it.

📞 11. Questions about this policy

If you are unsure whether something needs to be declared, or if you have any questions about this policy, please speak to:

Chairperson	Mai Nio Aporo/mai@temaevanui.nz
Secretary	Frances Top-Fariu/frances@temaevanui.nz
Charities Services (NZ)	0508 242 748 | www.charities.govt.nz

Approved by the Trustees of Te Maeva Nui O Aotearoa New Zealand Charitable Trust

Signed: ____________________________ Date: ___15 August 2026_______________

Name: _Mai Nio-Aporo_______________ Version: 1.0

Role: Lead Trustee

This policy is governed by the Charities Act 2005 and the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 (New Zealand)