

Code of Conduct for the Chair and Board Members of IPSA

1. Background

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct applies to the Chair and Board Members of IPSA.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 IPSA's values are staying connected, seeing the bigger picture, being open, doing the right thing, and making a difference. These values underpin the behaviour expected of the Chair and Board Members of IPSA.
- 2.2 In adhering to IPSA's values, the Chair and Board Members of IPSA undertake at all times to:
- 2.2.1 observe the highest standards of impartiality, integrity, and objectivity in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, with reference to the Seven Principles of Public Life as established in the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life under the headings: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership;
 - 2.2.2 act in good faith and in the interests of IPSA;
 - 2.2.3 not disclose any confidential information without lawful authority;
 - 2.2.4 comply fully with the Freedom of Information Act 2000;
 - 2.2.5 not misuse information or opportunities gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political purposes, or to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, businesses, or organisations;
 - 2.2.6 declare in a register of interests any political, financial (where directly relevant to their position within IPSA), personal, and business interests; and to comply with IPSA's rules on claiming expenses and the acceptance of gifts and hospitality;
 - 2.2.7 allocate sufficient time to meet the expectations of the role.
- 2.3 No code of conduct can cover every eventuality and Board Members of IPSA should raise any queries or concerns with the Chair of IPSA for their consideration. The Chair should direct their own queries or concerns to the Chief Executive, who will commission advice as necessary.

3. Political Activity

- 3.1 The Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 states that the Chair and Board Members of IPSA cannot have been a member of the House of Commons at any time within the last five years, except for the Parliamentary Member, who must be a person who has been (but is no longer) a member of the House of Commons.

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- 3.2 For IPSA to perform effectively the functions given to it by Parliament, it must command wide confidence that it is independent of government, political parties, and organisations that seek to influence government policy.
- 3.3 It is important that the Chair and Board Members of IPSA provide full details of any activities that might lead to claims that they are, or have been, an active supporter of one political party or another, or of a particular policy which is associated with the objectives of a political party. To this end, a register of interests will be completed by the Chair and Board Members of IPSA on which they will declare any such information.
- 3.4 Membership of a political party, by itself, will not be a bar to appointment but the Chair and Board Members of IPSA must not engage in specific political activities on matters directly affecting the work of IPSA. With regard to the Parliamentary Member, it is accepted that they will be, or will have been, an active supporter of one political party and may be, or may have been, a supporter of particular policies. The Member will declare these interests, but they will not be a bar to being appointed. Upon being appointed to the IPSA Board, the Parliamentary Member may continue to be a member of a political party, but must not hold any paid or high-profile unpaid office in that political party, nor engage in specific political activities on matters directly affecting the work of IPSA.

4. Register of Interests

- 4.1 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA must declare any financial, personal or business interests which may conflict with their responsibilities to IPSA. These will include both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests which members of the public might reasonably think could influence the judgement of the Chair and Board Members of IPSA.
- 4.2 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA will not participate in the discussion or determination by the Board of matters in which they have a direct pecuniary interest.
- 4.3 When an interest is not of a direct pecuniary kind, the Chair and Board Members of IPSA will consider whether participation in the discussion or determination of a matter would raise a real danger of bias: that is, either the Chair or a Board Member of IPSA might unfairly regard with favour, or disfavour, the interests of someone who is a party to the matter under consideration. In considering whether a real danger of bias exists in relation to a particular decision, the Chair and Board Members of IPSA will assess whether they, a close family member, a person living in the same household as the Chair or Board Member, or a firm, business, or other organisation with which they are, or have recently been, connected, are likely to be affected more than the generality of those affected by the decision in question.
- 4.4 Where, in accordance with paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, the Chair and/or Board Member of IPSA does not participate in the discussion or determination of a matter, they should withdraw from the meeting. Where this occurs, it will be reflected in the minutes.
- 4.5 It is the responsibility of the Chair or Board Members of IPSA to provide sufficient documentary evidence regarding any declared interests if requested to do so.

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- 4.6 The register of interests will be published on IPSA’s website and updated bi-annually.
- 4.7 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA are required to notify the Chief of Staff of any additions or changes to their declaration of interests as soon as this change is known, but at the most within one month.
- 4.8 If Board Members of IPSA have any questions over what should be disclosed, they should raise these initially with the Chair. The Chair will direct their own queries or concerns to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will commission advice as necessary.
- 4.9 The final decision on whether an interest compromises the independence of the Board Members of IPSA rests with the Chair of IPSA. As above, the Chair will direct their own queries or concerns to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will commission advice as necessary.

5. Policy on Gifts and Hospitality

- 5.1 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA must adhere to the IPSA Board Gifts and Hospitality Code.

6. Expenses and Claims for Travel and Subsistence

- 6.1 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA must adhere to the IPSA Board Expenses Code.

7. Policies

- 7.1 The Chair and Board Members of IPSA must comply with the following organisational policies: Diversity and Inclusion, Whistle Blowing, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Information Technology, and Social Media.

April 2026