



Media Policy

Overview: This document includes the Queenslanders with Disability Network Ltd Media Policy as well as guidelines for staff and members for speaking with the media.

What is this policy about?

This policy outlines Queenslanders with Disability Network's (QDN) Guidelines for contact with the media, including dealing with media inquiries with regards to QDN's mission, goals and reputation.

This policy aims to ensure the organization acts in a professional, coordinated manner and that all statements made are accurate and appropriate and align to QDN's work and mission.

Who is covered by this policy?

These guidelines are for QDN members, group members, volunteers, contractors, employees and Directors of the Board.

What is covered by this policy?

This policy covers external news media including broadcast, electronic and print.

This includes providing information via media releases or statements, letters to the editor, responding to media enquiries over the phone and via email, interviews or briefings, disclosing information to the media, comments on talkback radio, addressing a seminar or conference where the media are present, and media activities for events, reports, and launches.

What are the principles and aims of engagement with media?

Media relations activity will:

- Be undertaken with the recognition that the media play an important role in influencing social attitudes towards and perceptions of people with disability.
- Aim to educate and raise awareness about issues facing people with disability and improve understanding and acceptance of people with disability in the community.
- Have regard to confidentiality and privacy of members, participants, volunteers and staff.
- Be communicated in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner i.e. utilising culturally appropriate language and images.

- Seek to promote positive coverage of its achievements, challenges and future vision e.g. new service developments.
- Provide comment and systemic policy positions on the merits and deficiencies of relevant policy initiatives, without endorsement of any particular political party.
- Proactive media contact will be consistent with the organisation's mission objectives, as outlined in its strategic plan.
- Reactive media responses will be consistent with the organisation's area of expertise, as defined within the strategic plan.

Designation of Organisation Spokesperson

Who has authority to engage with media?

- CEO and Chairperson of the Board of Directors
- Person delegated responsibility by CEO or Chairperson. This may include a staff member, group convener, regional facilitator.

What are their roles and responsibilities?

- Identify most appropriate approach to engagement with each media inquiry
- Identify QDN's official position and messages to issues of significance or sensitive in nature.
- Provide a voice and position from the perspective of people with disability to increase public understanding and awareness of the issues;
- Increase awareness and understanding of QDN, our work and the inclusion of people with disability within communities;
- Promote a positive image of QDN and our work to promote organizational membership growth and reputation with stakeholders including community, Government and sector peers.

The CEO or Chairperson may delegate the following responsibilities to relevant staff member:

- Cultivating relationships with journalists, field and filter media enquiries, and keep media contact records.
- Drafting or coordination of media releases and statements and coordination of media interviews, media kits and background material; liaison with appropriate staff to coordinate responses to media issues, and alerting senior management to sensitive or controversial media issues relevant to the organisation.

What support is provided to delegated spokesperson?

If the CEO or Chairperson is delegated responsibility to engage with the media on a particular issue, the CEO or Chairperson will work with that individual to assist their preparation for the media engagement as needed. This may include developing talking points as well as coaching, training and practicing for interview.

Procedure

The following procedure outlines the process for engaging with the media.

1. All media enquiries are to be directed to the CEO.
2. Media responses should always be 'on the record'. They will be truthful and accurate, and not include speculation, guesswork or personal opinion. They will not include disparaging comments about other organisations or individuals.
3. Where media statements are required immediately, the CEO will respond. The Chairperson or authorised delegate may also respond to media inquiries following consultation with the CEO.
4. Notify CEO in a timely manner of any likely media events, announcements or issues that may attract media interest.
5. Members, volunteers, and staff must not communicate with media on behalf of the organisation without prior authorisation from the CEO.
6. Where members, staff, volunteers etc receive a media enquiry they will:
 - a. Request the journalist's name, contact details, publication or program deadline (date and topic), and what they are requesting – for example, an attributable quote, statement or background briefing.
 - b. Pass on this information immediately to the CEO.
7. Verbal and/or written consent from any party is sought prior to any photographs, films or interviews for media activities. The CEO or her/his delegate is responsible for seeking this consent.
8. Where a conflict of interest exists, or could be seen to exist, that individual or group will not communicate with the media on the issue in question. If it is not possible to do so they will openly declare the conflict of interest and proactively act in a transparent fashion.