

# Brisbane Networking Group General Policy Document

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## 1. Definitions

In this General Policy Document, words and phrases will have the meaning ascribed to them in the Constitution. The following additional definitions apply to this document:

| <b>Word or Phrase</b> | <b>Meaning</b>   |
|-----------------------|--|
| Act                   | <i>Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Qld)</i>   |
| Applicant             | A person making application for membership of the Association.                                       |
| Constitution          | The constitution for the Brisbane Networking Group as amended from time to time.                     |
| Leadership Team       | The group of Members holding the positions specified in Clause 10 of this General Policy Document    |
| Member                | A member of the Association.   |
| Membership Committee  | The group of Members appointed by the management committee to make decisions as detailed in Policy 9 |
| Policies/Policy       | A policy or policies as contained in this General Policy Document.                                   |
| Referral/s            | A qualified referral passed to a Member of the Association by another Member or a group of Members.  |
| Weekly Meeting        | The meeting of the Association held in accordance with Policy 5.                                     |
| Weekly Meeting Fee    | The fee payable by an Applicant, Member or visitor of the Association for each Weekly Meeting.       |

## 2. Membership

### 2.1 Exclusivity of category

- a. Only one (1) person per business specialty will be permitted to join the Association as a Member.
- b. The Membership Committee shall be responsible for maintaining a list of business specialities for which a Member may be accepted into the Association.
- c. Any dispute in relation to business specialities or the eligibility of an Applicant to hold a business category will be decided by the Membership Committee which will be binding on a Member or Applicant.

### 2.2 Commitment to Association

To ensure Member commitment to the Association, no Member may be a member of another networking group where such the other group is a networking group that restricts the number of members per business specialty.

### 2.3 Membership Fees Payment

- a. For the purpose of clause 8(1) of the Constitution, the management committee declares the membership fees will be payable by a Member:
  - i. upon acceptance of a new application for membership with the Association; and
  - ii. prior to each anniversary of the commencement of a Member's membership with the Association following the outcome of the Membership Committee's process in Policy 2.5 below.

### 2.4 Member Trial Period

- a. Each new Member is subject to a three (3) month trial period. During the trial period, the new Member:
  - i. will not be extended the privilege of being the speaker at the Weekly Meeting;
  - ii. must participate in the Weekly Meeting and other associated activities; and
  - iii. must pass a minimum of two (2) Referrals.
- b. At the end of the trial period, the Membership Committee will determine if the new Member is suitable to continue within the Association.
- c. Should the Membership Committee determine that a new Member is not fit to continue as a Member of the Association pursuant to this policy, the Association will refund the membership application fee (if paid) as soon as possible following the provision of notice terminating the membership under this policy. For clarity, any weekly meeting fees will not be refunded and any unpaid Weekly Meeting fees will be deducted from the membership application fee.

### 2.5 Member renewal process

- a. No later than one (1) month prior to the anniversary of a Member's commencement date, a Member must submit a renewal application to the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will assess the said Member's performance over the previous twelve (12) month period and will conduct a renewal interview to determine if they continue to meet the Associations qualifications for membership.

The Membership Committee must elect to approve or decline the renewal application within two (2) weeks of receiving the renewal application.

- b. For the purpose of this Policy 2.4, clause 10(3) of the Constitution is amended by addition of the following:
  - (e) is deemed by the Membership Committee, acting reasonably, to be consistently failing to meet the obligations of membership for the Association evidenced over the prior twelve (12) month period.

## 2.6 Qualifications for Membership

A Member must:

- a. hold the requisite qualifications and membership required to legally perform or undertake their business and thereby operate within their business specialty; and
- b. be directly responsible for the provision of the services offered by the business specialty.

## 2.7 Restrictions on Attendance

Where a Member's membership fee or Weekly Meeting fees are overdue by more than thirty (30) days, the Member will be prohibited from attending the Weekly Meeting until such time as they bring their account into credit.

## 2.8 Leave of Absence

A Member may take up to eight (8) weeks leave per year for medical reasons with the Membership Committee's prior approval. The Member is responsible for arranging a substitute person to attend the Weekly Meeting in their absence and to ensure all other obligations of membership continue to be met.

## 2.9 Membership Holds

With the prior written approval of the Membership Committee, a Member may request that the Association hold their position for a period of up to two (2) weeks.

## 2.10 Membership transfer policy

- a. Where a Member's position is held on behalf of a company and the company requests to change the business representative, the business must submit a request in writing to the Membership Committee.

- b. The new proposed representative will be treated as a new applicant for the business specialty within the Association and must comply with all rules contained within this document in conjunction with the Constitution.
- c. Acting reasonably, the Membership Committee reserves the right to refuse to grant any transfer request where the new proposed representative does not meet the qualifications for membership.

### **3. Membership Termination**

#### **3.1 Issuing of notices**

Where the Management Committee elects to exercise their right to terminate a Member's membership where the said member has failed to comply with any policy in this General Policy Document or any rule contained within the Constitution, the Management Committee must first issue a warning notice and provide the said Member with no less than fourteen (14) days to remedy the relevant breach.

#### **3.2 Process for termination**

Following the issuance of a warning notice in accordance with this Policy 3, in the event the Member has not attended to rectifying the breach, then the Management Committee shall provide the Member with a written notice stating that their membership is terminated effective immediately in accordance with clause 10 of the Constitution

### **4. Payments**

#### **4.1 Payment of Membership Fees**

For the purpose of clause 8(1) of the Constitution, the management committee declares the membership fees will be payable by a Member:

- a. upon acceptance of a new application for membership with the Association;  
and
- b. prior to each anniversary of the commencement of a Member's membership with the Association following the outcome of the Membership Committee's process in Policy 2.5.

#### **4.2 Other Financial Obligations**

In addition to the membership fees, Members are required to pay the Weekly Meeting Fee. The Weekly Meeting Fee will be invoiced to the Member monthly in advance and must be paid prior to commencement of the calendar month to which it relates.

#### 4.3 Methods of payment

Members must pay any and all fees to the Association using such methods as approved by the Association from time to time.

#### 4.4 Refund policy

The Association will not issue a refund unless a Member is entitled to a refund pursuant to the rules in the Constitution, this General Policy Document or the management committee approves the refund (in its absolute discretion).

### 5. Meetings

#### 5.1 Location and time

The Weekly Meeting will be held at such time and in such location as determined by the management committee from time to time as notified to the Members.

#### 5.2 Attendance requirements

- a. Members are required to:
  - i. attend every Weekly Meeting;
  - ii. arrive on time for the pre-meeting networking; and
  - iii. stay for the entire meeting.
- b. If a Member is unable to adhere to the above requirements on any given week, the Member should notify the President prior to the commencement of the Weekly Meeting. Such notification does not constitute a waiver by the Association of the Members obligations under this General Policy Document or the Constitution.
- c. In addition to any approved period of leave from the Association, each Member is afforded three (3) absences in every rolling six (6) month period. Absences beyond this will result in membership of the Association being reviewed by the Membership Committee.

#### 5.3 Participation requirements

In addition to a Member's attendance at the Weekly Meeting, a Member must:

- a. pass a minimum of two (2) Referrals each calendar month;
- b. meet with a minimum of two (2) other Members each calendar month to learn about their business; and
- c. bring a minimum of one (1) visitor every six (6) months.

#### 5.4 Substitutes

- a. Where a Member is unable to attend a Weekly Meeting, the Member must send a substitute in their place. Where a substitute attends in a Member's place, the non-attendance of the Member will not be recorded as an absence.
- b. Prior to sending a substitute to a Weekly Meeting, the Member must ensure their substitute understands how to conduct themselves at the Weekly Meeting and that they are prepared to present the Member's sixty (60) second summary of the Member's business services and ideal referral.
- c. A Member is not entitled to send a substitute to more than four (4) Weekly Meetings in a rolling six (6) month period.

#### 5.5 Conduct during Weekly Meeting

Members must:

- a. Arrive on time;
- b. Stay for the entire meeting;
- c. be professional and well-mannered towards all other Members and visitors of the Association together with any staff at the venue at which the Weekly Meeting takes place;
- d. limit speaking out of turn to ensure that the meeting can proceed and conclude on time;
- e. limit use of electronic communication devices where such use distracts the Member from participation in the meeting; and
- f. be dressed according to the attire appropriate for their business speciality and attendance at a professional meeting.

#### 5.6 Member Reward Draw

- a. The Member designated as the speaker at the Weekly Meeting must provide, at their cost, a member reward prize.
- b. The member reward prize will be given to the Member randomly selected from the Referral slips deposited at that Weekly Meeting as drawn by the Vice-President or a nominee of the Vice-President.
- c. The member reward prize can be, but is not required to be, reflective of the Member's profession.

#### 5.7 Visitors

- a. Members are required to invite genuine visitors to the Weekly Meeting as often as possible.

- b. A genuine visitor is a person who operates within a profession that does not conflict with an existing Member's category within the Association and is, as far as possible, able to abide by the rules set out in this General Policy Document and the Constitution.
- c. Nothing in this Policy prevents a Member from inviting a visitor where such visitor operates a business of the speciality already represented or partially represented in the Association providing the Member first notifies the existing Member with who the visitor may conflict.

### 5.8 Speakers

- a. The Events Co-ordinator will be responsible for preparing and maintaining the speaker roster for the Weekly Meeting and making it readily available to the Members of the Association.
- b. Members are responsible for diarising the date they are the allocated speaker at the Weekly Meeting and if unable to attend that Weekly Meeting, must make arrangements with another Member to swap their speaking date.
- c. Where a Member fails to attend a Weekly Meeting at which they are the speaker without arranging to swap their speaking date with another Member, they will forfeit their entitlement to speak until their next allocation to speak.
- d. The allocated speaker is further responsible for supplying any equipment and/or materials required for their presentation or arranging for such equipment and/or materials to be available for the presentation.

## 6. Referrals

### 6.1 No obligation to only use Members

Members are not restricted from referring their contacts to businesses or individuals outside Members of the Association.

### 6.2 Quality of Referrals

Members must only pass a Referral to another Member where they have spoken to the Referral and honestly believe that the Referral is looking to engage a business for the supply of goods and/or services offered by the other Member.

### 6.3 Follow up of Referrals



Either the Member who provided or the Member who received a referral may follow up the other Member to check on the status of the referral. To the best of their ability, a Member must provide an update on the referral status. For privacy and confidentiality reasons, a Member is not required to disclose details of work a Referral has engaged a Member to undertake.

#### 6.4 Referral Reality Check

At each Weekly Meeting, the Vice-President will draw, at random, two (2) Referral slips deposited within the previous month. Either the Member who provided or the Member who received the drawn referral must provide a brief update on the status of the Referral. This check is important to ensure quality referrals are being provided and the referrals are being handled appropriately once received.

## 7. Disputes

### 7.1 Member Conflicts

Where a Member takes issue with another Member, the actions of another Member, any Applicant or otherwise has a complaint, the said Member must notify the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will be responsible for receiving and facilitating the resolution of the complaint.

### 7.2 Handling disputes

Save for circumstances that would warrant a different response, the process for handling a dispute is as follows:

- a. Members should seek to resolve any issues with another Member directly with that other Member.
- b. Where a Member is unable to resolve the conflict themselves, the Member must submit their complaint in writing to the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will assess the legitimacy of the complaint and whether it is within the scope of the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will then notify the President. Where a Member on the Membership Committee or the President is the target of the complaint, they will not be involved in any discussions regarding the handling of the complaint.
- c. Provided the complaint is legitimate, all Members involved will be interviewed separately by the Membership Committee to ascertain any missing information and allow each Member to provide their version of events or evidence of the

conflict at hand. The Membership Committee shall then meet to discuss the interviews and decide on a resolution.

- d. The Membership Committee will communicate with all parties and advise of the resolution to be adopted by the Association.

## **8. Management Committee**

### **8.1 Constitution of Management Committee**

Further to clause 18(1) of the Constitution of the Association, the management committee shall consist of the President, the Vice-President, and the Treasurer.

### **8.2 Expenditure Limits/Authorisations**

The management committee is limited to spending any more than \$1,500.00 without the prior consent of the Members taken by vote at a Weekly Meeting.

### **8.3 Designated Sitting Area**

To facilitate easy management of the Weekly Meeting, the management committee and Members will observe the designated seating of the management committee at the head of the room.

### **8.4 Engagement of third-parties**

In furtherance of to the powers extended to the management committee under the Constitution of the Association, the management committee is authorised to engage third-parties including any solicitor, accountant, or auditor and/or do any act required to be transacted or done for or on behalf of the Association and to act upon the advice of such third-party.

## **9. Membership Committee**

### **9.1 Delegation of Responsibility**

The management committee hereby delegates its rights and responsibilities to the Membership Committee for the purpose of clause 9 of the Constitution and the functions contained in this clause 9 of this General Policy Document.

### **9.2 Role of Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee is responsible for:

- a. Assessment of all new membership applications;
- b. Assessment of all renewal applications by existing Members;

- c. Participation and absence tracking of all Members;
- d. Providing progressive coaching to all Members in respect to their participation and/or absence; and
- e. Evaluating and resolving complaints and/or conflicts against or between Members.

### 9.3 Membership of Membership Committee

- a. The Membership Committee consists of two (2) Members and the Vice-President who is to oversee the committee.
- b. A member of the Membership Committee must be a Member of the Association and, with the exception of the Vice-President, must not already be a member of the management committee.
- c. Contemporaneously with the election of the management committee, the Vice President will appoint the Membership Committee from those Members that agreed to join the Membership Committee and will continue in that position until the annual general meeting immediately following their appointment.
- d. Members of the Membership Committee are eligible to be reappointed.

## 10. Other Leadership Roles

### 10.1 Types of positions

The Leadership Team shall consist of the following positions within the Association having the roles as indicated:

| <b>Position</b>              | <b>Description</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|
| President                    | As defined in the Act   |
| Vice-President               | Appointed by the President to assist with operation of the Association and to exercise the delegated authority of the Secretary |
| Treasurer                    | As defined in the Act   |
| Membership Committee Members | Those Members appointed to the Membership Committee   |
| Visitor Host                 | Those Members appointed to greet and deal with Applicants before they become Members of the Association                         |
| Network Education Member     | The Member appointed to provide networking education to the Association at the Weekly Meeting                                   |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Events Co-ordinator            | The Member appointed to maintain the speaker roster for the Weekly Meeting and to co-ordinate any other events for the Association  |
| Digital Marketing Co-ordinator | The Member appointed to handle digital marketing for the Association including the management of any third-party contractors or consultants engaged by the Association for marketing assistance |

## 10.2 Role of Leadership Team

The Leadership Team shall be responsible for operational management of the Association and for guiding the Association in pursuit of the objects of the Association.

## 10.3 Authority of positions

Each of the positions listed in this Policy 10 shall bear the authority of the position as determined from time to time by the management committee, the Constitution and this General Policy Document.

## 10.4 Tenure of Leadership positions

Contemporaneously with the election of the management committee, the positions listed in this Policy 10 will be appointed at the annual general meeting and will continue until the annual general meeting immediately following their appointment. Members appointed to any of the positions on the Leadership Team are eligible to be reappointed to the said position.

# 11. Delegation of Duties

## 11.1 Secretary Delegation

The Secretary of the Association delegates all rights and responsibilities contained in the Constitution capable of delegation to the Vice-President of the Association.

## 11.2 Management Committee Delegation

The management committee of the Association delegates all rights and responsibilities contained in the Constitution capable of delegation to those of the Leadership Team as deemed appropriate by the management committee from time to time.

## 12. Privacy and Intellectual Property

### 12.1 Intellectual Property

Other than with the prior written consent of the management committee, a Member must not use the BNG intellectual property to market, sell, or otherwise promote any product or service.

### 12.2 Information Privacy Policy

*The Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and other privacy legislation applies when the Association collects, uses and discloses information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion (**personal information**). The Members agree that the Association may manage a Members personal information in accordance with the Association's Privacy Policy available on the Association's website as amended from time to time.

### 12.3 Security of Personal Information

The Association will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that personal information is neither unnecessarily disclosed outside the Association nor otherwise used inconsistently with the Associations obligations to you provided for herein.

### 12.4 Collection and use of personal information

All Members authorise the Association to collect and use personal information in the course of marketing the Member as a member of the Association but only to the extent necessary for the Association to market the Member's services. This may includes personal information about the business a Member operates, contact phone numbers and business addresses. If the Association does not collect such personal information, or if a Member or other person does not consent to the Association collecting such information, the Association may not be able to market the Member or their business.