



Advocacy, Lobbying and Endorsement Policy

Communities Creating a Sustainable Canberra

SEE-Change Inc

Approved by SEE-Change Inc Committee February 2014

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1. Introduction

SEE-Change Inc is committed to ensuring that SEE-Change maintains a prominent, respected and influential position within the community, whilst ensuring that there is no conflict of interest for SEE-Change members.

2. Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for SEE-Change Inc when dealing with lobbying and advocacy considerations. This policy intends to inform SEE-Change staff, volunteers and members about lobbying and advocacy issues including the agreed SEE-Change position and requirements for when and what disclaimers should be used.

3. Definitions for this Policy

Advocacy is understood to be the active support of particular causes, proposals or actions. It can involve awareness raising, education and communication.

Lobbying is a particular kind of advocacy that seeks to influence, persuade or put pressure on public officials.

Endorsement of products or services is to give public approval or support of it.

4. SEE-Change Position on Advocacy, Lobbying and Endorsement

SEE-Change is an advocate for reducing Canberra's ecological footprint, and enabling communities to create a sustainable Canberra for the wellbeing of all. Much of the work in SEE-Change is about advocating positive social change to meet these goals. SEE-Change is not a lobby group and therefore advocates through awareness raising and supporting individual and community-level activities rather than directly lobbying for or against particular policies and legislation.

SEE-Change advocacy is focused on creating holistic shared views through:

- Building trust and relationships with the community and/or government
- Educating and informing the community and/or government
- Establishing strategic partnerships with the community and/or government

This could be achieved by:

- Using communication and media to inform and educate the community and/or government
- Writing submissions to inform government consultation processes
- Having meetings and discussions with key stakeholders

SEE-Change forms partnerships with other organisations, private businesses and government departments and agencies. Sometimes these partnerships give members access to exclusive or discounted products and services, which could be interpreted as product or service endorsement. In each of these cases SEE-Change will state clearly that members are responsible for doing their own product and service research to meet their individual requirements, and SEE-Change involvement is not to be interpreted as product endorsement or recommendation.

5. Rights and Responsibilities

SEE-Change staff, volunteers, members and other persons involved with SEE-Change can expect to have the following rights:

- Individuals have the right to express their own opinions, views and ideas.
- Individuals have the right to have their opinions, views and ideas respected by others.
- Individuals have the right to engage in lobbying with other organisations.

All persons involved with SEE-Change have the following responsibilities:

- To respect the opinion, views and ideas of others.
- When representing SEE-Change individuals must make clear when they are expressing their own personal opinion, view or idea, as opposed to a SEE-Change agreed opinion, view or idea.
- If asked to support or promote a particular issue that aligns with the SEE-Change mission but could be viewed as lobbying, SEE-Change will promote the issue with the following disclaimer:
 - *Please note: This is being provided for informational purposes. It does not represent a SEE-Change agreed opinion, view or idea and SEE-Change does not warrant or guarantee the currency, accuracy or completeness of information provided.*

5. Breach of Privacy and Confidentiality

If a breach of this policy is identified, the person responsible may be subject to disciplinary proceedings as outlined in the SEE-Change *Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy*. For more serious breaches, their involvement with SEE-Change may be terminated immediately at the discretion of the Executive Officer.

6. Review of Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually by the Executive Officer or a person designated by the Executive Officer. It should be reviewed in relation to any internal changes within SEE-Change since the last review and updated if necessary. Any changes should be confirmed by the Committee.