

Communications policy

1. Introduction

U3AC recognises that consistent, effective and appropriate communications – both external (public) and internal (members) – are essential for the organisation to achieve its aims and objectives as an independent charitable organisation and in order to maintain its reputation with its members, potential members and the wider public. External and internal communications are an intrinsic part of strategic and business planning.

This policy outlines the principles for managing communications, including a summary of key strands of communications, and the responsibilities of trustees and office staff in relation to communications. It is important that trustees and staff are familiar with it.

2. Scope

The principle aims of the Communications policy are:

- to clarify the role of communications in relation to U3AC's objectives under its Constitution;
- to ensure that trustees and staff are aware of how communications are best conducted externally and internally;
- to detail lines of responsibility in relation to communications.

3. Definitions

External communications include all messages and information that U3AC presents to various public audiences, including the media, in order to:

- create awareness of U3AC and what it offers;
- promote the U3AC brand;
- campaign for new members.

Internal communications include all of the messages and information shared between the U3AC organisation and its members, including volunteers.

4. Statement of principles

The objective of the Communications policy is to guide U3AC in achieving a better understanding of what it offers to the public and its members by:

- improving the clarity with which the values and identity of U3AC are expressed;
- promoting transparent and open communication;
- providing clear and well-judged information at the most appropriate level of detail in relation to the needs of the intended audience.

Principles for managing external communications

External communications involve U3AC undertaking promotion and advocacy by means of the following:

- the distribution of high-quality information about the organisation and its programmes of activity that ensure potential members and public media are kept well informed;

- the provision of organisational and background information – principally through the website;
- the use of a clear, coherent and consistent visual identity that reflects U3AC’s key values in all its print and digital communications.

Principles for managing internal communications

Internal communications involve active management to ensure that:

- members are regularly informed of important, up-to-date information relating to U3AC’s activities and governance;
- all communications with members, through mail, e-mail, meetings, surveys and telephone calls are thoughtful, respectful, efficient and well disciplined;
- the efficacy of internal communications is periodically measured through a member survey.

5. Responsibilities

Chair

The Chair has overall responsibility for the Communications policy as follows:

- ensuring, in conjunction with the Marketing Officer, that the Communication policy is followed by trustees and staff and is consistent with other U3AC policies;
- encouraging trustees to help promote U3AC through consistent external communication;
- to that end, encouraging trustees to familiarise themselves with all U3AC activities and to refer complex or difficult external questions to the Chair.

Marketing Officer

The Marketing Officer is responsible for the management of all external communications as follows:

- with the Chair, and in line with the Marketing policy, ensuring the overall clarity and coherence of the U3AC’s external communications;
- ensuring that U3AC’s visual identity is consistently applied to all external communications;
- Liaising with staff to ensure the appropriate implementation of marketing plans;
- actively seeking opportunities for good advocacy in order to promote the interests of U3AC.

Approved by Council: 31 October 2023

Next review date: October 2025