

ETHICAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



1. Scope

Sight For All uses images, videos, stories and case studies in a variety of communication and promotional materials. Such materials are used to describe Sight For All's projects and their impact, to raise awareness of the organisation's vision and activities, for fundraising and marketing purposes, for research activities and to provide general information about vision impairment, blindness and eye health.

Images, videos, stories and case studies feature Fellows and project participants who are direct project beneficiaries. They also feature patients and their families who are indirect beneficiaries of Sight For All projects.

This Ethical Communications Policy sets the standard for transparent and responsible communication practices. The policy, along with Sight For All's Informed Consent Procedure, Ethical Decision-Making Framework (contained as Appendix A), Fundraising Policy and Privacy Policy outline the requirements and processes to be followed to ensure informed consent, to respect an individual's privacy, to provide an accurate representation of the circumstances and to maintain cultural sensitivity.

This Policy applies to Sight For All staff, Visionaries, Fellows, project participants, consultants and volunteers who collect images and stories when representing Sight For All.

The Sight For All Board of Directors has responsibility for approving this Policy and the associated Ethical Decision-Making Framework on a biannual basis.

2. Purpose

Sight For All's Ethical Communications policy exists to ensure that:

- Information disseminated is accurate, truthful and timely.
- Images, videos, stories and case studies that are collected and shared are done so in line with this Policy, the Ethical Decision-Making Framework and other key policies such as the Informed Consent Procedure, Privacy Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Human Rights Policy and Child and Young Person Protection Policy.
- Images, videos, stories and case studies that are shared portray individuals and their communities in respectful ways to deliver the commitments outlined in this policy.
- A racial justice lens and human rights based approach is applied in collecting stories and case studies, taking images and videos, and how they are used.

3. Commitment

Sight For All is committed to capturing and sharing information and images of direct and indirect beneficiaries of Australian and international projects that respect the dignity, values, culture, circumstances and history of the individuals portrayed. Sight For All collects images and stories in compliance with the Australian Council for International Development's (ACFID) Code of Conduct and Fundraising Charter.

Sight For All commits to ensuring informed consent is provided for all images and stories. Where informed consent is not provided, the image or story will not be used or shared.

Sight For All commits to being transparent in its operations and in sharing of information publicly. As such, Sight For All strives to ensure that stakeholders and the broader community are provided with relevant, timely and accurate information that is sourced ethically and is presented in accessible formats.

Sight For All commits to ensuring that the collection of information, images and stories do not harm people or the environment.

4. Informed Consent

Informed consent is when an individual agrees to being photographed, filmed or having their personal story shared after they have been provided with clear information about the possible use and implications of publishing the material. The process that Sight For All follows in collecting and recording real, prior and informed consent is outlined in the organisation's Informed Consent Procedure.

In gathering consent from an individual to use their image, story or that of their child or family member, Sight For All representatives must provide enough information to them so that they can make well informed decisions without experiencing any pressure to commit to their image being taken or story being shared.

All Sight For All representatives and contracted videographers/photographers are required to follow the 'Process for Collection of Informed Consent' as outlined in the Informed Consent Procedure in the collection of all images, videos, stories and case studies.

Use of the Ethical Decision-Making Framework (attached to this policy as Appendix A) is also to be referenced to provide guidance.

5. Types of Material

Images, videos, stories and case studies are produced in a variety of formats. This includes:

- Printed promotional brochures, specific campaign brochures, information sheets
- Documentaries and film production – more commonly undertaken by professional filmmakers
- Website material containing organisational information, case studies, project details
- Social media activities including posts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
- Marketing campaigns and appeals
- Presentations at gatherings, events, conferences or community groups
- Displays at expos and congresses
- Event-based promotional material.

Community Eye Health Education Materials

Sight For All's Community Eye Health Education Program (Australia) and International Eye Health Awareness projects contain written content shared via posters and brochures and verbal presentations to eye health workers and community groups. The material is created with guidance and approval from Australian and international eye health professionals to ensure ophthalmic and optometric content is accurate. Sight For All's General Manager and Australian Projects Manager participate in the development of such material to ensure compliance with this policy, the Ethical Decision-Making Framework, the Informed Consent Procedure and the ACFID Fundraising Charter.

6. Images and Story Guidance

Representatives who collect images, videos, stories and case studies are required to take a risk based approach that:

- Ensures images are an honest representation of the facts and context
- Ensures photographs, films, videos and stories of people (including children and young people) portray the individual, and their story and experience in an honest and respectful manner
- Ensures images, films, stories and case studies portray the diversity of local people including age, disability and other marginalised groups
- Does not manipulate the story or image in a way that embellishes or exaggerates Sight For All's impact or portrays people in a pitiful way
- Does not take, create or share images of children where they are not adequately clothed or in poses that could be deemed as sexually suggestive
- Does not include any identifying information of children or young people, including their full name, community or school name

- Ensures images and stories portray individuals in activities that reflect their daily lives
- Ensures images and stories accurately convey the context and complexity of the situations in which local people live
- Ensures images of people in vulnerable situations focus on the reasons for and context of a situation, rather than the person's suffering
- Considers that images should not be altered or significantly changed
- Ensures that direct quotes are not edited or changed significantly after they have been obtained, to alter meaning and context
- Honestly portrays the diversity of local people, including age, disability and other marginalised groups
- Ensures recording of the origins of images and case studies, with the attached consent form along with details such as name, age, image location, date image collected, associated project
- Uses Sight For All's file name process to ensure that the document labels do not identify the information about the person
- Ensures a safe repository for images and stories as outlined in the Informed Consent Procedure
- Ensures geo-tags (geographical identifiable meta data) are turned off on the camera when taking images
- Follows the guidance outlined in the Informed Consent Procedure regarding the use of historical images
- Follows the approval protocol to ensure that photos and stories follow the Ethical Decision-Making Framework, attached to this Policy as Appendix A.

7. Sharing of Confronting Images and Stories

The nature of the work undertaken by Sight For All results in there being some cases where photographs or videos of an adult or child can be medically graphic or can demonstrate surgical procedures. These images can be confronting, and their use requires careful consideration and sensitivity. When images of this nature have been identified, their reproduction and use require approval by the Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair, who may also instigate discussion with the Board of Directors and Marketing Committee.

In all cases, the Ethical Communications Policy and Ethical Decision-Making Framework must be followed.

8. ACFID Fundraising Charter

As a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Sight For All adheres to the ACFID Code of Conduct. As a signatory to the Code, Sight For All also adheres to the ACFID Fundraising Charter. Having a clear, ethical decision-making framework in place that aligns with organisational values and the ACFID Code of Conduct is a requirement of adhering to the ACFID Fundraising Charter. This particularly includes:

- A commitment to portraying affected people in a way that respects their dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture
- A process that integrates a range of key staff in the organisation (e.g.: communications, project management, child protection and the General Manager) in decision making where appropriate
- Clear responsibilities for approval for public use of images and messages
- A process which recognises and balances both donors and affected people, but which gives primacy to the primary stakeholders.

The means by which Sight For All adheres to the ACFID Fundraising Charter is demonstrated via this Ethical Communications Policy, the Ethical Decision-Making Framework (Appendix A), the Fundraising Policy and the Informed Consent Procedure.

9. Complaints about Promotional Materials

Sight For All's Complaints Handling Policy is available on the Sight For All website, along with fact sheets about how to make a complaint translated into various languages.

Individuals wishing to make a complaint about promotional material (including content) can do so following the mechanisms outlined in this policy. This includes making a complaint to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee should the complaint be related to the Code and unresolved by Sight For All. Sight For All's Operations Manager is the nominated Communications Focal Person and Privacy Officer.

10. Privacy

Sight For All's Privacy Policy outlines the way in which an individual's personal information is collected and managed to protect their privacy. The Privacy Policy is available on the Sight For All website.

11. Related Documents

- Appendix A – Ethical Decision-Making Framework
- Sight For All Child & Young Person Protection Policy
- Sight For All Code of Conduct Policy
- Sight For All Complaints Handling Policy
- Sight For All Fundraising Policy
- Sight For All Informed Consent Procedure
- Sight For All Privacy Policy
- Sight For All Transparency Policy
- ACFID Code of Conduct
- ACFID Fundraising Charter

12. Review

The Sight For All Ethical Communications Policy is reviewed biennially.

Sight For All Ethical Communications Policy
Approved by the Board of Directors
Version 2

Document Revision History		
Document Name	Version #	Date Approved
Published Material Quality Assurance Procedure	1	17 October 2016
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Published Material Quality Assurance Procedure	3	17 November 2020
Published Material Quality Assurance Procedure	4	14 September 2021
Ethical Communications Policy	1	18 February 2025
Ethical Communications Policy	2	24 February 2026

APPENDIX A



Ethical Decision-Making Framework

Sight For All's Ethical Decision-Making Framework is designed to ensure our communications are of the highest ethical standard. Through this Framework, our project beneficiaries, indirect beneficiaries and stakeholders are protected and respected, and trust in our organisation is maintained.

The Sight For All Ethical Decision-Making Framework is in place to ensure we are using best practice methods of communication that minimise the risks related to sharing and publishing stories and images.

As outlined in our Human Rights Policy, Sight For All is committed to a human rights approach in all undertakings, based on the principle that every person is equal in dignity and rights.

Sight For All's values are respect, sustainability, collaboration, equity and excellence. These values relate to our process for collecting and sharing stories and images and ensuring the storage is in line with our Privacy Policy.

Sight For All's values are aligned with the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct and our suite of policies and procedures, namely:

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Child and Young Person Protection Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Disability Inclusion Policy
- Fundraising Policy
- Gender Equality Policy
- Human Resources Policy
- Human Rights Policy
- Informed Consent Procedure
- Privacy Policy
- Transparency Policy
- Vulnerable Persons Code of Conduct

Sight For All's Ethical Decision-Making Framework for ethical communications uses a framework of structured discussions to be undertaken at ethically important moments during the storytelling process and has the aim of creating focused discussions that improve practice. The framework also aims to protect those who agree to share their images and stories, and to reduce the risk associated with storytelling.

Sight For All's Ethical Decision-Making Framework outlines important questions to be asked, when these questions need to be asked and who has responsibility for asking them. Furthermore, the framework articulates who makes the final decision when particularly disturbing content may be considered to share.

Sight For All's Organisational Risk Register includes the potential risk of not adhering to this Policy, the Informed Consent Procedure and the ACFID Fundraising Charter to ensure individuals (children and adults) who are featured in images, videos, stories and case studies are kept safe. Additional and separate identified risks regarding child and young person protection and a cyber attack are outlined in the Organisational Risk Register, along with identified consequences and mitigation strategies. Sight For All's Organisational Risk Register is reviewed at each meeting of the Finance, Risk, Remuneration, Audit and Compliance Committee (FRRACC) and the Risk Management Heat Map at each Board meeting.

Six Key Ethical Issues to be considered and discussed as part of the Ethical Decision-Making Framework:

1. Connection to values

Does the story convey Sight For All's values of respect, collaboration, sustainability, equity and excellence?

Have we put the best interests of the individual first?

If we share the story, will the individual(s) be empowered?

If we share the story, will the individual(s) feel respected by themselves and others?

Have we protected individuals (children and adult's) rights to dignity and equality?

Have we considered how women or girls or other minority groups have been portrayed?

Have we carefully considered how people with a disability are portrayed?

Have we carefully considered how indigenous people are portrayed?

Will the content of the material be accessible for people with a disability?

2. Protection

Have we ensured a 'Do not harm' approach throughout the process?

Have we adequately protected children?

If we share the story will the individual(s) be safe?

Could the individual's life, health, dignity be put at risk by sharing the story?

Are there any special protection needs for individuals (considering gender and disability)?

3. Informed Consent

Have we followed the requirements of the Informed Consent Procedure?

Have we ensured the content is accurate?

Have we given enough information to the individual so that they can decide whether to consent to participate?

Have we shown the individual appropriate examples of how their story or image might be used (including where it may be published and who might see it?)

Have we consulted with the right people (guardians, parents or community elders)?

Is consent in place?

4. Privacy

Has consent been correctly stored and file named following the Informed Consent Procedure?

Has Sight For All's Privacy Policy been adhered to?

5. Authorship and Ownership

Have we given the individual control over the portrayal of their identity and thoughts/views?

Who owns the copyright of the storytelling content, including the use of third parties?

Are there any unconscious biases that may affect the collection of stories and images?

What are the moral responsibilities of the content creator?

6. Fuzzy Boundaries

What are the different roles of those involved in the development of the story/case study?

Does everyone involved understand their role and others' expectations of them?

How do we respond to any blurred roles and relationships during the development of the story/case study?

How do we ensure third parties (i.e.: contracted filmmakers) understand our process?