

Terms of reference – Advocacy Forum

Ratified August 2021 by AVA board

Preamble

A (National) Advocacy Forum is a representative body that advises the Advocacy Advisory Committee (AAC) on advocacy issues.

Functions

The Advocacy Forum:

- Provides input into the AVA annual advocacy plan and priorities.
- Provides a forum for interaction between AVA SIGs and Divisions.
- Identifies emerging issues
- Provides other feedback to AAC on request.

Scope

The Advocacy Forum informs the AVA Voice on advocacy issues that are important to members and assists in communicating advocacy activity to members.

Membership

The Advocacy Forum is made up of the AAC and representatives of each of the Divisions and SIGs, includes:

- AAC
- Board representative
- ‘Advocacy Representatives’ from all Divisions and SIGs
- AVA staff
 - Head of Veterinary and Public Affairs
 - National Manager Advocacy
 - National Manager Policy & Vet Science

Chairing

The Forum will be chaired by the Chair of AAC.

Meetings

The Forum will meet on a quarterly basis. Meetings will generally take between 60-90 minutes.

Appointment process

Representatives of each SIG and Division shall be appointed by their respective Group.

Staff and AAC members shall hold their positions on an ex officio basis.

Term

Three years (with potential of reappointment for up to three consecutive terms)

Staff

National Manager, Advocacy & Campaigns

Approval Process

NA

Responsibility of Members

Members of the Advocacy Forum are responsible to:

- Comply with the AVA Code conduct
- Attend and participate in meetings, being prepared for meetings.
- Be responsive to requests for feedback outside meeting times.
- Declare conflicts of interest
- Represent Division or SIG advocacy interests and communicate back to their member – bidirectional conduit

Confidentiality

Generally, the Forum proceedings will be open to the AVA Membership. Where specific discussions or correspondence needs confidentiality, Forum members will be made aware of this and expected to respect that confidentiality.

Managing Conflict of interest

Conflicts of interests could be described as facts that, when revealed later, could make a reasonable person feel misled or deceived. An important concept is that there does not have to be an actual conflict for a reasonable person to feel misled or deceived. A perception of a potential conflict can be sufficient to be a conflict of interest.

These interests may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial, and may be “material” or “perceived”. In either event, members of the Forum must declare any interest before joining the group. Minor or perceived conflicts of interest may be managed by the relevant member withdrawing from decisions directly related to their conflict. More material conflicts of interest may mean that the proposed member cannot join, or must withdraw permanently from the Forum should such a conflict arise subsequently.

