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Governance Information for Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee Roles

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Good governance is a skill anyone can learn!

Scarlet Executive Committee Is made up of the following positions:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, 2 General Members (and CEO with no voting powers)

Non Voting Observers: President Double, Vice President Double, Secretary Double, Treasurer Double, 2 General Member Doubles

The Executive Committee is the governance committee of Scarlet Alliance.

The Scarlet Alliance Annual General Meeting (AGM) occurs once a year and is the most important decision making body of the organisation. During the rest of the year there is a Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee that is delegated the responsibility to make governance decisions for the organisation and is accountable to the membership. The National Forum and the voting membership are at the top of the Scarlet Alliance governance structure.

Key Criteria for Executive Committee Members:

- Sex work experience.
- Sound knowledge or willingness to gain knowledge of national sex worker issues and Scarlet Alliance policies.
- Interest in the sex worker rights movement in Australia and an understanding of issues affecting sex worker communities.

Governance Role:

All Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee members are responsible for the governance of the organisation. This includes contributing to:

- Strategic planning
- Strategic steering
- Providing financial oversight
- Risk management
- Delegations
- Organisational policies & procedures
- Managing conflicts of interest
- Complaint resolution
- External relationships, advocacy, representative & marketing

Decision Making

Decisions made by the Scarlet Alliance Executive rely on the group reaching a consensus. This means the issue is discussed and the group finds a position where shared agreement can be reached.

Doubles

The Doubles roles are twinned to a position on the Executive Committee (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and two General Members) and are elected positions. The Doubles step-up into vacant positions through pre-negotiating schedules with Executive Committee members, or when an Executive Committee Member is away or a position is vacant. Doubles have the opportunity to observe the E-list decision making process and attend certain teleconferences and meetings. Doubles are provided with orientation and opportunities to develop governance skills through discussion, observation, participation and chances to “step up” into positions on the Executive Committee. Doubles being able to step up and down means that members of the Executive Committee can be a bit more flexible and share workloads or tasks. Doubles may step up for three months of the year, or they might just step up one month but provide input through their counterpart on the Executive Committee, or participate in a Executive Committee working group on a particular task, such as re-credentialing or organising a specific event or body of work. The doubles positions also allow people with knowledge and experience of the Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee, or sex worker organising/governance in general, to be involved, mentor others and share their skills, even if they do not have the capacity to commit to a position on the Executive for the whole year.

Communication

There are a variety of systems of communication that allow distribution of information and forums for decisions to be made.

Executive Email List

A Yahoo Groups email list is the main method of communication, decision making and approvals.

Decisions on many issues are made via email where possible. The Executive members are required to reply to the emails as soon as possible- often adding track changes to documents, providing feedback or asking questions with an aim to make consensus decisions within a 2 week turn around.

All Executive Committee members are required to dedicate ten hours per week to Scarlet Alliance governance responsibilities on the E-list. This means 10 hours a week monitoring and contributing to the E-list, but in addition you may also need to do work to support you making decisions on the E-list. E.g. phone conversations/skype/meeting up with other exec members and reading/editing documents or doing background reading. You may also need to attend external meetings to undertake representation or advocacy; this is in addition to the ten hours contribution to the Executive E-list.

Teleconferences

The Executive Committee holds monthly teleconferences (1.5 hours) and these are generally hosted within weekday office hours.

Face to Face Meetings

Scarlet Alliance holds quarterly face to face Executive Committee meetings. These are usually either two or three weekdays in a row at the office in Sydney.

There is currently a budget towards covering flights and accommodation for Executive Members travelling from interstate or regional NSW.

Conflict of Interest

Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee members must announce a conflict of interest prior to a discussion or decision or at any point that a conflict arises. The remaining Executive Committee members will then determine whether the conflict is such that the person cannot be expected to make a fair and unbiased decision – in which case the person will leave the decision making forum (room or call etc) until after the decision is made.

Confidentiality

Executive members and doubles will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement which covers both the period of time they are an Executive Committee Member and after that time.

Staff

Executive committee members are not responsible for the direct supervision or management of staff.

Representation Roles

When a Scarlet Alliance Executive Committee member represents the organisation: as part of a working party or committee; at a meeting or conference; during a teleconference; by providing training; during a media interview or by writing an article or editorial, the person must clearly articulate that they are a Scarlet Alliance representative and explain who the organisation is and its contact details.

All Scarlet Alliance Executive members who represent Scarlet Alliance must report back to the Executive Committee in a timely manner.

Sitting Fees

Executive committee members are able to claim per diems for face to face meetings and sitting fees for each quarter over the year. This amount is a contribution toward the costs of participation for executive committee members (internet access, printer costs, etc).

Readings to get you prepared for the role.

The Scarlet Alliance website will provide you with access to a range of documents that will help you to gain some background and understanding of the organisation.

Recommended readings include:

History

You can find this at <http://www.scarletalliance.org.au/who/history>

Objectives

You can find this at <http://www.scarletalliance.org.au/object/>

Scarlet Alliance constitution

You can find this document at <http://www.scarletalliance.org.au/who/constitution-2003>