



Policy - Making Decisions Online

1. Purpose

In line with best practice for the governance of charities, important decisions affecting the Guild will always be made in full consultation with the Board of Directors. Usually, such decisions will be put to the Board at a planned meeting and supported by background paper(s), a set of options, risks, outcomes and a recommendation. Because of the relative infrequency of Board meetings, it is inevitable that the need to make a key decision outside the meeting cycle will arise. With Board members spread geographically very widely, the only way such decisions can practicably be made is via email. This short document sets out the framework for making such decisions.

2. Key Decisions

Examples of decisions that would fall within this framework might include:

- Commitment to a new contractual arrangement;
- Commitment to a new partnership;
- Award of a new grant or increase to an agreed grant;
- Procurement of an item or items for the Collection (pending a new acquisitions policy);
- Response to a legal challenge or issue;
- Response to a serious reputational challenge or issue;
- Response to a significant staffing/volunteer/partner issue.

There will be other examples, but almost all will involve some form of risk to the Guild, financial, reputational, legal or operational.

3. The Process

Directors will decide either via discussion with a colleague or the Master when a key online decision is necessary. The reason for requesting a decision will be set out in an email headed ONLINE DECISION REQUIRED. The email will:

1. Set out the issue
2. Set out the opportunities/risks
3. Set out the potential outcomes
4. Set out any options
5. Make a recommendation for a preferred option
6. Give a realistic deadline for response

4. Further Considerations

- The email will go to the Administrator or, in his/her absence, the Membership and Communications Officer to ensure centralised circulation and tracking of responses

UNLESS the decision concerns a staffing issue in which case the responsible Director will circulate with the approval of the Master/Deputy Master;

- The 'reply to all' option should not be used in voting;
- The Administrator will collate responses and feedback the majority decision (beginning with the Director who had requested the decision);
- A Director may request a conference call. This will be facilitated by the Director/staff member with conference call facilities (if available);
- Editable documents will be available online via the shared Google drive.

5. The Decision

A simple majority will determine the outcome which, with the approval of the Master/Deputy Master, will be communicated to the Board by the Administrator/ Membership and Communications Officer. In the event of a tied vote the Master/Deputy Master will have the casting vote. Failure to respond within the deadline will be deemed an abstention. **All online decisions will be logged in the minutes of the next planned Board meeting.**

NB: Directors will have access to the full Board email distribution list. This comes with every formal notification from the Administrator and the list should be saved individually by each Board member as a 'group' on their preferred email account.

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