



ISLANDS TRUST FUND

TRUST FUND BOARD POLICY

Policy number: 3.3

Title: Relationships with External Groups Policy

Approved By: Trust Fund Board
Revised

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PURPOSE

To clarify various aspects regarding how the Trust Fund Board will develop and maintain relationships with the external groups with whom it works.

SCOPE

This policy will help to guide interactions with external groups. Internal relationships are guided by *TFB Policy 3.5. Policy on Consulting Trust Council, Local Trust Committees, Island Municipalities, and Local Trustees on Trust Fund Board Matters*. Separate policies are also in place for communications related to covenant and acquisition projects, *TFB Policy 3.2 Communicating Information Regarding Covenant and Acquisition Projects*, and communications occurring through partnership for a property acquisition, *TFB Policy 3.4 Trust Fund Board Role in Partnership Acquisition Projects*.

DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

“Advocacy” is the act of influencing and/or seeking cooperation with other agencies and decision-makers about laws, regulations, policies, programs, budgets, priorities, and other decisions relevant to the Islands Trust mandate.

“Object of the Islands Trust” is to preserve and protect the Islands Trust area and its unique amenities and environment in cooperation with others, as defined in the *Islands Trust Act*.

BACKGROUND

The Islands Trust Fund works collaboratively with other agencies and individuals to promote conservation in the Islands Trust area. Staff and Board members participate regularly in

partnerships with various levels of government, non-profit organizations, community groups and other agencies to further preservation of nature in the Islands Trust area. The Trust Fund Board wishes to maintain good communications with other agencies working in the region and has created policy 3.3 to identify methods for maintaining good relationships.

POLICY

General

1. Trust Fund Board members and Islands Trust Fund staff will conduct activities in a manner that enhances the Islands Trust Fund's reputation as an organization that works proactively, constructively and collaboratively to advance the Object of the Islands Trust, as described in the Islands Trust Fund Board Five-Year Plan, in an informed, organized, respectful, and transparent way.

Correspondence

2. All written communications from the Trust Fund Board or Islands Trust Fund should be on the official ITF letterhead.
3. Correspondence addressed to the Trust Fund Board or Board Chairperson will be copied to the Chairperson and where the Chairperson deems it necessary, will be added to the next regular meeting agenda for Board reference.
4. The positions expressed and requests made in correspondence from staff of the Islands Trust Fund should be consistent with decisions and/or policies of the TFB.
5. Use of Islands Trust Fund letterhead by the Trust Fund Board should be restricted to the TFB Chairperson and positions expressed and requests made in correspondence from the Chairperson of the Trust Fund Board should be consistent with decisions and/or policies of the TFB.
6. Letters drafted by staff for the TFB Chairperson should be sent only after review and approval of the TFB Chairperson or another TFB member delegated by the Chairperson.
7. Letters drafted by the Chairperson should be sent only after review as to their suitability and content by the Islands Trust Fund Manager or another staff delegated by the Manager.
8. When the subject matter of a piece of correspondence relate directly to the interests of Trust Council, a Local Trust Committee, and/or another agency or organization, that correspondence will be copied to the Trust Council Chairperson; the applicable Local Trust Committee; the applicable Islands Trust Directors, and Managers or Coordinators within Islands Trust; and to any relevant representatives of external agencies or organizations.
9. Generally, correspondence to the Trust Fund Board will be followed-up on within one week of receipt. Such follow-up should include a phone call to indicate the correspondence has been directed to the Board Chairperson for the next regular meeting of the Board and a written response within a week of the Board's direction.

Information Sharing

10. The Islands Trust Fund commissions studies and mapping inventories from time to time. These reports and inventories will be made publicly available provided they do not relate to any confidential negotiations or projects. Where data is being shared, Islands Trust data sharing agreements will be used.
11. Where information or mapping has been obtained that guides land securement, Islands Trust Fund staff will:
 - only share information with external agencies in closed meetings for the purpose of advancing conservation initiatives; and
 - only share information verbally or through map displays that are retained by Islands Trust Fund staff, i.e. no hard copy or digital information will be provided to external agencies.
12. If an external agency requests that the Trust Fund Board share confidential information or mapping developed for the purpose of guiding land securement, the Trust Fund Board will require a reciprocal sharing of equally relevant information from that agency. If the agency is unable to provide a reciprocal sharing of information, staff will request a resolution from the Trust Fund Board prior to sharing information outlining the request and the perceived benefit(s) of sharing the information.

Advocacy

13. The Trust Fund Board will ensure that its advocacy positions are consistent with the Islands Trust Fund Board Five-Year Plan and Islands Trust Policy 6.10.iii and are supported by a resolution of the Trust Fund Board. Advocacy letters from the Trust Fund Board to elected officials will be signed by a Trust Fund Board member.
14. When practical, the Trust Fund Board will coordinate its advocacy efforts with the Executive Committee so that related issues can be advanced strategically.
15. When the Trust Fund Board is involved in advocacy work related to Trust Council activities or interests or the activities or interests of local trust committees it will notify the Director of Trust Area Services or the appropriate Regional Planning Manager, and as appropriate, work with Islands Trust staff to prepare briefing and decision documents for Trust Council or the relevant local trust committee.
16. The Trust Fund Board will consider the impact on existing work programs when considering advocacy positions.
17. If the Trust Fund Board wishes to advocate on an issue overlapping with the jurisdiction of another Islands Trust body or island municipality, it may consult with the affected body. After considering the advice of that body it may take an independent position consistent with the object of the Islands Trust, and will inform the affected body of the position.

Social Media

18. Islands Trust Fund staff will engage with other organizations on Social Media according to the Islands Trust Fund Social Media Guidelines.

Relationship with Government

19. As deemed appropriate by the Trust Fund Board, the Board will work with other groups to encourage the federal, provincial, regional, municipal and First Nations governments to improve incentives for private land conservation through the establishment and improvement of government programs and tax incentives.
20. The Trust Fund Board, as deemed necessary by the Board, will meet with provincial or federal political representatives to request assistance with conservation related projects within the Islands Trust area.
21. The Islands Trust Fund staff will work to establish and maintain good working relationships with government representatives in the fields of conservation and land protection.
22. All new programs or projects undertaken by the TFB involving a government agency should be communicated to the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Trust Area Services and periodic updates will thereafter be provided as the work evolves.
23. If timely responses (i.e. within one month of date of correspondence or request) are not forthcoming from government representatives with whom the Trust Fund Board is working on a project, the Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Trust Area Services will be asked to intervene.
24. The Islands Trust Fund will acknowledge all government partners in conservation projects undertaken by the Board when preparing public announcements and media releases.

Relationships with Conservation Organizations

25. The Trust Fund Board and staff will foster positive communications with local, regional, provincial, and national land conservation organizations and community groups in order to encourage land stewardship and positive working relationships within the Islands Trust Area.
26. The Trust Fund Board will meet with the Boards of Islands Trust area conservancies regularly, subject to opportunity and available resources.
27. Where possible, the Trust Fund Board will initiate or participate in joint ventures with other conservation organizations within the Islands Trust area.
28. The Trust Fund Board will assist conservation and community groups working in the Islands Trust area, by sharing its experience and expertise; providing organizational or technical assistance; organizing or participating in conservation-related workshops; and providing information on land stewardship, subject to Board, staff and resource availability.
29. The Islands Trust Fund will recognize all official project partners in public announcements and media releases.

Relationships with Landowners

30. The Islands Trust Fund will respond to landowner enquiries in a timely manner and provide additional information as appropriate in response to landowner questions.

31. The Islands Trust Fund staff will work to maintain good working relationships with landowners who are working with the Board on conservation and land protection projects.
32. Landowners who donate conservation covenants or land will be acknowledged and thanked by the Trust Fund Board in an appropriate manner upon completion of a project.
33. The Trust Fund Board will invite landowners who have made significant donations to the Islands Trust Fund to special events that it may organize from time to time.

REFERENCES

Islands Trust Act

Islands Trust Fund Five-Year Plan

TFB Policy 3.2 Communicating Information Regarding Covenant and Acquisition Projects

TFB Policy 3.4 Trust Fund Board Role in Partnership Acquisition Projects

TFB Policy 3.5 Policy on Consulting Trust Council, Local Trust Committees, Island Municipalities, and Local Trustees on Trust Fund Board Matters

Trust Council Policy 6.10.iii Advocacy Policy

Trust Fund Board Social Media Guidelines