

# Impartiality Policy

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation  
<https://www.trusteacms.in/feedback>



## 1. Purpose

trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation is committed to maintaining impartiality, independence, transparency, and integrity in all its certification, assurance, assessment, and related activities.

The Foundation recognizes that impartiality is essential to maintaining the credibility, reliability, and confidence of stakeholders in the trustea certification and assurance system.

This Policy establishes trustea's commitment to identifying, assessing, monitoring, and managing risks related to conflicts of interest and threats to impartiality in accordance with applicable accreditation requirements and international good practices.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all trustea certification, assurance, assessment, governance, and operational activities.

It is applicable to all employees, management personnel, auditors, consultants, committee members, contractors, certification bodies, and any individual or organization acting on behalf of trustea.

## 3. Commitment to Impartiality

trustea shall ensure that all certification and related activities are conducted in an objective, fair, consistent, and non-discriminatory manner.

The Foundation shall not allow commercial, financial, personal, organizational, or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

trustea is committed to:

- identifying and managing actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest;
- ensuring independent and objective decision-making;
- maintaining transparency and accountability in certification-related activities;
- preventing undue influence from any individual, organization, or stakeholder group; and
- promoting confidence in the integrity and credibility of the trustea system.

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All individuals associated with trustea are expected to disclose any situation that may create a conflict of interest or impact impartiality.

## 4. Conflict of Interest

trustea shall establish measures to identify, evaluate, monitor, and address risks related to conflicts of interest.

Individuals involved in certification, assessment, decision-making, training, or advisory activities shall avoid situations that may compromise their independence or objectivity.

Any individual having a direct or indirect interest that may affect impartial judgment shall disclose such interest and may be excluded from relevant discussions, reviews, decisions, or activities.

trustea shall periodically review its activities, relationships, and operational arrangements to identify and manage threats to impartiality.

## 5. Impartiality Committee

trustea shall maintain an Impartiality Committee to provide advice, support, and independent oversight regarding impartiality-related matters.

The purpose of the Committee is to monitor whether trustea develops, implements, improves, and maintains its certification and assessment activities in a manner consistent with the principles of impartiality and relevant accreditation requirements.

The Committee shall consist of external representatives and trustea representatives in such a manner that no single interest predominates.

The Committee may include representatives from:

- certified entities and clients;
- customers and supply chain stakeholders;
- industry associations;
- governmental or regulatory bodies;
- consumer organizations;
- civil society or other relevant stakeholder groups.

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Members of the Committee should possess appropriate knowledge of certification processes, conflict of interest management, impartiality principles, and the tea sector.

The Committee shall meet periodically to review impartiality-related matters and provide recommendations for continual improvement.

## 6. Responsibilities

Management of trustea shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation and maintenance of this Policy.

All employees, auditors, consultants, committee members, and individuals acting on behalf of trustea are responsible for:

- acting impartially and professionally;
- avoiding conflicts of interest;
- disclosing circumstances that may impact impartiality;
- complying with applicable policies and procedures; and
- supporting the integrity and credibility of the trustea system.

Leadership shall ensure that decisions relating to certification and assessment activities are made objectively and free from undue influence.

## 7. Review and Monitoring

trustea shall regularly monitor risks to impartiality and review the effectiveness of measures implemented to address such risks.

The Impartiality Committee may review:

- organizational changes and operational developments;
- performance against identified threats to impartiality;
- customer complaints and appeals;
- certification process performance;
- audit and assessment outcomes;
- accreditation status and related obligations; and
- recommendations for continual improvement.

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Recommendations from the Committee shall be considered by trustea management for appropriate action and improvement.

## 8. Confidentiality

Information obtained during certification, assessment, committee review, or conflict of interest evaluation processes shall be treated confidentially and handled responsibly.

Confidential information shall only be disclosed where required by law, accreditation obligations, or authorized organizational procedures.

## 9. Non-Discrimination

trustea shall ensure that access to certification and related activities is provided fairly and without discrimination.

The Foundation shall not use procedures, conditions, or practices that unfairly limit or prevent access to certification services.

## 10. Implementation and Review

This Policy shall be communicated to all relevant personnel and stakeholders associated with trustea activities.

trustea shall periodically review and update this Policy to ensure continued alignment with accreditation requirements, legal obligations, stakeholder expectations, and international best practices.

<b>REVIEW RESULT:</b>	<b>REVIEWED BY: Anandita Ray Mukherjee</b>
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	APPROVED BY: Rajesh Bhuyan
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