Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc.

Advocacy Policy

**Date of Issue: February 2019**

**Date of Review: February 2022**

# Introduction

In order to help achieve its goals, Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities (Round Table) welcomes the opportunity to systematically advocate on behalf of people with print disabilities.

From time to time, an issue will arise which has implications for our community, and on which our members and our community might reasonably expect Round Table to comment.

The purpose of the Round Table Advocacy Policy is to provide a framework to ensure that such advocacy best advantages Round Table, its member organisations, and people with print disabilities.

This policy applies to all forms of written statements, including emails and social media posts as well as to verbal comments made in public. It should be read in conjunction with Round Table’s existing Media Policy.

In any authorised interaction all Round Table Executive Committee members must always be conscious of their role as representatives of the organization. They should therefore avoid making comments that may damage the reputation of Round Table and its member organisations.

Where necessary, Round Table will defend itself against any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public is properly informed of all the relevant facts.

# Statement

Round Table may:

* Advocate for the goals of Round Table.
* Promote the work of Round Table.
* Advocate on behalf of Round Table member organisations.
* Comment on relevant issues which have a direct impact on the lives and the rights of people with print disabilities, specifically with respect to their access to information.

In so doing, it operates on the values of:

* Honesty: Round Table will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
* Transparency: Round Table will promote openness and accessibility in its interactions with the media, other public agencies and individuals, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
* Clarity: All communications will be written in Plain English.
* Balance: Information provided to the public by Round Table will be, as far as possible, objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

Any contact with the media by Round Table Executive Committee members or its representatives should take place under the guidelines laid down by Round Table’s Media Policy.

# Procedure

## **Responsibilities**

Authorised nominated Round Table Executive Committee members have the responsibility for drafting statement(s) in support of the issue.

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the Round Table President shall determine the most appropriate person/s to respond and where possible will seek agreement/input from a majority of the Executive Committee.

Round Table Executive Committee members must be authorised, properly briefed and guided before talking to the media or making any public comment on any issue.

Any issue to be advocated must be within the overall objectives of Round Table, i.e., must benefit people with print disabilities to enable access to information, have links to the purpose of Round Table and be beneficial to the community at large.

Round Table will monitor and support the work of member organisations and others in their advocacy initiatives when it meets the objectives of Round Table.

## **Processes**

* A draft copy of the issue at hand with a request for authorisation must be emailed to the Executive Committee for approval.
* The issue must contain sufficient justification so that the Executive Committee can make an informed decision to grant their support or not.
* Any release, before its distribution, must be checked and approved by the President or Vice President and at least two members of Round Table’s Executive Committee before release.
* If quick response is required, then at least two Executive Committee Members and the President or Vice President must be contacted and authorisation obtained before release. All members of the Executive Committee must also be subsequently emailed.
* When the statement has been released, a copy should be emailed to the Round Table Administration Officer to be placed on the Round Table website and Dropbox.
* Releases must be included in the correspondence section of Round Table’s monthly Executive Committee meeting agenda.