

Membership Approval Policy: Electronic Frontiers Australia (EFA)

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the criteria and procedures used by the Board of Electronic Frontiers Australia (EFA) to assess and approve applications for membership. As a South Australian incorporated association and a registered ACNC charity, EFA wishes to ensure that its membership base supports its Objects as described in the EFA Rules of Incorporation (“EFA Rules”) (available at <https://efa.org.au/about/rules-of-incorporation/>) and that the Board exercises its duties in compliance with its legal obligations.

2. Board Authority

Under the EFA Rules, the Board has the authority to approve all members (Rules 5. 2 and 5.3). Rule 25 of the Constitution provides that the register of Members should contain the “preferred name, postal address, electronic mail address (if provided)” of each Member. This is the minimum information required for membership applications to facilitate the Board’s assessment of each new member application.

Upon payment of the applicable membership fee (or approved waiver), each Member will be emailed acknowledging their application to join to EFA, noting that the Board has the authority to approve Members. The Board will consider each application for membership within a reasonable timeframe. Typically the Board will consider Member approvals by or at the next Board meeting.

3. Criteria for Rejection

While EFA aims to be an inclusive community, the Board may reject an application if it has a reasonable basis for doing so.

There is no obligation under the EFA Rules requiring the Board to take steps to investigate new Members.

[Governance Standard 5](#) of the ACNC, requires the EFA Board to take steps to act with the duties of reasonable care and diligence, to act honestly and fairly in the best interests of the charity and for its charitable purposes, and to ensure that the financial affairs of the charity are managed responsibly. As such the Board will act in accordance with these duties when assessing applications for new Members.

The grounds for rejection that the Board may consider include (but are not limited to) are those outlined below.

3.1 Contravention of Objects

Applicants must support EFA's Objects, which include the protection of digital civil liberties, freedom of expression, and privacy. The Board may reject applicants whose public activities or professional affiliations (or, in the case of Associate Members, whose business models) are fundamentally opposed to these goals. Public activities may include public postings on social media, interviews on podcasts etc. Differences in policy views or good-faith disagreement will not in themselves constitute grounds for rejection.

3.2 Administrative or Financial Burden

The Board may refuse an application where membership would create a significant administrative, legal, financial or compliance burden on the EFA which is disproportionate to the benefits of the applicant's membership to the EFA.

This flows from the ACNC duties to "to act honestly and fairly in the best interests of the charity and for its charitable purposes" and to "ensure that the financial affairs of the charity are managed responsibly."

3.3 Reputational Risk

The Board has a duty to protect the reputation and independence of EFA. Applications for membership may be rejected if the approval would damage public trust, EFA's reputation, threaten organisational independence, or associate EFA with unlawful or unethical conduct (such as where the applicant has previously publicly been disqualified for managing a corporation or registered charity).

3.4 Harassment and Behavioral Standards

EFA maintains a commitment to a safe and civil environment for all Members (including Board Members and volunteers) and staff. The Board may reject any applicant with credible evidence of harassment, abusive behaviour or serious misconduct, including unwelcome, offensive, or abusive conduct.

4. Notice of Membership Application Rejection and Review of Decisions

If a membership application is rejected by the Board, the Board shall give the relevant applicant a notice explaining why their application has been rejected, and provide any appropriate refund. Such notice must be sent within 7 days of the relevant Board decision.

The Membership Officer/Secretary shall maintain a register of unsuccessful EFA membership applications.

If a membership application is rejected, the applicant may request a review of the decision in writing within 30 days of receiving notice. The Board will consider the request at or by its next Board meeting.

If the rejection is upheld, the Board will not consider any further application for membership from the applicant for a period of 12 months from the date of notice of the original rejection.

END

Approved by	EFA Board	Approved date	15-07-2026
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