

AALA Media and Public Message Policy

Purpose

1. The AALA Media and Public Messaging Policy provides guidelines for AALA media contributors and writers to focus AALA's messages to certain targets and within clear boundaries.

Focus of AALA's media and public message

2. AALA must take care to maintain and promote the broad AALA objective of advancing cultural diversity in the law in accordance with the purposes in its Constitution, which are:
 - a. to bring together members of the legal profession of Asian heritage and cultural background and others with an interest in Asia;
 - b. to provide a cohesive professional network to advocate for, and provide support to, our Members and to benefit from shared learning and experience;
 - c. to improve the capability and reputation of the Members in the legal profession through raising public awareness and providing education;
 - d. to develop links with Asian legal associations and facilitate and promote access for Members to Asian legal markets;
 - e. to promote and facilitate Asian cultural diversity in the senior ranks of the legal profession;
 - f. to promote a mutual understanding of Australian and Asian legal systems; and
 - g. such other purposes as the Association, by General Meeting, may determine, as an independent, politically unaffiliated and religiously tolerant organisation.
3. As there are many organisations in the diversity space and in the legal space, AALA must differentiate itself from other organisations and contribute to media and public messaging in line with its purposes. This includes contributing on issues where there is an effect on members of the legal profession of Asian heritage and cultural background and others with an interest in Asia.
4. Our aim is not to promote a multiplicity of causes in the public arena, but rather to target our messages into the industry, institutions, legal forums, government circles where institutional bias manifests and where such license for street racism and xenophobia originates. This includes raising awareness of these issues, our brand and reputation in the legal, professional and mainstream media, including through print, online, images and video.
5. AALA is an independent, politically unaffiliated and religiously tolerant organisation. Straying into areas of partisan policies and popular commentary may serve to dilute or mix our overall message to other organisations and the media.
6. However, there are unique circumstances where AALA can use its voice to advocate for society-wide causes that align with its purposes and the interests of its members. This includes, for example, AALA's statements on the 2017 same-sex marriage postal survey and the 2020 Black Lives Matters protests. All media and public messages on these unique issues must be approved by a majority of Executive Committee members by way of flying minute or at an Executive Committee meeting.

Key issues on which AALA will comment

7. The key issues on which AALA will comment are:

- a. Advocacy:
 - i. Representation in the industry;
 - ii. Bias, discrimination and racism affecting Asian Australian lawyers;
 - iii. Access to law;
 - iv. Judicial appointments;
 - v. Collaborating with other culturally diverse legal associations; and
 - vi. Asian legal markets and systems;
 - b. Career development:
 - i. Professional skills development;
 - ii. Networking;
 - iii. Continuing Legal Education; and
 - iv. Mentoring;
 - c. AALA's unique projects:
 - i. National Summit;
 - ii. William Ah Ket Scholarship and Scholars Forum;
 - iii. Student engagement; and
 - iv. Events and initiatives undertaken by AALA.
8. AALA will contribute announcements, updates, interviews, op-eds, feature articles and other forms of media on:
- a. The work, programs, contributions and submissions of AALA;
 - b. Emerging issues, news, inquiries, and current and past legislation that relate to cultural diversity and the law, institutional bias, discrimination and racism affecting Asian Australian lawyers; and
 - c. Achievements, congratulations, promotions, success stories and awards for AALA members or projects and persons in the legal profession.

Media production

9. The chief media spokespersons for AALA are the National President and the National Vice-President. The National President and National Vice-President may provide comment to media organisations on the issues listed in cl 7 without Executive Committee approval. This delegation acknowledges the leadership role of the National President and National Vice President and the short timeframes within which media organisations require comment for publishing deadlines.
10. The National President and National Vice-President are assisted in their media work by the Advocacy, Policy and News Media Subcommittee and, from time to time, other interested Executive Committee and Branch Committee Members.
11. Formal AALA media releases must be approved by a majority of Executive Committee members by way of flying minute or at an Executive Committee meeting. Executive Committee members are expected to respond promptly (i.e. usually within 24 hours) with their vote on a flying minute.

Approved by National Executive Committee, 16 February 2021