Australian Veterinary Association

Publicity campaign participation policy

Approved by the Board on 15 February 2013

Policy
The AVA will participate in publicity campaigns conducted by other organisations only under conditions that protect the interests of the association, and enhance its own strategic objectives.

Background
From time to time, the AVA is invited to participate in publicity campaigns being run by other organisations. The organisations may be commercial operations, not-for-profit organisations or government agencies.

This policy outlines the decision-making process for the AVA entering into a partnership arrangement for publicity purposes, the approvals required, and conditions placed on AVA involvement.

Process
Whether or not the AVA participates in a joint venture depends on four factors:

- The risk of AVA involvement being perceived as an endorsement of a commercial brand, product or service
- The opportunity for AVA to achieve its strategic objectives through participation with the campaign
- Whether the AVA’s organisational key messages are reinforced by the campaign
- Whether the veterinary profession as a whole will benefit.

Any proposed partnership proposals are evaluated according to these four factors. Negotiation may be required to ensure the campaign meets AVA requirements.

The AVA must not be associated or seen to endorse a particular brand, product or commercial service. The perception of endorsement of a commercial product or service often relates to the use of corporate logos and the names of proprietary companies or products. AVA’s own publicity campaigns only use generic terminology for products or treatments, and involvement with other organisations’ campaigns needs to be consistent with that approach.

The proposed campaign must deliver significant benefits to the AVA and the profession including the promotion of its key messages, increasing its media coverage and promoting veterinarians as the primary authority on animal health and welfare. All AVA publicity must support the organisational key messages in some way.

There may also be other strategic objectives that the proposed campaign will help the AVA to realise.
Potential damage to relationships with key corporate supporters and other stakeholders should be considered in the decision-making process, but the AVA’s own organisational aims and strategic objectives need to be the primary focus.

Some examples of campaigns that have met these criteria include:

- The joint venture launch of the Hendra virus vaccine where AVA was included as an equal partner with other stakeholders such as CSIRO and US research organisations. All the organisations’ logos were included in the release, and spokespeople quoted from Pfizer Animal Health, CSIRO and AVA. Approvals were obtained from all partner organisations. (November 2012)
- A generic AVA media release promoting the importance of leptospirosis vaccination of cattle was issued at the suggestion of a corporation’s PR consultant. The suggestion coincided with views expressed by members that AVA should be promoting vaccination to protect the health of vets as well as farmers and their families. The media release was issued on the AVA template, with no other logos or product names included, and an AVA spokesperson was quoted. (April 2012)
- A generic AVA media release promoting the importance of treatments for heartworm following floods. This supports the views expressed by members of the AVA to take preventative measures for a potentially fatal disease. The media release was issued on the AVA template, with no logos or product names mentioned and used an AVA spokesperson. (April 2012, February 2011)

Guidelines

- Media releases using AVA spokespeople must be approved by the process set out in the AVA Media relations policy.
- All publicity material must support one or more AVA organisational key messages.
- The use of the AVA logo is guided by the AVA Logo use policy, and it can only be used in publicity material for AVA alone or in a true joint venture publicising a collaborative project that AVA has participated in as an equal partner.
- A written campaign strategy, outlining key objectives, expected media outcomes and campaign activities must be provided for consideration. The strategy should also specify the nature of AVA’s involvement in the campaign.
- The proposed campaign strategy should be assessed by the National Communications Manager and Media Relations Manager for consideration under the guidelines set out in this policy.
- Participation in the publicity campaign must be approved by the CEO and National President.
- The AVA does not accept payment in cash or in kind in exchange for participating in publicity campaigns run by external organisations.