

SCPF GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURE FOR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE IMAGES

1. BALANCING CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY

Photography is an art form that allows individuals to capture the world through their unique lenses, challenging boundaries and breaking traditional rules. While the SCPF highly encourages creativity and personal expression, it is crucial to consider the diverse perspectives of those who will view the work. This document has been prepared by the SCPF Council to provide guidelines on how to navigate the fine line between artistic freedom and sensitivity to avoid causing offence. The concluding section describes the procedure for reviewing and acting on potentially offensive images.

2. UNDERSTANDING DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

Club photography should be inclusive and respectful of various perspectives based on age, gender, cultural backgrounds, and religious persuasions. Members must be mindful of the following considerations:

- Age: Images that may be suitable for adults might not be appropriate for younger audiences. We consider the age group of the viewers and ensure content is age appropriate.
- Gender: We avoid images that perpetuate stereotypes or objectify individuals based on their gender. We are sensitive to gender identities and expressions.
- Cultural Backgrounds: We are aware of cultural norms and taboos. What is acceptable in one culture might be offensive in another. We respect these differences.
- Religious Persuasions: We respect religious beliefs and practices. We avoid images that viewers could interpret as blasphemous or disrespectful to any faith.

3. CONTEXT OF IMAGE PRESENTATION

When presenting photographs, the context in which they will be viewed is paramount. Different settings require different levels of sensitivity:

3.1. CAMERA CLUB INTERNAL COMPETITIONS

Clubs may use their own criteria when deciding whether images are suitable for presentation to their members, appraisers and the public at an exhibition or on their website. However, we advise that appropriate discretion is used. Club venues may also impose restrictions on the work shown.

In an internal competition, there is more control over the audience. Members should still be mindful of the diversity within the club. Images likely to cause offence should be avoided or accompanied by a warning. The appraiser should also be considered and must be consulted in advance concerning their willingness to appraise potentially offensive images. The appraiser is within their right to decline to appraise any material that they feel uncomfortable with.

3.2. SCPF COMPETITIONS

Competitions include the Federation's Leagues, Championships (Print, PDI, Audio-visual), other inter-club and inter-federation competitions. It is important to adhere to the guidelines set by the organising bodies. These events may have a broader audience, and clubs should avoid entering images that are likely to cause offence. The competition organisers shall review entries to all these competitions and may require that potentially offensive images be removed or replaced. The organisers may permit these images if there is a sufficient creative or storytelling justification, but such images could require a suitable warning to allow the viewers to make an informed choice.

You should note that membership age restrictions vary between clubs and some clubs allow members from age 14.

3.3. THE SCPF ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Our annual exhibition is on display in a public gallery for an extended period. We have no control over who views the exhibition. The exhibition

organisers will apply stricter criteria and are unlikely to accept entries which could cause offence or distress to any members of the viewing public. The SCPF must also comply with any rules and guidelines imposed by the hosting gallery.

4. EXAMPLES OF POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE OR DISTURBING CONTENT

While it is impossible to predict all potential triggers, the following examples provide a general idea of content that might cause offence:

- Nudity: While artistic nudity is a valid form of expression, it should be handled with care. Explicit or suggestive content should be avoided in public settings.
- Violence: Irrespective of whether they are real or simulated, images depicting violence, torture, blood, self-harm etc. can be disturbing. These should be avoided unless the context absolutely necessitates it, and even then, with significant caution and warnings.
- Religious Symbols: Using religious symbols inappropriately or mocking any religious practice can be deeply offensive.
- Racial and Cultural Stereotypes: Avoid images that reinforce negative stereotypes or depict cultural appropriation.
- Substance misuse: Avoid images that depict the misuse of controlled substances such as drugs and alcohol.
- Sexual Content: Explicit sexual content or suggestive themes should be avoided in all public settings.
- Gender: Avoid negative representations or stereotypes based on gender, gender transition or sexual orientation.
- Sensitive Historical Events: Be cautious when dealing with imagery related to sensitive historical events such as war, genocide, and tragedies. Respect the gravity of these events.

5. SCPF PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWING IMAGES AND HANDLING OF POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE CONTENT

Most entries submitted for competitions and exhibitions will be accepted without issue. Clubs entering these events are expected to have selected their entries based on these guidelines.

The organiser for each event shall review all entries to that event and flag any image of concern, erring on the side of caution. Flagged images shall then be reviewed by two representatives of the SCPF, typically Council members. This review may result in the following actions:

1. Accept the entry unconditionally
2. Reject the entry as being inappropriate for the event
3. Accept the entry but require an accompanying appropriate warning (although this would be exceptional)

If the entry is rejected, the club will be notified with a clear reason and given the following options:

1. Replace the entry with one that is appropriate for the event within a reasonable time
2. Remove the entry
3. Withdraw from the event

Where the SCPF accepts an entry but requires that it is accompanied by a warning, the club will be notified of the decision and will have the option to accept the attachment of the warning or replace the entry with one deemed appropriate for the event.

Where an event includes potentially offensive entries the SCPF may choose to issue a warning that the event includes entries that some may find offensive or are age sensitive, or may require specific handling of the specific entries. Exclusion from a specific competition does not mean that an image is unsuitable for all; an image deemed unacceptable for public display in the exhibition might be accepted in a championship.

We reserve the right to exclude previously deemed acceptable images from future competition and display should the need arise.

6. CONCLUSION

Balancing creativity and sensitivity is a delicate task for photographers. By understanding diverse perspectives, carefully considering the context of image presentation, and being mindful of potentially offensive content, photographers can create work that is both innovative and respectful. Ensuring a safe and inclusive viewing environment is essential for fostering appreciation and understanding in the world of photography.

The SCPF is keen to encourage personal expression and creativity, while minimising censorship. However, we must be inclusive and respect the views of others. We must also avoid exposing viewers to potentially offensive or disturbing content which could damage the reputation of the SCPF or expose its officers and members to potential legal challenges. This review process is there to avoid the potential of such harm.