

Communications Policy



Last Updated: 8 June 2026



Registered Charity



Vanni Hope (ABN: 19614675231) is a charity registered with the ACNC.

Background

Vanni Hope recognises the rights of members, partners, stakeholders and donors to accurate, unbiased information on financial management, project implementers and other activities of the organisation. It is committed to being transparent in its work and accountable to its stakeholders and the Australian and Sri Lankan community by disclosing relevant and accurate information in an accessible format.

Purpose

The purpose of the Communications Policy (the **Policy**) is to:

- outline the measures that Vanni Hope takes to provide such transparency;
- outline what information should be made available to whom, where and when; and
- ensure that in making information available, privacy is respected and the use of images and messages in communications is undertaken in a way that portrays the affected people in a manner that respects their dignity, values and culture, and is authentic to the context and terms of consent given.

Scope

This Policy applies to all information and images collected for research, information-sharing and marketing purposes to be shared with members, partners and donors (both actual and prospective). All Vanni Hope board of directors, members, and volunteers, staff and contractors are bound by this policy.

Where Vanni Hope works with partner organisations, Vanni Hope will ensure that those partners are made aware of this Policy and agree to comply with its key obligations, including ethical communications standards and informed consent requirements, through a Memorandum of Understanding or equivalent agreement.

Definition of Key Terms

Images means moving or still representation of an individual in either film or digital media.

Informed consent means where an individual agrees to being photographed, filmed and/or interviewed for an Image and gives permission to Vanni Hope to use this material in any publication, after being provided with clear information about the possible use and implications of publishing this material.

Transparency

Vanni Hope is committed to transparency and integrity in the operation of its organisation.

For example, the annual report is reviewed by the board of directors at the annual general meeting (**AGM**) of the organisation and members are given the opportunity to scrutinise the operations and financial management of Vanni Hope. Minutes of the AGM are maintained to ensure that any issues raised are recorded. For those that are unable to attend the AGM, the annual report is made available on Vanni Hope's website.

The links to the following documents are provided on Vanni Hope's website:

- Vanni Hope Constitution;
- Vanni Hope Annual Reports; and
- details of the current Vanni Hope board of directors and other officeholders.

Consent

No Images or messages containing personal information will be published without the prior consent of those depicted in the Images or messages. Personal information on donors or members will never be revealed without prior consent of the relevant individual(s).

We acknowledge that there are challenges in obtaining consent (or Informed Consent) from people who are depicted in Images. However, Vanni Hope will obtain at the very least, Informed Consent, from those who are depicted in Images and provide such individuals with sufficient information so that they can make a well-informed decision, and under no circumstances will members of Vanni Hope apply pressure or duress on individuals or a group or people to be depicted in Images.

In short, prior to posting an Image publicly, the relevant Vanni Hope member or volunteer must:

- set out the what the Image(s) is being used for and how it may be used;
- explain that the Image(s) may be published for the purposes of the promotion of Vanni Hope and its objectives;
- provide an explanation as to who may see the Images;
- set out when the Image(s) will be initially published;
- explain that certain individuals can be omitted from Images (if they request such omission);
- that they have the right to revoke their consent at any time by notifying Vanni Hope members/volunteers and Vanni Hope must act promptly in removing such person, but also explain to such person that some copies of their image may remain online even after Vanni Hope removes it from online platforms it has access to.

Where possible, the above information should be provided in writing to the relevant person or parent/guardian/adult care giver.

Vanni Hope members and volunteers will seek Informed Consent in the most culturally sensitive and appropriate way, such as verbal consent, which, if possible, should be recorded in writing by the relevant member or volunteer.

In the event a person refuses permission to have themselves displayed in an Image, they must not be depicted in any Images published by Vanni Hope (and Vanni Hope must not have acted in such a manner to cause the publication of such person's Image).

A record must be kept of those individuals who have not provided consent (including Informed Consent) of Images for publication.

Under no circumstances, should the publication of Images of individuals or groups of people harm any such persons, nor should it harm their community.

Guidelines for making material public

All materials shared with the public must:

- be consistent with their stated purpose
- be accurate and honestly portray the diversity of local people including age, disability and other characteristics
- not sensationalise the challenges faced in the recipient communities in which we work
- be collected in ways that do not risk harming people or the environment in which they are depicted (ie, Images of women and men, boys and girls will present them in a dignified, respectful manner portraying them as equal partners in the development process)
- not include any identifying information of children, including their family name, community or school name
- use pseudonyms to identify people in the relevant Image, where the person has requested Vanni Hope to do so
- Images used will be known and any necessary permissions, including copyright releases, be held.
- be consistent with Vanni Hope's Privacy Policy
- to the extent there are Images portraying affected people, such Images must be presented in a way that respects their dignity.

Where Vanni Hope works with not-for-profit organisations, promotional materials should clearly distinguish between Vanni Hope's work and the work of the other organisations.

No information about a specific project or program should be made public without the prior approval of the project coordinator, followed by that of the board of directors of Vanni Hope.

No material in any way connected with fundraising should be distributed without the prior approval of the board of directors of Vanni Hope.

Guidelines for making material public

Unless there are legal or bona fide confidentiality reasons not to publish or share certain information, Vanni Hope will use best endeavours to share information covering the following areas:

- Financial information: Vanni Hope will ensure that summary and complete financial reports are made available to all stakeholders. It publishes summary financial statements in its Annual Report in accordance with guidelines set by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission which can be viewed [here](#) on Vanni Hope's website. Full financial reports will be available on request.
- Governance Structure: Vanni Hope shares information regarding its governance structure and purpose on its website.
- Vanni Hope provides information regarding its activities, including results and lessons to all stakeholders and donors.
- Vanni Hope recognises and acknowledges the support of the Australian Government, through its public communications.
- Vanni Hope shares its policies on its website.

Requests for Information

Requests for information should be sent to the Vanni Hope Managing Director, via email (ranjan@vannihope.org.au) or the Communications Director via email (Valluvan@vannihope.org.au).

On receipt of a request, the sender's request for information will be acknowledged within one week and whoever is responding will check that the information requested does not infringe Vanni Hope's Privacy Policy and the information will be collated and sent in a timely manner.

Use of Images of Children

At times, Vanni Hope intends to publicise Images of children when communicating with the public about the activities undertaken by the organisation. To the extent children (ie, persons under 18 years of age) are depicted in Images, the parent, guardian or other adult care giver of such child must give their consent prior to capturing and using the child(ren)'s Image and that the steps above have been taken.

The use of such Images must meet the following conditions:

- Informed Consent must be obtained by the parent, guardian or other adult care giver of such child, and by the relevant child, if old enough for consent to be meaningful, and their parents, before their Images are used in publications. A record of each permission must be kept;
- Images will not identify the specific location of children or enable them to be contacted by potentially harmful people (for the avoidance of doubt, a general location such as 'Jaffna' or

'Sri Lanka' may be publicised but not the specific street or village);

- Images should never infringe the Vanni Hope Child Protection Policy;
- Images should never show children naked or in a sexualised manner;
- guidelines for storing Images securely will be provided to Vanni Hope board members project coordinators; and
- names of children will never be used in publications.

Prior to the publication or distribution of any information the form, content and recipients of such information has been reviewed and considered by the Vanni Hope Managing Director or a person with delegated authority from the Managing Director.

Any major developments with respect to Vanni Hope's projects or operations which are material from the point of view of a donor, member and/or other stakeholder must be communicated to those persons in a prompt manner.

Information which is directed at donors or members must be sent directly to them either electronically (via an email address provided) or physically (using a residential address provided). Information which for the general public is uploaded onto one or more of Vanni Hope's online platforms, including its website or social media platform.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed once every two years to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

Date	Version	Review Description	Reviewed by	Approved by
Feb 2025	1	New template created	Virosh Poologasundaram	Board of Directors
June 2026	2	Complete reformat and general update of policy	Abinaja Yogarajah	Board of Directors

