Advertising & Sponsorship Standards Policy

This Advertising and Sponsorship Standards Policy (the **'Policy'**) forms a binding schedule to the Master Services Agreement between **SEEDL Group Limited** (**'SEEDL'**) and **Resident Learning Hub CIC** (the **'CIC'**).

Both SEEDL and the CIC shall comply with and enforce this Policy across all commercial, community, council-partnered, and resident-facing platforms, printed publications, and associated marketing assets.

1. Principles and Objectives

SEEDL and the CIC deliver learning solutions designed to keep resident and partner costs low or free of charge at the point of delivery through sustainable commercial sponsorship. This Policy ensures that all advertising, sponsorship, and promotional material displayed across digital portals or printed collateral upholds the reputation, public trust, and statutory duties of SEEDL, the CIC, and participating Local Authorities.

All advertising, sponsorship, and recruitment listings accepted across the platforms fall into three primary categories:

1. **Direct Community Sponsorship & Partner Advertising:** Curated local sponsor placements, including brand logos, display panels, prospectus half-page features, counter fliers, and civic library / public signage.
2. **Platform & Communication Placements:** Fixed digital banners and sponsor credits displayed within learning management portals and resident newsletters.
3. **Recruitment Advertising:** Verified employment vacancies displayed via the integrated jobs board, matching user study pathways, career areas, or active searches.

(Note: Third-party automated ad networks, programmatic display feeds, and cookie-based behavioural search-tracking advertising are strictly prohibited across all resident and local authority platforms.)

This Policy is grounded in the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (the **'CAP Code'**) administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (**'ASA'**), and adheres to three fundamental principles:

- **LEGAL:** Advertisements must comply with all UK laws, regulations, and statutory guidance, and must not omit anything required by law.
- **DECENT:** Advertisements must not contain content likely to cause grave or widespread offence, create safeguarding concerns, or subject SEEDL, the CIC, or partner Local Authorities to public criticism or disrepute.
- **HONEST & TRUTHFUL:** Advertisements must not mislead users through inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, or omission regarding any product, service, or employment opportunity.

2. Prohibited Advertising Categories

Neither SEEDL nor the CIC shall accept, display, or publish advertising, sponsorship, or promotional material relating to:

- **High-cost consumer credit:** Payday loans, unsecured personal loans, logbook loans, and high-interest credit cards.
- **Unregulated financial schemes:** Cryptocurrencies, initial coin offerings (ICOs), crypto-wallets, binary options, and schemes designed for tax avoidance or money laundering.
- **Questionable business schemes:** Pyramid schemes, multi-level marketing (MLM), Ponzi schemes, or paid-entry 'business opportunities'.

- **Gambling & gaming:** Betting shops, online casinos, spread betting, and commercial lotteries (excluding registered local authority community lotteries).
- **Alcohol, tobacco, and nicotine:** Alcohol products, cigarettes, cigars, loose tobacco, electronic cigarettes (vaping), and nicotine pouches.
- **Unsubstantiated health, diet, and beauty:** Slimming clinics, weight-loss supplements, non-prescriptive health treatments, and aesthetic procedures (excluding registered pharmacies and veterinary practices).
- **High Fat, Salt, or Sugar (HFSS) food & drink:** Promotion of foods classified as HFSS under UK government nutritional profiling standards, fast food delivery, and energy drinks.
- **Adult & sexual entertainment:** Escort services, adult shops, massage parlours, dating or introduction agencies, and sexually explicit media.
- **Age-restricted media:** Video games, films, streaming services, or publications carrying an 18+ certificate or rating.
- **Political & industrial controversy:** Political parties, election campaigning, lobbying organisations, partisan campaigns, or any matter conflicting with local authority publicity rules or pre-election sensitivity (purdah) periods.
- **Religious organisations:** Proselytising material or religious bodies (except non-denominational community initiatives formally approved in writing).
- **Unsubstantiated environmental claims:** Greenwashing or non-verifiable ecological claims.

3. Restricted and Regulated Classifications

3.1. Regulated Professions

Advertisers within statutory professions must hold current UK professional qualifications, registrations, and regulatory authority approvals (e.g. Solicitors holding Law Society practicing certificates, certified Accountants, registered Gas Engineers, Architects, and registered Healthcare Professionals). Proof of current registration must be provided upon request.

3.2. Regulated Financial Promotions

Any permissible financial advertising (e.g. standard high-street banking, mortgages, pensions, or insurance) must comply strictly with the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (**'FSMA'**), Financial Conduct Authority (**'FCA'**) regulations, and mandatory statutory risk warnings (including explicit typical APR disclosures and investment risk notices). Advertisers must execute a Credit and Financial Services Customer Declaration prior to publication.

3.3. Charitable Causes & Third-Sector Partners

Community groups, registered charities, and third-sector organisations may be featured provided their activities directly support resident upskilling, local employment, or community wellbeing, and have received formal written approval from the CIC and the participating Local Authority.

3.4. Local Economic Protection

Advertising that deliberately conflicts with local authority economic strategies, or promotes neighbouring retail and commercial districts with the intent of diverting economic footfall away from the partner council's administrative area, is strictly prohibited.

4. Print and Digital Delivery Specifications

4.1. Print Collateral (Prospectuses, Posters, Signage, Fliers)

- Advertisers must supply complete high-resolution artwork adhering strictly to the required dimensions (including half-page prospectus adverts measuring 148 × 105 mm) and technical print deadlines established by the CIC.
- All print copy must be decent, honest, non-misleading, and strictly suitable for open display in family-friendly, public civic environments, including (but not limited to) libraries, GP surgeries, and community hubs.

- SEEDL and the CIC reserve the unconditional right to reject or mandate amendments to any print artwork deemed unsuitable for display within local authority facilities.

4.2. Digital Landing Pages and URLs

- Any digital advert or sponsor logo linking out from a portal must provide direct continuity of user experience.
- Destination URLs must direct to legitimate websites owned and operated by the advertiser. Deep links must directly correspond to the specific offer, service, or job vacancy advertised. Broken links or redirects to unrelated pages will result in immediate suspension.

5. Sponsorship, Endorsement, and Civic Association

- **Sponsor Association:** Local business partners securing designated campaign positions are celebrated as official community sponsors whose financial support directly enables free resident education. This civic contribution may be acknowledged across promotional banners, prospectuses, and council-endorsed collateral.
- **Product & Service Disclaimer:** The appearance of a sponsor's branding, advertisement, or job listing does not constitute an endorsement, recommendation, or warranty by SEEDL, the CIC, or the partner Local Authority regarding the advertiser's underlying commercial products, services, or business operations.
- **Misleading Association:** Advertisers are strictly prohibited from stating or implying that their commercial offerings are formally certified, guaranteed, or procured by the Local Authority, SEEDL, or the CIC without separate written agreement.

6. Recruitment Advertising Standards

Where vacancies are published via the resident learning portal or jobs board, the following terms apply:

6.1. Platform Status (Employment Agencies Regulations 2003)

Under the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003, SEEDL and the CIC operate solely as a digital communication platform and do not act as an employment agency or employment business. Neither SEEDL nor the CIC vets, interviews, selects, or references candidates, nor confirms candidate identities, legal right to work, or mandatory qualifications. Recruiters are solely responsible for conducting required background checks, references, and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) verifications.

6.2. Equality Act 2010 & Statutory Compliance

All job postings must comply fully with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality and Human Rights Commission Code of Practice. Advertisements must not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, or gender reassignment. Recruiters must comply with all relevant employment laws, including National Minimum Wage standards and IR35 tax legislation where applicable.

6.3. Quality and Candidate Protection

- Vacancies must represent genuine, existing employment opportunities.
- Advertisers are strictly prohibited from demanding fees, deposits, training costs, franchise fees, or equipment purchases from candidates at any stage of the application or onboarding process.
- Misleading business opportunities, commission-only schemes, pyramid sales, and unverified freelance listings are prohibited.
- Expired or filled roles must be promptly removed; SEEDL and the CIC reserve the right to remove inactive postings immediately without liability.

7. Compliance, Monitoring, and Termination

- **Review Rights:** SEEDL and the CIC reserve the right to review, audit, pre-approve, or reject any prospective advertisement, print artwork, or digital link submitted by any partner or sponsor.
- **Immediate Removal:** If SEEDL, the CIC, or a participating Local Authority reasonably determines that an advertisement breaches this Policy, violates UK law, infringes the CAP Code, or threatens the civic reputation of the partners, the advert or print material shall be removed or suspended immediately without liability for refund, compensation, or loss of visibility.
- **Indemnity:** Advertisers and sponsors agree to indemnify SEEDL, the CIC, and the relevant Local Authority against any fine, loss, legal cost, or claim resulting directly from any breach of this Policy or relevant statutory requirements.