

## IMAGE GUIDELINES

AUTHORITY	Senior Executive Team
APPROVAL DATE	June 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 2027
POLICY OWNER	Director Digital Engagement
DOCUMENT NO.	

### 1. PURPOSE

The Image Guidelines are based on the well-supported premise that viewing humans in animal photos can affect public attitudes towards wildlife (Ross, Vreeman & Lonsdorf, 2011) in a way which may lead to unintentionally damaging behaviour, knowledge and attitudes towards wildlife. This research highlights the importance of understanding the impacts of varying elements of human-animal photography on public attitudes, noting that impacts may vary across different audiences.

Supported by the evidence available to inform the guidelines, we can send clearer and more positive messages about our zoos and how society should view and treat wildlife, via leading by example.

As a world-leading zoo-based conservation organisation, we are positioned at the forefront of industry initiatives which means we often conduct ourselves differently from other zoos; this applies to how we portray animals and our work. In summary, the Image Guidelines:

- Avoid anthropomorphism in our communications
- Avoid depicting animals as domesticated or as pets
- Link conservation to all our communications
- Celebrate animals in our care and encourage visitation

### 2. SCOPE

The Image Guidelines apply to all Zoos Victoria staff when presenting pictures or footage of animals to an external audience, via publicity, marketing, social media, email, and all online and onsite signage and promotions.

### 3. DEFINITION

Guidelines apply to the following areas:

a) **Business cards and email/Outlook directory identification of staff.**

No depiction of people with an animal is permitted for these applications. For staff identification on Zoos Victoria's digital applications, please use a picture of the staff member alone, to assist in easily identifying your colleagues.

b) **Visual depiction of animals in nature and in our care**

Photography, videography, signage (including animation and illustrations) will only depict touching an animal if it is clear this is occurring for husbandry, medical or training reasons, and the staff

member is uniformed. No patting, hugging or holding for ambiguous reasons is to be captured or publicised. This applies to all staff, visitors and volunteers. No “selfies” are to be used on ZV channels or personal social media channels, unless the person shown is clearly engaged with the animal (i.e. facing the animal and looking at it, rather than posing with the animal as a prop). If in doubt about the suitability of a picture or video, please check with a Communications team member.

c) **Nomenclature**

Naming animals in our care needs to be culturally relevant and inclusive, as approved by the property Senior Manager Animal Care and Welfare/ General Manager Life Sciences. Regardless of the animal’s sex, please ensure gender-neutral attributes are reflected in naming choices. Although appropriate “back of house” names for Life Sciences staff are still acceptable, names must avoid being a commercial brand name to respect existing and future sponsorship arrangements.

d) **External communication of enrichment activities and celebrations**

Any enrichment for animals in our care must clearly be depicted as varied and inspired by nature. In general, enrichment activities will be communicated externally when they reflect more naturalistic activities:

- Enrichment activities for external communications may include engaging the animal in foraging activities, cognitive challenges or items that encourage species appropriate investigative or social behaviours. For example: eggs, termite mounds etc; novel food items; hard plastic/rubber enrichment items that are reusable not single use; ziplines and bungees for feeding, etc.
- For external communication and presentations, enrichment that has high relevance for humans but little relevance for animals should be avoided. For example, animals interacting with gift boxes, Easter eggs, human toys, single use plastic items, or themed or themed anthropomorphic celebrations and promotions such as Christmas, Easter or Halloween are not acceptable for publicity or social media.