

Q: What information does TVA allow vendors to include in news releases or marketing materials related to services or work provided to TVA?

A: The Standards of Ethical Conduct places significant restrictions on TVA and TVA employees' ability to endorse services and/or products provided by a vendor. While strictly factual statements are okay, those are typically in situations where we are simply confirming someone did work for TVA or some other objective statement. Some general advice to keep in mind:

- It is ethically permissible to make strictly factual, objective statements about the work a vendor has done for TVA and to document compliance with agency requirements or standards.
- Where things can get ethically troublesome is if the vendor seeks statements from TVA personnel saying "nice things" about the vendor or calls for opinion-based, subjective type statements about the vendor (e.g., "XYZ was the best vendor TVA ever used"). These issues can also create procurement implications as well, especially in the case of competitive bids.

Q: Can a vendor use a photograph of a TVA plant site in their marketing literature?

A: The inclusion of the picture could be viewed as a tacit endorsement of the vendor by TVA, or could cause security-related concerns. A picture can be particularly problematic if the TVA logo is visible on a sign or building. You should ask TVA's Communications group to review any proposed use of a TVA photograph.

Q: Am I allowed to present a paper at an upcoming conference?

A: Yes, generally, with some qualifications. Key points to keep in mind include:

- The presentation should not include statements implying an endorsement by TVA of a product, service or enterprise.
- You must make sure that any biographical reference to your position at TVA does not receive any more prominence than any other biographical information provided.
- If you receive questions from the audience regarding a particular vendor, product, or service, you should provide strictly factual responses and avoid opinion-based answers.
- The Federal ethics rules prohibits "compensation" for teaching, speaking, or writing that relates to the employee's official duties. The definition of "compensation" also includes payment of travel expenses, which should not be accepted personally by the TVA employee.

Q: Can TVA or TVA employees submit a letter on TVA letterhead in support of an organization that is trying to obtain a grant?

A: TVA has historically declined to provide endorsements to entities applying for grants. The Standards of Ethical Conduct and the TVA Code of Conduct generally provide that public recognition of TVA's name and status (including an employee's status as part of TVA) should not be used to endorse any product, service, or enterprise.