

# Contributor Guidance Sheet: How to Safely Use Creative Commons Material

## Purpose:

This sheet helps contributors understand how to use third-party materials in their submissions without violating copyright or Creative Commons (CC) licenses. Since Project NS20-2 will be sold commercially, following these guidelines ensures both the contributor and the Company remain compliant.

## 1. What is Creative Commons (CC)?

- CC is a set of licenses that let creators **share their work with conditions**.
- A CC license **does not mean the work is free**—it sets rules for use, attribution, and modification.
- There are six main types of CC licenses (some allow commercial use, some do not, some allow derivatives, some do not).
- For official CC license information: [creativecommons.org/licenses](https://creativecommons.org/licenses)

## 2. General Rules for Using CC Material

Before including any CC content in your submission:

### 1. Check the License Type

- Look for **commercial-use permissions** if your work will be sold or distributed commercially.
- For example:
  - CC BY, CC BY-SA → Usually fine with attribution and share-alike
  - CC BY-NC → **Cannot be used commercially**
  - CC BY-ND → **Cannot create derivatives**

### 2. Attribute Properly

- Always include:
  - Creator's name
  - Title of the work
  - CC license type
  - Link to original work or license

### 3. Check Derivative Rules


- Some licenses allow you to modify, remix, or build upon the work; some do not (No Derivatives / ND).
- If your submission adapts a CC work (e.g., sampling a song, remixing visual art), make sure the license permits derivatives.

#### 4. Avoid Fair Use Assumptions

- Even if you think it's "just a clip" or "just a sample," fair use is **not guaranteed** and depends on context. Always check CC licenses first.

## 3. Medium-Specific Guidance

### Written Works (Poetry, Essays, Lyrics, Flash Fiction)

- **Can include CC material** only if:
  - Commercial use is allowed
  - You give proper attribution
  - You follow the derivative rules (ND vs SA)
- **Examples:**
  - Quoting a CC BY-NC poem in a paid anthology → **Not allowed**
  - Using a CC BY-SA quote in an original essay with attribution →  Allowed

### Musical Works & Short Films

- **Can sample CC-licensed audio or video** only if:
  - Commercial use is permitted
  - You comply with derivative rules
- **You must disclose** all external CC material used in your submission
- **Phase one:** Unpublished YouTube, Vimeo, or personal links are allowed, but the final version must comply fully

### Visual Art / Drawings / Photography

- **Can incorporate CC content** only if:
  - Commercial use is permitted
  - Proper attribution is included
  - Any derivatives comply with the license
- AI disclosure is still required if AI tools are used

#### 4. What to Include in Your Submission When Using CC Work

- Full attribution (Creator, Title, License, Link)
- Indicate the portion of your work that uses CC content  
Disclose whether it's a derivative/remix or unchanged
- Confirm compliance with commercial use restrictions

#### 5. When in Doubt, Don't Use It

- If you cannot verify the license or usage rights, **exclude the material** or replace it with original content.
- The safest way to minimize risk: **create all work yourself**.

**CONTRIBUTOR TIP!:** Always include a note in your submission if CC material is used. Transparency protects you and ensures the Company can legally publish your work.

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#### References / Further Reading

- [Creative Commons Licenses](#)
- [Creative Commons FAQ](#)
- [Penn State University – Creative Commons Basics](#)
- [UBC Copyright – Creative Commons](#)
- [Copyright Alliance – CC License Overview](#)