



Code of Conduct

AGE Platform Europe

www.age-platform.eu

November 2024

About AGE Platform Europe

AGE Platform Europe (AGE) is the largest European network of non-profit organisations of and for older people. We elevate older people's voice, bringing their experience and aspirations to the table to celebrate ageing and fight for equality at all ages.

Introduction

This Code of Conduct outlines the principles, values, and standards of behaviour expected from all AGE members, staff and volunteers, as well as partners participating in AGE activities. Our organisation is committed to integrity, transparency, respect, and the promotion of a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. This code ensures that we uphold the highest ethical standards in all our activities, relationships, and decision-making processes.

This Code of Conduct should be read in complement to AGE Statutes, Internal Rules and any other documents or processes that guide the organisation's advocacy work and daily functioning, such as pluriannual strategies, social media policy, well-being plan and the employment rules and regulations that apply to AGE under the Belgian law.

1. Core Values

1.1 Integrity

We act with honesty, transparency, and accountability in all of our actions. We are responsible for our decisions and take ownership of our conduct.

1.2 Respect for Human Rights

We respect the human rights, inherent dignity and worth of all individuals, regardless of their background, gender, ethnicity, religion, age or other characteristics. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment free from discrimination, harassment, or exploitation.

1.3 Service to the Community

We prioritise the needs and well-being of the communities of older people we serve and ensure that our programs and activities are inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to their needs.

1.4 Transparency and Accountability

We uphold openness and transparency in our finances, decision-making, and operations. We are accountable to our stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, staff, and the broader public.

1.5 Environmental Responsibility

We are committed to minimising our environmental impact and integrating sustainability into all aspects of our work.

2. Ethical Conduct

2.1 Professionalism

Members and staff must demonstrate professionalism in all interactions, both internally and externally. This includes respect for deadlines, a commitment to high-quality work, and adherence to the organisation's policies and procedures.

2.2 Confidentiality

Members and staff must respect the confidentiality of information related to the organisation, its partners, and beneficiaries. Information should only be shared when necessary and with appropriate authorisation.

2.3 Conflict of Interest

Members and staff must avoid situations where personal interests conflict, or may appear to conflict, with the interests of the organisation. Any potential conflict of interest must be disclosed immediately to supervisors or appropriate authorities within the organisation.

2.4 Use of Resources

Members and staff must use organisational resources, including time, finances, and physical assets, responsibly and for legitimate organisational purposes. Misuse or theft of organisational property is strictly prohibited.

2.5 Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Members and staff are expected to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies in the countries where we operate.

3. Workplace Conduct

3.1 Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

We provide a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. All members, employees and volunteers are treated equally, and we actively promote diversity and inclusion in our recruitment, decision-making, and day-to-day operations.

3.2 Zero Tolerance for Harassment

We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, whether sexual, verbal, physical, or psychological. Any behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment will be addressed immediately and appropriately.

3.3 Health, Safety, and Well-being

We prioritise the physical and mental well-being of all members and staff. We strive to provide a safe and healthy working environment and encourage open communication on any safety or well-being concerns.

3.4 Substance Abuse

The use of illegal drugs or misuse of alcohol or legal drugs while engaged in organisational activities is prohibited. We expect our members to be free from the influence of substances that impair their performance or judgment.

4. Interaction with Beneficiaries and Communities

4.1 Respect for Beneficiaries

Members and staff must treat each other and all beneficiaries with respect, dignity, and fairness. This includes respecting their autonomy, cultural differences, and choices. Consent and participation must be obtained for any decisions or actions affecting them.

4.2 Protection of those in vulnerable situations

Special care must be taken when interacting with persons in vulnerable situation, for example people with disabilities or marginalised populations. Safeguarding and protection from exploitation, abuse, or neglect is paramount in all engagements.

4.3 Non-Exploitation

Members and staff are prohibited from exploiting our partners and beneficiaries, financially or otherwise. This includes any form of coercion, manipulation, or taking unfair advantage of anyone in a vulnerable situation.

5. Reporting Misconduct

5.1 Obligation to Report

Members and staff are encouraged and obligated to report any suspected violations of this Code of Conduct, organisational policies, or the law to Secretary General or the dedicated 'Members' and Staff Liaison Person' – contact is available at AGE Secretariat. AGE will ensure that reports are handled confidentially and investigated promptly.

5.2 Protection Against Retaliation

Retaliation against individuals who report misconduct in good faith is strictly prohibited. Anyone found engaging in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

6. Disciplinary Actions

6.1 Consequences of Violations

Violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or membership status, and, if necessary, referral to law enforcement authorities.

6.2 Fair Process

All allegations of misconduct will be investigated fairly, impartially, and confidentially. The person under investigation will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

We commit to regularly reviewing and updating this Code of Conduct to ensure it reflects evolving standards of integrity, accountability, and ethical behaviour in the NGO sector.

Acknowledgment

All AGE members, including staff and volunteers, are required to read, understand, and adhere to this Code of Conduct. By signing below, you acknowledge your commitment to uphold the values and principles set forth in this document.

This Code of Conduct serves as a foundation for maintaining the trust and respect of our stakeholders and the communities we serve. Let it guide your actions as a member, staff or representative of AGE.

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____



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