

CODE OF CONDUCT

HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE NETWORK

1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets out the professional standards that we, the Human Rights House Network, adhere to. It also provides guidance in the performance of our professional responsibilities towards achieving a common goal to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as set forth in the UN Human Rights Defenders Declaration.

This Code of Conduct aims to:

- establish a standard for the conduct of all organisations and governing bodies in the Human Rights House Network;
- set out the duties of all organisations and governing bodies in the Human Rights House Network;
- set guidelines for communication between the organisations and with external actors.
- improve the effectiveness of our work through enhanced transparency and accountability.

2. Our values

The Code of Conduct is based on the following values of the Human Rights House Network, which we seek to promote:

- The Network is an open forum of cooperation between credible organisations that are members of established and emerging Human Rights Houses. Willingness to participate, contribute and gain are key to our cooperation.
- The Network relies on the principles of mutual trust, respect, solidarity and equality. We shall treat each other and expect to be treated in that way.
- Openness, transparency and reliability are expected from all the members and governing bodies.
- We respect equal rights and dignity of all human beings.
- We communicate in a respectful, non-violent and non-aggressive manner.

3. To whom it applies

The Code governs the conduct of organisations in the Human Rights House Network. It applies to members of all grades, including full members and associate members, Human Rights House Foundation as the Secretariat of the Network, as well as all governing bodies of the Network (the Norwegian board and the International Advisory Board).

Moreover, while this Code of Conduct is specifically made for the members of the Human Rights House Network, we expect our partners, experts, advisors and others who are working with the Human Rights House Network to respect this Code.

4. Breach

The International Advisory Board will consider breach of the Code of Conduct brought to the attention of the Human Rights House Network. Breach of the Code of Conduct may result in the suspension of membership or permanent exclusion from the Network, as well as in termination of further partnership and cooperation. If the partner does not accept the advisory board's decision, he/she has the right to appeal to the annual meeting. The annual meeting decides on a 2/3-majority vote.

5. Principles of Conduct

1. Safety and protection of human rights defenders comes first

Safety of human rights defenders is the first and foremost consideration upon which all our activities and decisions are based.

2. Respect for all human rights of all individuals without discrimination

We respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons in all countries of the world in line with the UN Human Rights Defenders Declaration.

3. Ensure transparency and accountability

We are committed to transparency and openness about our objectives, structure and activities. We seek to be independent from our donors and do not tolerate corruption, both internally and externally.

4. Conflict of interest

Leaders of the Human Rights Houses or member organisations should not engage in political activities that qualify or damage the independence of the HRH or the HRHN.

5. Equality and autonomy

Each organization is an equal partner and retains its autonomy.

6. Act in good faith

We act honestly and in what we believe to be the best interest of human rights defenders, organisations and the Network.

7. Good governance

In the process of decision-making and the process by which our decisions are implemented, we ensure the presence of 8 characteristics of good governance as defined by the United Nations: participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law.

8. Zero tolerance for abusive language

We do not use or tolerate any abusive language in our work.