



Off Stream

Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SHEA)

Purpose

Off Stream is committed to providing a working and collaborative environment founded on respect, safety and the dignity of every individual. This Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment establishes the organisation's commitment to preventing, identifying and responding effectively to incidents of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment across all areas of its work. The policy forms an integral part of Off Stream's broader commitment to equality, inclusion, human rights and non-discrimination, and applies across all organisational activities, partnerships and programmes. Off Stream adopts a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in any form and expects everyone associated with the organisation to uphold the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone engaged in or associated with Off Stream, regardless of the nature of their employment or contractual relationship. It applies to employees, consultants, freelancers, artists, curators, educators, volunteers, project partners, participants, individuals in vulnerable situations and members of the public attending or participating in the organisation's activities. The policy applies equally to interactions taking place in physical settings, digital environments and any professional, creative or social context connected with Off Stream's work.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Sexual harassment means any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, obtaining financial, social or political benefit or any other form of advantage.

Sexual abuse means any actual or threatened sexual act carried out without freely given consent or under conditions of coercion, intimidation, manipulation, unequal power or exploitation.

Policy Principles

Off Stream maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Every report or allegation is treated seriously, confidentially and with respect for the rights and dignity of all individuals involved. The organisation's foremost priority is the protection, safety and wellbeing of individuals who experience or report inappropriate behaviour. Off Stream is equally committed to ensuring that no person is subjected to retaliation, victimisation or any other adverse treatment as a result of raising a concern or participating in an investigation.

Preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment is recognised as a shared responsibility. Everyone involved in Off Stream's activities is expected to contribute to maintaining a culture of respect, accountability and professional integrity. Off Stream further recognises that sexual exploitation and abuse frequently occur in situations characterised by unequal power, dependency or trust. Accordingly, any sexual relationship or conduct that involves the abuse of professional authority, influence or privileged access to individuals in vulnerable situations is strictly prohibited, irrespective of any apparent or purported consent.

Prevention

Off Stream considers prevention to be the most effective means of eliminating sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. The organisation is committed to fostering a culture based on dignity, equality, mutual respect and inclusion by integrating these principles throughout its organisational practices, partnerships and programmes. Clear expectations regarding acceptable standards of behaviour are communicated to employees, collaborators, volunteers and participants alike. Off Stream also seeks to cultivate an environment in which individuals feel safe, supported and empowered to raise concerns or report inappropriate behaviour without fear of retaliation or prejudice.

Reporting procedure

Any individual who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may constitute sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment can report their concerns promptly, safely and without fear of retaliation. Reports should be made to the organisation's Gender Equality and Inclusion Officer, who serves as the designated focal point for receiving, recording and managing reports under this policy. All reports are handled with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. Information is shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know in order to ensure an appropriate and fair response. Individuals are encouraged to report concerns as early as possible, regardless of whether they possess complete evidence or whether the alleged conduct has already ceased. Reports made in good faith will always be treated seriously and without prejudice.

Investigation and Case Management

Every report received under this policy is assessed promptly, impartially and with due sensitivity. The organisation considers the nature and seriousness of the allegation, the circumstances in which the incident occurred and its impact on the individual concerned. Throughout the process, Off Stream is committed to safeguarding the dignity, privacy and

rights of all parties involved while ensuring procedural fairness and compliance with applicable legal and data protection requirements.

Where appropriate, the organisation may seek advice or assistance from legal counsel, safeguarding specialists or other suitably qualified independent professionals. Where an investigation substantiates a breach of this policy, Off Stream will take appropriate action proportionate to the seriousness of the case. Depending on the circumstances, such action may include corrective measures, disciplinary action, suspension or termination of collaboration, referral to the relevant authorities, or any other measures necessary to protect those affected and prevent recurrence. The primary objective of every investigation is not only to address the specific incident but also to restore a safe, respectful and inclusive working environment.

Protection from retaliation

Off Stream strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report concerns, make complaints or participate in investigations under this policy. No person shall suffer intimidation, discrimination, adverse treatment or any other negative consequence for raising a concern or cooperating in good faith with an investigation. Any act of retaliation will itself be regarded as a serious breach of this policy and may result in appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

Implementation and Review

This policy is communicated to all individuals engaged in Off Stream's activities and is incorporated into the organisation's partnerships, contractual relationships and operational procedures. Its implementation is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that it remains effective, relevant and responsive to emerging organisational needs, legislative developments and recognised international good practice. The policy is reviewed periodically and updated whenever necessary to strengthen Off Stream's commitment to preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding, accountability and professional conduct.

Final Statement

Off Stream is committed to fostering a culture in which every individual is treated with dignity, respect and fairness. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment have no place within the organisation or any of its activities. Through this policy, Off Stream reaffirms its commitment to creating safe, inclusive and accountable environments in which all individuals can participate, collaborate and create free from fear of abuse, harassment or exploitation.