



# BBC Media Action

## Staff Code of Conduct

<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>BBC Media Action Board of Trustees</b>
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>May 2024</b>
<b>Date for next review</b>	<b>3 years (May 2027)</b>

## BBC Media Action Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out what BBC Media Action expects from all staff and freelancers and complements the BBC's Code of Conduct. The behaviour of each person must demonstrate the highest professional standards. Irresponsible or abusive behaviours can damage the BBC's reputation and impact our ability to deliver our mission. **Compliance with BBC Media Action's Code of Conduct is a contractual requirement for all staff and freelancers** on any contract.

### **Safeguarding**

- Treat colleagues, partner staff and everyone you meet through work with respect.
- Never harm a child, young person, vulnerable adult or anyone else you have contact with.
- Never sexually, physically or emotionally harass, assault, exploit or abuse another person at work or outside work.
- Do not engage in any forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- Do not exchange money, offers of employment, goods or services for sex. Such actions are an exploitative abuse of unequal power relations and incompatible with the mission and values of BBC Media Action
- Do not use any of the organisation's computers or other equipment to view, download, create or distribute inappropriate material (such as pornography).
- If working directly with children, read and follow the advice set out in the section on child protection found in BBC Media Action's safeguarding policy, and complete all the mandatory training modules in relation to working with children.
- Where BBC Media Action staff develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.

### **Protecting health, safety and security**

- Comply with all legal and BBC health and safety requirements.
- Raise a concern if you feel any of these requirements are not being met.
- Complete all mandatory training modules in relation to health and safety.
- Comply with all security guidelines in force where you work.
- Read and follow the advice of any required risk assessments.
- Do nothing that might expose yourself, colleagues, partners or beneficiaries to unreasonable risk of harm.
- Do all you can to protect yourself and other people.

### **Protecting information and resources**

- Use BBC Media Action funding, resources and information in a responsible and appropriate way and in line with BBC Media Action policies and the law. This includes,
  - money,
  - vehicles,
  - media production, IT and communications equipment,
  - BBC Media Action property, including accommodation, provided by the organisation,
  - information and personal data held by BBC Media Action or the BBC (meeting the data protection requirements legislation in force in relevant countries, as well as the UK's General Data Protection Regulation),
  - the BBC Media Action and the BBC name and brand.

## **Personal and professional conduct**

- Don't do anything to undermine the reputation of BBC Media Action or the BBC.
- Inform the recruiting manager during recruitment of any prior conviction that may either have an impact on your ability to deliver work or be a reputational risk to BBC Media Action. Inform them of any safeguarding or fraud concerns raised by any previous employer.
- Don't do anything that is corrupt or exploitative. Neither accept nor offer bribes. Be honest, fair, ethical and accountable in everything you do. Do not use or abuse your position to gain indirect or direct personal advantage.
- Be sensitive to different cultures, beliefs and points of view, and treat those of different race, ethnicity, religion, colour, national origin, age, sex, citizenship, gender, disability, marital status, tribe, caste, sexual orientation, family situation or social class with respect and dignity.
- Be mindful and self-aware regarding the possible unintended impact that your behaviour may have on colleagues or others, and actively try to avoid causing offence or perceptions of harassment.
- Wherever possible, challenge inappropriate behaviour while representing BBC Media Action.
- When working in an international context or travelling internationally on behalf of BBC Media Action, observe all local laws and be sensitive to local customs.
- Do not work (including when representing BBC Media Action at external events) if your judgement is impaired by alcohol. Do not use illegal substances in BBC Media Action offices, vehicles or accommodation. Do not allow the use of alcohol or illegal drugs to impact on your work performance, professional relationships or the reputation of BBC Media Action.
- Tell your manager at BBC Media Action about any requests for information or interviews from the media, and secure permission in advance.
- BBC Media Action staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of the code of conduct. Managers at all levels have responsibilities to support systems which maintain this environment.

## **Private life / conflicts of interest**

- Anything you say or write publicly may be interpreted as expressing the views of BBC Media Action or the BBC. Act and communicate in public in a way that avoids harm to the impartiality of BBC Media Action or the BBC. Seek guidance from your manager if in doubt.
- Ensure that your use of social media does not bring BBC Media Action or the BBC into disrepute.
- Declare any interests (direct or indirect) that might potentially be – or be perceived to be – a conflict of interests. This includes political affiliations, financial/business interests, additional work (paid or unpaid), family or personal relationships. Ensure that any potential conflict of interest does not compromise your work, conduct or BBC Media Action.
- In line with the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, do not enter into a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of eighteen.
- Inform your line manager of a romantic/sexual relationship that develops with a BBC member of staff who is in any way accountable to you. This is to avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interests and so that, where necessary, alternative working arrangements can be made.
- When working outside your home country, inform your line manager if you develop a romantic/sexual relationship with any BBC member of staff and avoid any such relationships

that may create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

- Refrain from developing a romantic/sexual relationship with project beneficiaries including trainees working at partner media organisations. Sexual relationships between BBC Media Action staff and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of BBC Media Action's work.
- Be cautious about developing a romantic/sexual relationship with staff of partner organisations who are in any way connected to the work of BBC Media Action (and inform your line manager if such a relationship exists). These might exploit unequal power relations, undermine the integrity of BBC Media Action's work and/or create a real or perceived conflict of interest.
- Do not accept significant gifts or any remuneration from governments, beneficiaries, partners, donors, suppliers and other persons, which have been offered to you as a result of working with BBC Media Action. In the event that refusal might damage BBC Media Action's reputation or relationships, declare any such items or privileges immediately.

### **IASC principles**

BBC Media Action's code of conduct is aligned with the Inter-Agency Standing committee's six core principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse as follows:

- Sexual exploitation or abuse by BBC Media Action staff constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes the exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
- Sexual relationships between BBC Media Action staff and beneficiaries are prohibited since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of BBC Media Action work.
- Where a BBC Media Action staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by anyone working on or participating in a BBC Media Action project, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.
- BBC Media Action staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of the code of conduct. Managers at all levels have responsibilities to support systems which maintain this environment.

### **Duty to report**

Speak up if you see others doing wrong and take others seriously if they raise the alarm. Speaking up can be difficult. The usual route to take is to discuss any concerns with your line manager. If you are not comfortable with doing this, or you feel no action is being taken on concerns that you have already raised, then please make use of the BBC Media Action whistleblowing policy.

### **Related Policies**

- [BBC Media Action Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [BBC Media Action Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [BBC Anti-bribery Policy](#)
- [BBC Acceptable use of Information Systems](#)
- [BBC Editorial Guidelines](#)