

## Cultural Emergency Response (CER)

# Code of Conduct

### 1. Introduction

The code of conduct of the Cultural Emergency Response (CER) takes into consideration the nature of the organisation, the fact that CER is financed in large part by the Prince Claus Fund through a subsidy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from public taxes and that it functions in and communicates with different cultures. CER's way of working should be in line with its mission and vision.

#### Mission:

Our mission is to coordinate and support locally-led protection of heritage under threat. We promote inclusivity and accessibility by developing and strengthening decentralised infrastructures for cultural emergency response. We provide fast, flexible support to fit the needs of local actors in crisis situations and invest in the capacities of our partners through dialogue, training, and sharing expertise. Our advocacy work makes the case that cultural rescue is a vital component of humanitarian relief.

#### Vision:

We see a future in which all heritage communities can safeguard their culture in times of crisis. We want to build a strong and inclusive heritage system in a world that recognises the protection of cultural heritage as a humanitarian issue.

It is essential to maintain the quality of internal and external communications, as well as transparency concerning decisions for the reputation and image of CER and to ensure that in dealings with CER people feel properly treated. It requires a professional and open attitude towards the various people who work for CER and to those who deal with CER. These include people of all ages, from all parts of the world, with different faiths and in many different roles.

We make the following guarantees in line with the requests of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

1. That CER has a safe and trusted environment that offers protection to all the people who are in contact with CER, including partners, staff, and volunteers.
2. That CER prioritises a culture of protection, in which people who observe, or experience violations of integrity are able to speak out, report incidents and concerns, with the assurance that complaints will be handled with care.

3. That CER has a broad policy for conduct that is known, with clear procedures and rules to adequately protect people.
4. That within CER there is complete clarity as to how incidents and accusations will be handled, including reporting to competent authorities.

## 2. Organisation

Cultural Emergency Response must be transparent about its goals and who belongs to its target groups; it must be clear in its decision-making process and the outcomes that result; clear in agreements made with third parties and with its own staff and it is obligated to inform people concerned, such as partners and members of the Board, in a timely and sufficient manner about policy, finances and activities.

CER accepts that it has responsibilities towards a variety of groups and individuals.

These include people who:

- submit a proposal.
- have a financial relationship with CER.
- request information about the work, goals, and network of CER
- are national or international collaborating partners.
- are staff members, interns, Board members or advisors.

All the parties named above can count on communications with Cultural Emergency Response that are clear, helpful, and accessible.

Staff members of CER are sufficiently informed and able to carry out the responsibilities that are appropriate for their function.

CER provides stimulating working conditions and suitable opportunities for further development. It expects employees and board members to be prepared to take responsibility for the way in which they perform their duties and to demonstrate the commitment required for active, open and honest action by CER. Collegial relationships and credibility with a view to the public interest are a shared responsibility for both director and employees.

## 3. Basic values

In all its dealings, Cultural Emergency Response must be governed by several guiding principles or basic values:

We are fast, agile, and pragmatic. We take concrete action. We proactively support fast and efficient coordinated response. We are flexible and adapt quickly to needs on the ground.

We are universal and inclusive. We help people all around the globe where cultural heritage is under threat. We stand by vulnerable communities and support people and places that are often overlooked.

We are open and reliable. We show up. We are consistent, accessible, and transparent. We work with integrity and always based on solidarity, mutual trust, and respect.

We are humane. We bring assistance without discrimination; we promote mutual collaboration inclusivity and respect. We put people first in our culture, decision-making and approach.

We are pioneers. We aim to lead the way in cultural emergency response. We advocate for the importance of heritage protection.

We value exchange and collaboration. We highly value our network and collaboration. We make an effort to share knowledge and expertise to foster connections and amplify our work and the work of our partners. We are curious and open to learn.

### Elaboration of the Basic Values

The basic values listed above determine the actions and omissions of CER vis-à-vis its stakeholders. In practice, these values have concrete significance for the institution's relationship with donors and other funders as well as with the aims of the projects it supports, for relationships with fellow institutions, with the government and with the general public.

Compliance with the basic values means that:

a. Donors can trust that:

- Respect will be shown to both the donor and the project partner concerned.
- Correct and complete information will be made available relating to their contribution.
- The aim will be to achieve the highest quality in all activities undertaken.
- To the extent possible, all funds received will be spent on the stated aim.
- A full, fair, and comprehensible account will be given of the use of resources and the activities to achieve the objective.

b. Grantees and partner organisations can trust that:

- They will be treated with respect
- In realising their project and its goals, the aim is to achieve the highest quality in all activities

c. Interns and volunteers can trust that:

- They will be given good guidance and clear instructions and any specific rules for the tasks they are expected to perform
- They will work in a positive and open atmosphere and under good conditions
- They will be appropriately valued for their contribution and commitment

d. Collaborating institutions can trust that the CER will

- interact on the basis of mutual respect
- be willing to consult on common interests;
- seek coordination and cooperation in fundraising, selection and management of projects and disbursement of funds
- assume that all parties adhere to generally accepted values and norms, both of social behaviour and of the principles of the democratic constitutional state.

#### 4. Integrity policy

##### a) Staff

Integrity means that everyone who carries out work in the service of CER is aware that they each represent an institution that in turn represents the interests of many others. This requires that each employee performs their work in a professional, responsible and careful manner, with attention to service and the required confidentiality.

It is important that there is an organizational culture in which:

- there is clarity about what CER stands for
- problems can be resolved through discussion
- management acts with integrity (they set the standard and lead by example)
- employees are involved and are able to meet expectations with regard to ethical conduct
- there is transparency about what ethical behaviour entails
- there is a culture of accountability.

Integrity can be further defined by a number of key concepts:

##### Service

An employee of CER is at the service of the CER's contacts and relations. This requires being creative and communicative and willing to take an extra step if necessary.

##### Professionalism

Employees of CER are professionals in their field. Employees know what their job entails and have the knowledge and skills to fulfil it well. They follow developments in their profession, take initiative where necessary and know how to deal with new situations.

### Responsibility

Responsible performance rests on these elements:

- CER gives its employees the responsibilities that are appropriate to their positions;
- employees are willing to take on their responsibilities;
- employees feel accountable to colleagues, managers, and the public at large for the way in which they fulfil their responsibilities.

Employees of CER are aware that they work on behalf of CER, with resources from CER and in the interests of CER. This requires careful exercise of CER's powers and use of its financial and material resources. It also requires care towards people, CER's partners and public as well as colleagues, who each deserve consideration, respect and credibility.

### Confidentiality

Strict confidentiality is honoured for any knowledge and information of a confidential nature that is available to the CER's employees. Third parties and colleagues can count on sensitive or confidential information only being used for the specific purpose it was given.

### Independence

CER's employees avoid situations in which their personal interests or the interests of the relations of CER that they are in contact with are in conflict with, or might conflict with, the interests of the CER. Where possible they avoid even the appearance of such a conflict of interests.

### **b) Board members**

The Board of Cultural Emergency Response follows the recommendations of the Governance Code Cultuur and good governance is embedded in CER's statutes.

Administrative integrity and responsibility can be further defined by a number of key concepts:

### Service

Commitment to CER's interests and to the interests of CER's partners should be the hallmark of their actions.

### Functionality

Actions taken by board members must have a demonstrable link with their function on the board; CER's best interests must be their guiding principle.

### Independence

Members of the Board avoid situations in which their personal interests or the interests of groups they are associated with are, or can be, in conflict with the interests of CER. To the extent possible, they will avoid even the appearance of such a conflict of interests.

### Openness

Openness and transparency are guiding principles for CER and for its Board members, but must be exercised responsibly, given the complex and sensitive political context within which the board works.

### Confidentiality

Board members will be careful that the knowledge and information available to them by virtue of their position will not be used in any way that harms the interests of CER or third parties.

### Responsibility

Members of the board show respect to all individuals and bodies with whom they have contact in the performance of their duties.

## 5. Rules and standards regarding inappropriate behaviour

### No tolerance policy

Inappropriate behaviour between colleagues (including superiors) is unacceptable. A work climate characterised by openness, commitment and trust are important for employees as well as the organisation as a whole. Cultural Emergency Response takes all complaints very seriously. This also includes inappropriate behaviour towards CER staff and interns by partners or contacts of CER that they come in contact within the course of their work. There is no place for bullying, any type of verbal or physical harassment, aggression, racial or any other type of discrimination, such as ageism or sexism.

### Definition of harassment

Harassment in general is any unwelcome conduct that makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. In dealing with allegations of sexual harassment, the starting point is not the intention or interpretation of the perpetrator but how the recipient experiences the behaviour. It creates an unpleasant working environment for the recipient. Any form of harassment can involve one or more incidents, actions or behaviour that may be physical, verbal or non-verbal.

Harassment is often based on stereotypes (e.g. racial, ethnic, religious or LGBTQ+). It may include, but is not limited to:

- Offensive jokes or remarks about a person's appearance, beliefs, behaviour, or background
- Mimicking of speech patterns, behaviour, or physical attributes in a way that is meant to demean
- Exclusion from normal workplace conversation or activities because of ethnic origin, colour, nationality sexual orientation or beliefs
- Intentional and systematic difference in treatment based on expectations that come from (negative) stereotypes

Sexual harassment refers specifically to conduct of a sexual nature. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, contract or supply of services. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Staring, leering or unwelcome physical touching
- Sexual or suggestive comments, jokes, or taunts
- Making or displaying sexually demeaning gestures, offensive pictures, or other materials in the workplace
- Making remarks with sexual connotations
- Unwanted invitations to go out on dates
- Unsolicited demands or request for sexual favours
- Intrusive questions about a person's private life or body
- Unnecessary familiarity such as deliberately brushing up against a person
- Unsolicited acts of physical intimacy
- Sexually explicit physical contact
- Sexually explicit letter, emails, SMS text messages or social media expressions
- Repeatedly asking a person to socialize during off duty hours when the person is not interested
- Giving unwanted gifts or any objects that are of a sexual nature
- Off duty, unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that affects the work environment.

Discrimination is against the law in the Netherlands. Some forms of sexual harassment, such as physical/sexual assault, rape, indecent exposure and stalking, are also criminal offences and will be reported to the police.

Labour disputes do not fall under the category of sexual harassment. These conflicts are resolved between the employee and the director.

### Procedure

Interpersonal relationships, especially in intercultural contexts, are complex and may lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding. Some misunderstandings are quickly resolved by direct confrontation, but in cases where that is not possible, or when the offensive behaviour persists, the next possibility, if appropriate, is for the employee to discuss the complaint with their superior or the HR representative to try to find a solution.

If those first steps do not lead to a solution, the steps of the whistleblower procedure can be followed. Since CER is a very small organisation, the composition of the complaints committee will vary according to the people involved in the complaint. This way the submission and handling of the complaint can be done in a secured, safe, confidential and accessible way, in line with the current integrity norms.

## **Annexe 1**

### Overview of other relevant regulations and protocols of CER

- Governance Code for cultural organisations
- Complaints Procedure
- Regulations concerning whistleblowers (klokkenluidersregeling)
- Administrative Organisation
- Relevant paragraphs in contracts in connection with confidentiality, etc.