

## Ethical Policy

**The Geographical Association (GA) is a membership organisation and charity and, as such, acts on behalf of the membership and in an ethically responsible manner. This is carried out in accordance with the NCVO Ethical Principles (January 2019).**

### The GA's Ethical Principles

The GA upholds the following ethical principles, **working not only for its beneficiaries and staff** but also any person who has contact with the GA under any circumstances, ensuring they experience **integrity, openness** and have **the right to feel safe**.

Throughout its work, the GA will:

- respect every individual's dignity and rights to safety, privacy and confidentiality
- commit to name, challenge and act upon any instances of power imbalance, leading to prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, based on another person's sex, gender, beliefs, values, social class, age, disability, religion, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language or nationality
- value and widen diversity in the governing body, committees, special interest groups, boards and the staff.

This policy underpins all the work of the GA and may overlap, or duplicate, provisions made in other GA policies.

### Working for Beneficiaries and Staff

The GA carries out its purpose for the benefit of the public, beneficiaries and staff. .

Therefore, the GA:

- has a clear purpose.
- knows who its beneficiaries and staff are.
- ensures the views of beneficiaries and staff, are actively listened to and taken account of as part of how the GA operates, facilitating engagement and communication.
- ensures that all relevant policies and procedures are drawn up with the interests of beneficiaries, and staff in mind.

### Working with Integrity

The GA, its beneficiaries and staff should always uphold the highest level of institutional integrity and personal conduct.

Furthermore, GA beneficiaries and members of staff should:

- ensure appropriate systems are in place to help guarantee that all decisions are robust, defensible and free from conflict of interest.

- consider the effect of activities conducted on the reputation of the GA and of charities generally.
- ensure their resources are managed responsibly and their funds are properly protected, applied and accounted for, including policies and procedures to combat the risk of bribery, fraud, corruption and extortion.
- exercise due diligence in understanding the ethical standards of commercial partners and individuals, to seek support or collaboration from those with ethical values that are consistent with those of the GA.
- exercise due diligence when investing the financial resources of the GA and that only companies with similar ethical principles should be considered
- assess the impact of their activities on both natural and human environments by:
  - making responsible use of resources
  - adopting environmentally sustainable working practices
  - undertaking initiatives to promote social and environmental responsibility

### **Working with openness**

The GA creates a culture and space where beneficiaries, staff and the wider public, can see and understand how the Association works, including how it spend their funds and deals with problems when they arise.

Furthermore, GA beneficiaries and staff:

- operate a presumption of openness and transparency; subject to complying with existing legal and regulatory requirements, the GA should be willing to share information about how they work, ensuring it is easily accessible.
- establish clear lines of responsibility and accountability for all their work, both internally and externally where applicable.
- publish, or at least make available on request:
  - annual reports, including reference to how the GA's purpose and values are being fulfilled.
  - the approach to safeguarding, bullying and harassment.
  - the complaints procedure.
  - the whistleblowing policy.

### **Ensuring all have the right to be safe**

Every person who is a beneficiary or a member of staff or who encounters the GA should be treated with dignity and respect and feel that they are in a safe and supportive environment.

The GA has a responsibility to create an inclusive culture that does not tolerate inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive or harmful behaviour towards any person who works for, is a member, or who encounters the GA. The GA is a place where people's wellbeing and mental health are valued and promoted.

Furthermore, GA beneficiaries and staff:

- stand against and have a clear approach to prevent abuse of trust and power including bullying, intimidation, harassment, discrimination or victimisation in all their activities.
- create a culture that supports the reporting and resolution of allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse of any kind or inappropriate behaviour.
- ensure that anyone who is a beneficiary of, or working for, the GA understands the expectations placed upon them, and provide the relevant training to support them in meeting their responsibilities.

- value and invest in their own health and wellbeing.
- ensure that anyone who is a beneficiary, or who works for, the GA has access to proper support and advice if during the course of their membership activities or whilst working for they GA they:
  - experience or witness unacceptable behaviour
  - raise a concern or make an allegation about the actions of other
  - do not feel safe.

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