

Code of Conduct

The Critical Education Association

I. MISSION, VISION & VALUES

This part seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. It is not about operational details, rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which the Critical Education Association aspires.

OUR MISSION

Child welfare is our priority.

We care for those whose voices are silenced, especially children and youth.

OUR VISION

Through research, reflection and action together with children and youth we change their small worlds of leaving because we care for a big change.

OUR VALUES

JOY

We bring joy to other people. We see and enjoy the effects of work and being together.

We smile, we are moved with happiness. We look for reasons to be happy in small things. We are nice to each other. We turn things into a joke.

CARE

We make the world better and support each other.

We offer real help to others in their own activities.

DEVELOPMENT

We teach others and each other, we give people opportunities to implement new initiatives and personal development.

We are learning from each other. We organise formal training and use them.

TRUST

We trust ourselves and other people and build relationships based on trust.

We believe in people. We give them the opportunity to exceed their own limitations and entrust them with demanding, difficult and satisfying tasks.

FREEDOM

We are open to people and give them freedom to implement their ideas, believing that what we do makes sense.

We allow others to implement their own ideas.

COOPERATION

We like to work with people and for people, we create good relationships.

We actively participate in our projects, working with the people we help. We are in constant contact with each other. We share tasks.

RESPONSIBILITY

We take responsibility for the actions entrusted to us, as well for the people we help and cooperate with. We do what we agreed on. We report and react to problems. We are looking for solutions. We formalise projects. We support each other.

II. GOALS AND METHODS OF OPERATION

The aims of the Association are: scientific and social activities for development and education of communities at risk of exclusion – including the activation of women, as well as educational, didactic and charitable activities for the benefit of children and youth.

In addition, the Association's goals include:

- Child Protection
- Educating in the sphere of Children's and Youth Rights
- Creating conditions conducive to the integration of local communities.
- Equalizing educational opportunities of women and children from the areas at risk of exclusion.
- Counteracting discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, socio-economic status, religion, race, and ethnicity.
- Acting to eliminate the disadvantage of women in public life, on the labour market, in the society and culture.
- Promotion and protection of human freedoms and rights, as well as civil liberties.
- Promotion of equality between women and men, in particular in the labour market and in the domestic sphere.
- Counteracting violence against women, children, and youth.

Removing barriers related to access to knowledge about new technologies and educational

- opportunities.
- Supporting small entrepreneurs and social cooperatives.
- Civic and environmental education for local communities.
- Social assistance, including assistance rendered to families and people in difficult life situations, the disabled and single mothers, as well as providing these families and people with equal opportunities.
- Maintaining cultural traditions and natural heritage.
- Promotion of sport, sightseeing, and tourism.
- Supporting the handicrafts and arts of the inhabitants of rural areas.
- Working towards the European integration and supporting contacts between communities.
- Working for the benefit of seniors, including operations aimed at activating them, i.e., meetings, workshops, classes, running Senior Clubs, promoting intergenerational activities.
- Activities for the development of civil society.
- Activities for anti-discrimination, multicultural education.
- Running Local Activity Centres, Neighbourhood Clubs, Community Clubs, etc.

The above goals will be realized through paid and unpaid public benefit activities, including:

- Child protection services
- Educational and didactic activities in communities at risk of exclusion.
- Running day-rooms, activity centres and clubs for children and youth.

- Activating women in the Radical Housewives Clubs.
- Running small kindergartens.
- Organizing meetings, classes, creative activities, campaigns and other forms of promoting the rights of women and children.
- Organizing courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, concerts and all kinds of events integrating the local community.
- Organizing competitions and awarding prizes.
- Cooperating with other foundations and organizations that have similar goals.
- Disseminating knowledge about the situation of children and women in Poland.
- Promoting new technologies and educational opportunities among mothers and their children.
- Carrying out operations for information and intervention.
- Organizing media campaigns (campaigns and social actions) promoting the rights of women and children in Poland.
- Conducting research and publishing activities, including designing and publishing magazines and books.
- Organizing legal, civic and other consultations.
- Charitable activities promoting self-help in communities at risk of exclusion.
- Promoting and organizing volunteering.
- Organizing activities for seniors: including classes, workshops, Senior Clubs, intergenerational meetings.
- Activities for anti-discrimination, multicultural education.
- Promoting civic society.

In addition to the implementation of initiatives initiated by it, the Association cooperates with other institutions, organizations and people to achieve common statutory goals. This cooperation may take the form of organizational support, partial or total financing of the project or assistance in obtaining the necessary funds from other sources.

The Association may also pursue its statutory goals through membership in organizations uniting Polish and foreign foundations and associations, with statutory goals similar to or identical to the Association's goals.

III. Basic standard

This part CoC sets out the basic standard of conduct expected of all staff and the organisation's policy on matters like acceptance of advantages and declaration of conflict of interest by staff in connection with their official duties.

1. Prevention of Bribery Ordinance

An employee of an organisation who solicits or accepts an advantage in connection with his work without the permission of the employer may commit an offence. The term "advantage" is defined in the Ordinance and includes almost anything of value, except entertainment, such as money, gift, commission, loan, fee, reward, office, employment, contract, service or favour (Appendix 1).

2. Acceptance of Advantages

It is the policy of this organisation to prohibit all staff from soliciting any advantage from any persons having business dealings with the organisation (e.g. clients, suppliers, contractors). Staff who wish to

accept any advantage from such persons should seek special permission from the Management Board prior to the acceptance.

Any gifts offered voluntarily to the staff in their official capacity are regarded as gifts to the organisation and they should not be accepted without permission. Staff should decline the offer if the acceptance could affect their objectivity in conducting the organisation's business, or induce them to act against the interest of the organisation, or lead to complaints of bias or impropriety.

For gifts which are presented to staff in their official capacity and of nominal value (below 50 zł), the refusal of which could be seen as unsociable or impolite (e.g. a plaque presented to a staff member during a seminar in which he is invited to be the guest speaker), the Management Board has given a blanket permission for the staff to accept these gifts. In other circumstances, the staff should apply in writing to the Management Board for permission to accept the gifts. Each application should be carefully considered by the Management Board delegated the authority to consider such applications. Proper records of these applications should be kept showing the name of the applicant, the occasion of the offer, the nature and estimated value of the gift, and whether permission has been granted for the applicant to retain the gift or other directions have been given to dispose of the gift. Possible ways of disposal of such gifts are listed at Appendix 2.

There is however no restriction on the acceptance of advantages, in the staff's private capacity, from any person who does not have any official dealings with the organisation. In case of doubt, the staff should refer the matter to Kamila Kamińska for advice and instruction.

3. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest situation arises when the "private interests" of the staff compete or conflict with the interests of the organisation. "Private interests" means both the financial and personal interests of the staff or those of their connections including:

family and other relations;

- personal friends;
- the clubs and societies to which they belong; and
- z any person to whom they owe a favour or are obligated in any way.

Staff should avoid using their official position or any information made available to them in the course of their duties to benefit themselves, their relations or any other persons with whom they have personal or social ties. They should avoid putting themselves in a position that may lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the organisation. Failure to avoid or declare any conflict of interest may give rise to criticism of favouritism, abuse of authority or even allegations of corruption. In particular, staff involved in the procurement process should declare conflict of interest if they are closely related to or have beneficial interest in any company which is being considered for selection as the Association's supplier of goods or services. Appendix 3 provides some examples of conflict of interest situations which may be encountered by staff.

When called upon to deal with matters of the organisation for which there is an actual or perceived conflict of interest, the staff member should make a declaration in writing to his supervisor. He should then abstain from dealing with the matter in question or follow the instruction of his supervisor who may reassign the task to other staff.

4. Entertainment

As defined in Section of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, “entertainment” refers to food or drink provided for immediate consumption on the occasion, and any other entertainment provided at the same time. Although entertainment is an acceptable form of business and social behaviour and is not an “advantage”, staff must not accept lavish or frequent entertainment from persons with whom the organisation has official dealings (e.g. suppliers or contractors), so that they will not be placed in a position of obligation to the offerer.

5. Misuse of Official Position

Staff who misuse their official position for personal gains or to favour their relatives or friends are liable to disciplinary action or even prosecution. Examples of misuse include a staff member responsible for the selection of suppliers giving undue favour or leaking tender information to his relative’s company with a view to awarding the contract to the latter.

6. Handling of Classified or Proprietary Information

Staff are not allowed to disclose any classified or proprietary information to anybody without authorisation. Staff who have access to or are in control of such information should at all times provide adequate safeguards to prevent its abuse or misuse. Examples of misuse include disclosure of information in return for monetary rewards, or use of information for personal interest. It should also be noted that unauthorised disclosure of any personal data may result in a breach of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

7. Property of the Organisation

Staff given access to any property of the organisation should ensure that it is properly used for the purpose of conducting the organisation’s business. Misappropriation of the organisation’s property for personal use or resale is strictly prohibited.

8. Gambling

Staff must not engage in frequent or excessive gambling with persons who have business dealings with the organisation as well as among colleagues, particularly with subordinates. If on social occasions where refusal of gambling is considered unsociable, the amount of money involved should not be significant. Gambling in the organisation’s premises is strictly forbidden.

9. Outside Employment

Staff who wish to take up paid outside work, including those on a part-time basis, must seek the written approval of the organisation before accepting the job. Applications for outside work should be made to Kamila Kamińska for consideration. Approval will not be given if the outside work is in conflict with the interest of the organisation.

10. Compliance with the Code

It is the personal responsibility of every staff member to understand and comply with the Code of Conduct.

All managers should also in their daily supervision ensure that their subordinates understand and comply with the standards and requirements stated in the Code. Any problems encountered as well as any suggestions should be channelled to Kamila Kamińska for consideration and advice.

Any staff member who violates any provision of the Code will be subject to disciplinary action. In cases of suspected corruption or other criminal offences, a report will be made to the Critical Education Association.

Appendix 1

“Advantage” means :

- (a) any gift, loan, fee, reward or commission consisting of money or of any valuable security or of other property or interest in property of any description;
- (b) any office, employment or contract;
- (c) any payment, release, discharge or liquidation of any loan, obligation or other liability, whether in whole or in part;
- (d) any other service, or favour (other than entertainment), protection from any penalty or disability incurred or apprehended or from any action or proceedings of a disciplinary, civil or criminal nature, whether or not already instituted;
- (e) the exercise or forbearance from the exercise of any right or any power or duty; and
- (f) any offer, undertaking or promise, whether conditional or unconditional, of any advantage within the meaning of any of the preceding paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e), but does not include an election donation within the meaning of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance, particulars of which are included in an election return in accordance with that Ordinance.

Appendix 2

Ways to dispose of gifts presented to a staff member in his official capacity

- If the gift is of perishable nature (e.g. food or drink), it may be shared among the office or during an activity organised by a service unit of the NGO.
- If the gift is a useful item, it may be sent to a charitable organisation or a service unit of the NGO.
- If the gift is of historical or other interest, it may be sent to a library or museum.
- If the gift is suitable for display (e.g. a painting, vase, etc), it may be retained for display in the recipient's office or elsewhere in the organisation.
- If the gift is of low value (below 100 zł), it may be donated to the organisation's social function as a lucky draw prize.
- If the gift is a personal item of low value (below 50 zł), it may be retained by the recipient.

Appendix 3

Examples of Conflict of Interest Situations

A staff member takes part in the selection of suppliers or contractors, one of the bidders under consideration being his family member, relative or close personal friend.

A staff member has a financial interest in a company which is being considered for selection as the Association's supplier of goods or services.

A staff member accepts frequent or lavish entertainment or expensive gifts from the Association's suppliers or contractors.

A staff member serves as a member of the Association's recruitment or promotion board, and one of the candidates under consideration by the board is his family member, relative or close personal friend.

A staff member responsible for processing applications for admission to a home for the elderly operated by the Association is considering an application from his family member, relative or personal friend.