



Code of Conduct

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, March 2019

The Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) exists to uphold the rights of the world's rainforest communities and to champion their rights, both locally and globally. In order to achieve this mission, we have gained the trust of many of the world's rainforest communities, our partners who work in these locations, and of the people and institutions who support our work.

RFUK expects its staff and representatives to adhere to high standards of conduct and behaviour in their professional lives, including free time or rest periods undertaken as part of a defined RFUK mission or assignment. For the purposes of RFUK's Code of Conduct, the word *staff* is used throughout the document to refer to any individual representing or acting on behalf of RFUK, regardless of their legal employment status with the organisation. The *minimum* standards expected are described in this Code of Conduct; however, this list is not exhaustive, nor will all of its parameters be applicable in all contexts. RFUK expects all individuals who represent the organisation to use good judgement in applying the Code to their specific context, and to behave and act in accordance with and spirit of this Code. Familiarisation on the Code's contents will be provided during staff induction periods. However, the Code can be updated at any point, and any changes will be communicated to staff in a timely manner. Unfamiliarity with updated content cannot be claimed as a defence for violating any of aspects of the Code.

This Code of Conduct applies to all RFUK staff and representatives (including but not limited to trustees, ambassadors and volunteers) equally. Its purpose is to protect the well-being of anyone who comes into contact with the organisation and to outline the expected behaviours of staff and representatives. Adherence to the Code of Conduct is non-negotiable, and violating the Code may result in disciplinary action, as outlined in the RFUK Staff Manual and/or severance of your relationship with RFUK.

RFUK acknowledges that staff have distinct professional and private lives. However, external stakeholders may not make such a distinction, particularly if the staff member has publically identified themselves as representing RFUK. In such instances the actions and behaviours of staff could endanger the well-being or damage the reputation of colleagues and/or RFUK. Staff should be mindful of their actions and behaviour at all times and endeavour not to engage in activities that could result in harm to the organisation. In extreme cases, violation of this Code during personal time could oblige RFUK to take disciplinary action.

The content of this Code of Conduct, as listed below, has been developed in adherence to the legal and regulatory context which RFUK operates in and acknowledges best practice and standards set by other organisations similar to us. More importantly, it is grounded in our organisation's values, mission statement, policies, and reflects an expectation that RFUK staff will act and behave in a way that befits the RFUK's ethos.

1) Respect

- a. RFUK staff will treat all people with dignity and without discrimination based upon their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, nationality, pregnancy/maternity/paternity, race, religion/beliefs, sex, or sexual orientation;
- b. RFUK staff will respect the opinions of others and will make all reasonable efforts to resolve conflict and disagreement amicably;

- c. RFUK staff will maintain a professional, inviting and dignified working environment;
- d. RFUK staff will respect the independence and expertise of other colleagues, and refrain from providing undue or unconstructive criticism;
- e. RFUK staff will behave in a manner that is respectful of local customs and norms;
- f. RFUK staff will endeavour to ensure that no harm comes to any individuals as a result of activities they are conducting;
- g. RFUK staff will only report against the activities of others in an accurate and fair manner, and will not withhold or intentionally misconstrue evidence to serve their own purposes;
- h. RFUK staff will maintain confidentiality of all personal data that they process, in line with the RFUK's data protection policy and any relevant or applicable legal requirements.

2) Probity and stewardship

- a. RFUK staff will be transparent in their ways of working. They will not hide or restrict access to their work, unless there are legitimate reasons to do so in the interests of intellectual property, confidentiality or security;
- b. RFUK staff will notify their line manager if they are convicted of a crime, while employed by RFUK (except for minor traffic violations);
- c. RFUK staff will remain accountable for all resources, financial and otherwise, that are endowed upon them by the organisation and will maintain receipts and accurate records to account for their expenditure of the organisation's funds;
- d. RFUK staff will not offer or accept bribes, and will only offer or accept gifts provided that they are in line with the parameters in RFUK's policies on bribery, gifts and hospitality;
- e. RFUK staff will refrain from entering into any business or other contractual relationships on behalf of the organisation, with family, friends or other personal/professional contacts for the supply of any goods or services, except in cases where the person(s) apply for and are offered the tender through an open and accountable process;
- f. RFUK staff will not claim to represent, and/or make public statements on behalf of, RFUK unless the activity is sanctioned by the Executive Director or Head of Communications. Staff are, however, permitted to promote and distribute public-facing and sanctioned communications outputs, such as RFUK social media content and fundraising activities.

3) Behaviour and conduct

- a. RFUK staff will strive to be innovative in their work and to apply a results-oriented approach to overcoming obstacles and resolving challenges;
- b. RFUK staff will adhere to all RFUK policies, and will report violations of these in a timely manner;
- c. RFUK staff will not commit acts of bullying, abuse, harassment and/or other forms of assault or intimidation;
- d. RFUK staff will not commit any form of sexual assault, harassment, abuse or exploitation (including exchanging money (or other goods or services) for sex);
- e. RFUK staff will not engage in any form of sexual activity with children (anyone under the age of 18) regardless of the age of consent in the local context, or whether they believed that the other individual was over 18 years old at the time of the encounter¹;
- f. RFUK staff will not purposefully engage in any illegal activity while employed or affiliated with the organisation, including any activity that violates UK law even if they are not in the UK at the time;
- g. RFUK staff will not knowingly affiliate with or provide support to any groups or individuals who promote or carry out terrorist activities (as proscribed by UK law) or with any other groups whose primary intention is to cause harm to, or extort from, others;

- h. RFUK staff are prohibited from carrying or using guns while at work or on deployment, and from carrying other items that could be used as weapons when: it can be reasonably assumed that the intent of the weapon is *not* for self-defence, where such possession is to threaten, commit an offense and/or proactively cause harm to others, or possession of the weapon is illegal;
- i. RFUK staff will refrain from using any RFUK equipment or infrastructure to download, distribute and/or view pornography or other inappropriate materials;
- j. RFUK staff are prohibited from working under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances to such point that it inhibits their ability to do their job or to such point that it damages the reputation of RFUK;
- k. RFUK staff will not abuse their position for personal gain or betterment, except for gains that naturally result from the execution of their duties, and will refrain from using RFUK resources or programmes for conducting any activities for personal monetary gain (or for the gain of family, friends or close associates);
- l. RFUK staff will not abuse their position as an employee of the organisation to promote a personal political agenda and will ensure that any political activities undertaken during personal time do not implicate RFUK or bring the organisation into disrepute;
- m. RFUK staff will maintain professional standards of attendance and time-keeping, in line with their contractual obligations and expectations of their line manager and teammates;
- n. RFUK staff will manage their duties and fulfil their professional requirements in line with agreements made with their line manager and other members of staff, and;
- o. RFUK staff will refrain from damaging the reputation of RFUK, its mission and the organisation's values.

I, _____ have read and understood this Code of Conduct, and agree to be subject to its content throughout my period of employment and/or engagement with RFUK. I understand that breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action taken against me.

Signature:

Date:

Once signed, please return a copy of the document to the HR Advisor or Office Manager. The document will be stored on your personnel file for the duration of your employment with RFUK.

ⁱ The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) states that a child is anyone under the age of 18. RFUK applies this global standard to cover the actions and activities of its representatives regardless of their location where an incident takes place. This age of consent is consistent with DfID/Bond expectations and other codes of conduct published by NGOs headquartered in the United Kingdom.