

Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to set out the ethical conduct and behaviour expected from BGCI. By adhering to the Code of Conduct staff will positively contribute to the BGCI mission to mobilise botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the wellbeing of people and the planet.

2. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all BGCI employees, consultants, volunteers, interns, trustees, as well as agency staff, students or anyone else working on behalf of BGCI (collectively referred to as BGCI *personnel* throughout this Code of Conduct).

This Code of Conduct forms part of all contracts of employment and applies at all times. Breaches of this Code of Conduct are grounds for disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Whilst BGCI recognises that local laws and cultures differ considerably from one country to another, BGCI operates internationally, and therefore this Code of Conduct is developed from international and UN standards. BGCI personnel are expected to uphold local laws wherever they operate, except where the Code of Conduct is more stringent, in which case this Code of Conduct applies.

3. Code of Conduct standards

I will uphold the integrity and reputation of BGCI by ensuring that my professional and personal conduct is consistent with BGCI values and standards:

- I will treat all people fairly with respect and dignity and non-discrimination
- I will seek to ensure that my conduct does not bring BGCI into disrepute and does not impact on or undermine my ability to undertake my BGCI role
- I will be observant of local laws and be sensitive to local customs when working in an international context or travelling on behalf of BGCI
- I will not work under the influence of alcohol, or use or be in possession of illegal substances on BGCI premises.

I will not engage in abusive or exploitative conduct:

- I will not engage in sexual activity or marriage with anyone under the age of 18 years (regardless of the age of majority or the age of sexual consent in the country in which they are living). Mistaken belief about the age of a child is not a defence
- I will not sexually abuse¹ or exploit² or harass³ others, including children or vulnerable adults

¹ sexual abuse - the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (includes sexual assault, rape and molestation)

² sexual exploitation - any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another

³ sexual harassment - unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature

- I will not engage in sexual activity with vulnerable adults
- I will not subject a child or a vulnerable adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- I will not engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults, including child labour or trafficking
- I will not exchange money, employment, goods, or services, for sexual activity, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading and exploitative behaviour.

I will ensure the safety, health and welfare of all BGCI personnel:

- I will adhere to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements in force at my location of work
- I will comply with any local security guidelines and be pro-active in informing management of any necessary changes to such guidelines
- I will behave in a manner such as to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organisations and communities with whom we work.

I will be responsible for the use of information, assets and resources which I access through my BGCI role:

- I will ensure that I use BGCI assets and resources entrusted to me in a responsible manner and will account for all money and property
- I will not use BGCI IT equipment, software or e-mail and social media platforms to engage in activity that is illegal under local or international law or that encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offence.
- I will not use BGCI IT equipment to view, download, create, distribute or save in any format inappropriate or abusive material including but not limited to pornography or depictions of child abuse.

I will perform my duties and conduct my private life in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest:

- I will declare any financial, personal or family (or close intimate relationship) interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of BGCI
- I will not be involved in awarding benefits, contracts for goods or services, employment or promotion within BGCI, to any person with whom I have a financial, personal, family (or close intimate relationship) interests
- I will not accept significant gifts or any remuneration from governments, communities with whom we work, donors, suppliers and other persons which have been offered to me because of my role with BGCI⁴
- I will not permit my BGCI affiliation to be noted in any political or civic organisational materials without the express written approval of the Secretary General

I will uphold confidentiality:

- I will exercise due care in all matters of BGCI, and not divulge any confidential information relating to colleagues, work-related matters or any sensitive information unless legally required to do so.

⁴ The only exception are trivial gifts of a nominal value less than £20 (such as a calendar, chocolates or mugs). All other gifts must be politely refused or returned with a suitably worded letter signed by your line manager

I will promote human rights and environmental protection:

- I will conduct activities in a manner consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- I will make efforts to protect the natural environment and work sustainably.
- I will report any criminal or unethical activities related to BGCI activities

4. Reporting concerns

BGCI personnel are obligated to bring to the attention of the relevant manager any potential incident, abuse or concern that they witness, are made aware of, or suspect which appears to breach this Code of Conduct. BGCI personnel should report concerns according to the BGCI Whistleblowing Policy or the BGCI Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy if appropriate. BGCI personnel reporting concerns are protected by the BGCI Whistleblowing Policy.

I undertake to discharge my duties and regulate my conduct in accordance with the requirements of this code.

5. Associated policies

- BGCI Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
- BGCI Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- BGCI Dignity at Work Policy
- BGCI Safeguarding Policy
- BGCI Whistleblowing Policy

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Created by:	Anne-Marie Frankland
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