



BOTANIC GARDENS CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Code of Conduct

Introduction

BGCI expects its staff (including temporary, agency, interim, contractor or consultant staff) to be scrupulously impartial and honest in all affairs relating to BGCI and their job within it. All staff also bear a responsibility as employees to act as ambassadors for BGCI in terms of their general conduct both within and outside the organisation. This policy outlines the responsibilities of staff working for BGCI.

The duties of an employee are embodied in Common Law and built on by Statute. Under Common Law the duties of an employee are as follows:

- to be ready and willing to work;
- to offer their services personally: for example they must not subcontract the work for which they are employed;
- to take reasonable care in the exercise of that service, including the duty to be competent at work and to take care of BGCI's property;
- to not wilfully disrupt BGCI's business;
- to obey reasonable orders as to the time, place, nature and method of service;
- to work only for BGCI in BGCI's time;
- to disclose information to BGCI relevant to BGCI's business: for example that they might know or discover;
- to hold solely for BGCI the benefit of any invention relevant to the business on which BGCI is engaged;
- to respect BGCI's trade secrets;
- in general, to be of good faith and do nothing to destroy the trust and confidence necessary for employment;
- to account for all benefits – monetary or in kind – received in the course of employment;
- to not give or receive bribes or otherwise act corruptly
- to indemnify the employer for loss caused by the employee.

United Kingdom Statute places further responsibilities on individual employees in regard to their own behaviour and their behaviour towards other employees.

Standards of Conduct Required by BGCI

Bribery and Other Corrupt Behaviour

BGCI has a strict anti-bribery and corruption policy in line with the Bribery Act (See BGCI's **Anti-Bribery & Corruption** Policy, page 8 above). A bribe is defined as: giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly or to reward that person for having already done so. If an employee bribes (or attempts to bribe)

another person, intending either to obtain or retain business for BGCI, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of BGCI's business this will be considered gross misconduct. Similarly accepting or allowing another person to accept a bribe will be considered gross misconduct. In these circumstances the employee will be subject to formal investigation under BGCI's disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be applied.

Gifts and Hospitality

In addition to the duties placed on employees by Civil and Statute Law, BGCI requires its employees to ensure that gifts and hospitality offered by suppliers and potential suppliers of goods and services to BGCI are declined. This applies, whether the gifts or hospitality are offered within, or outside normal working hours. The only exceptions to this are trivial gifts with a nominal value of less than £20 such as a calendar, diary, chocolates or mugs can be accepted. All other gifts must be politely refused or, if received through the post, returned to the donor with a suitably worded letter signed by your line manager.

Transaction of Private Business

Employees having official dealings with contractors and other suppliers of goods or services must avoid transacting any kind of private business with them by any means other than BGCI's normal commercial channels. No personal favours or transactions should be sought or accepted.

Confidentiality

At all times confidentiality must be maintained. No information can be release to unauthorised persons or organisations. The Secretary General or other Senior Managers of BGCI will inform employees of those authorised to receive information. If doubt exists as to the validity of an organisation or individuals to receive information, this must be checked with your line manager.

Outside Interests and Employment

Outside interests include directorships, ownership, part ownership or material shareholdings in companies, business, or consultancies likely to seek to do business with BGCI. These should be declared to the individual's line manager as should the interests of a spouse / partner or close relative.

Political and civic activities

It is not the intention of BGCI or this policy, to dissuade employees from participating actively in public duties. It is important, however, that by doing so there is no suggestion to a third party that the employee is acting on behalf of, or with the support of BGCI. To avoid any misunderstanding, no Company employee should permit his or her company affiliation to be noted in any outside organisation's materials or activities without the express written approval of a member of senior management.

General Conduct

Employees should at all times conduct themselves in such a way as to enhance the reputation of BGCI (see also, BGCI's **Dignity at Work** policy).

BGCI will support employees who become aware of and are willing to report breaches of this policy or who genuinely believe that a breach is occurring, has occurred or is likely to occur within the business. Employees should raise the issue internally with their manager or supervisor or in accordance with BGCI's Policy on Disclosing Information (See **Whistleblowing**).

Compliance with IASC 6 Principles:

1. Termination for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Sexual exploitation and abuse by employees are considered acts of gross misconduct and will result in immediate termination of employment.
2. Prohibition of Sexual Activity with Minors: Engaging in sexual activity with individuals under the age of 18 is strictly prohibited, irrespective of local age of majority or consent laws. Mistaken belief about the age of a minor will not be accepted as a defence.
3. No Exchange of Benefits for Sexual Favors: The exchange of money, employment, goods, services, or any form of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behaviour for sexual favours is prohibited. This includes withholding or offering assistance to beneficiaries in exchange for such acts.
4. Discouragement of Sexual Relationships: Sexual relationships between employees and those with whom the company interacts, especially beneficiaries, are strongly discouraged. These relationships are inherently unequal in power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of our work.
5. Reporting of Suspected Abuse or Exploitation: If an employee has concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether within our company or not, they are obligated to report such concerns through our established reporting mechanisms.
6. Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment: All employees are responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes adherence to our code of conduct. Managers, at all levels, have specific responsibilities to support and develop systems that uphold this environment.

These standards of conduct are intended to underpin and clarify standards required by BGCI of its employees and form a fundamental part of the employment contract. Staff who fail to comply with the guidance detailed in this Policy could be subject, following full investigation, to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If through their actions or omissions staff are found to be in contravention of either this Policy or, indeed, their legal responsibilities then BGCI reserves the right to take legal action if it deems it to be necessary to do so.