MLDI PARTNER CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS

Policy statement

This Code of Conduct and Ethics (the Code) is applicable to Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI)’s partners, including staff and officers of grantees, contractors and consultants and; training and event participants (herein referred to as the Partner). This Code applies equally to all grant recipients, whether recipients of financial or in-kind support.

Our partners are integral to the work that we do. We partner with individuals and organisations all over the world in order to further our human rights work. We are committed to creating working relationships that are safe, respectful and fair. We require our partners to adopt the highest possible standards of ethical and moral conduct in their work, in line with international human rights standards and MLDI’s values and standards.

This code of conduct exists to ensure our partners feel respected and fairly treated, and to ensure that our partners practice the highest possible ethical and moral conduct in their work.

Non-compliance

It is a condition of partnership with MLDI that Partners understand and abide by this Code of Conduct. Non-compliance with this code of conduct may result in immediate termination of a grant, partnership or contract with MLDI. Partners are liable for the actions of their employees and volunteers in relation to this Code.

Please reach out to us at info@mediadefence.org for any questions or feedback you may have about this Code or to report any breaches.

MLDI’s values and standards

- Respect for human rights
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Mutual respect
- Inclusiveness
- Tolerance
- Protection of the environment
- Non-discrimination
- Trust
- Responsibility

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1 as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments
Code of conduct

1. Act in a way consistent with MLDI’s values and standards

MLDI’s Partners are required to act at all times with the highest standards of integrity and in a professional and ethical manner, and in-line MLDI’s values and standards. Grantees, consultants and other partners must always act in the interest of the journalist, blogger or media outlet they are supporting.

2. Respect the environment

Recognising that a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, MLDI’s Partners are required to respect the natural environment and to take into consideration climate protection as far as possible within their ability. They shall comply with all applicable environmental laws, regulations and standards.

3. Treat all people with respect and dignity

All Partners are expected to be committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity in their working and employment practices.

Partners shall not discriminate against any employee/beneficiary/client based on race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, political affiliation, union membership, national origin or marital status.

The Partner shall not engage in harassment, including sexual harassment, of any kind. Harassment is any verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate, silence, or coerce. Partners shall not tolerate harassment within their organisation and shall undertake all appropriate action to address allegations or incidents of harassment.

4. Avoid conflicts of interest

The Partner shall not undertake any action contrary to human rights principles, or which serves to undermine the work of MLDI.

5. Comply with all relevant laws and regulations

The Partner shall fully comply with all laws applicable to its business in the country in which it operates, including international laws and regulations related to anti-money laundering, trafficking and anti-bribery, and observe internal policies that support ethical behaviour.
In countries where there is no relevant law in place, the Partner will apply the standards inherent in this Code. The Partner shall fulfil all agreed contractual obligations with MLDI.

6. Ensure high standards related to anti-bribery and corruption

Partners must not engage in corruption, extortion, fraud or other improper payments or gifts, in any form. In particular, the partner may not offer services, gifts or benefits to MLDI employees in order to influence any part of the MLDI’s business. Partners shall comply with international anti-bribery standards as stated in the United Nations’ Global Compact and local anti-corruption and bribery laws. Partners must declare any interest that compromises the impartial delivery of their activities or service to MLDI.

7. Ensure confidentiality and information security

The Partner shall never breach the confidentiality of information they receive in a professional capacity from MLDI. The Partner shall not access any unauthorised personal and business information of MLDI.

8. Ensure accuracy of financial accounting and reporting

The Partner shall ensure high standards in all financial accounting and reporting matters. In addition to complying with all applicable laws, rules and regulations (including anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism) that govern the conduct of MLDI; and to the extent applicable the Partner will provide to MLDI information that is accurate and not misleading, complete, objective, relevant, timely and understandable. The Partner shall reject any business practice which might reasonably be deemed improper. The Partner will report any wrongdoing regarding accounting, internal accounting controls, auditing or financial matters to MLDI.

No fees or other payments shall be paid to a salaried employee of a grant recipient, unless express and prior agreement has been sought/given by MLDI.

No fees or other costs may be requested/charged to MLDI by a grantee or any member of the grantee’s staff, for any activity for which the grantee or their staff member has already been paid by MLDI or any other entity.

9. Ensure high standards in employment practice

The Partner shall not threaten workers with or subject them to harsh or inhumane treatment, including sexual harassment, sexual abuse, corporal punishment, or mental or physical coercion.

The Partner shall not use any form of forced, bonded, indentured, or compulsory labour. All work must be voluntary, and workers shall be free to leave work or terminate their employment with reasonable notice.

The Partner shall not employ children age 15 or under.

The Partner shall comply with the respective national laws and regulations, including those regarding working hours, wages and benefits, anti-trafficking, and relevant occupational health and safety regulations.

This policy is effective as of 1 July 2018. MLDI reserves the right to update this policy and will strive to notify all affected stakeholders of any changes.