

ELIX - Code of Conduct

Introduction

ELIX is a Greek Non-Governmental Organization committed to promote personal development and everyone's evolution as citizen of the world through active participation in public life. Founded in 1987, ELIX has supported and educated more than 10,000 people to participate in innovative actions in Greece and more than 40 countries around the world. ELIX cultivates voluntary conscience and promotes voluntary offering. It is a civil, nonprofit association, and its main activity is the **organization of international programs of voluntary work and youth exchange**, which are focusing on the **environmental protection, preservation of cultural heritage, promoting cultural and social contribution**.

Mission

Since 1987, Non Government Organisation ELIX has been cultivating voluntary conscience and promoting voluntary service. ELIX's main target is the contribution in the development of the person and his evolution as citizen of the world through his active participation in public life.

ELIX realizes international actions of voluntary participation with main targets the protection of the environment, the preservation of cultural heritage, the promotion of civilization and social service. In order to realize its actions, the organization cooperates with Local Authority Organizations, Government Bodies, Companies, Institutions as well as local environmental and cultural clubs and associations.

ELIX is registered organization at the list of the **First Reception Service (F.R.S) in Greece**, also is member of the international network **Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organizations** since 1991, of the Pan-Hellenic Network of Ecologic Organizations, Conservation Volunteers Alliance and of the Network Volunteerism and Environment.

Since November 2016, ELIX has been implementing the project "Quality Play-Based Learning and Non-Formal Education, Enhanced Psychosocial Well-Being and Positive Integration for Refugee Children Aged 3-17 Years in Greece" in 12 different locations. Through this project, more than 2,500 refugee children, and their parents, have gained access to a flexible and reliable framework offering non-formal educational activities, such as courses of Greek, English, Mother Tongue, Mathematics, Civic Education and Life Skills, in order to enhance their potential and learning pathway.

Key terms and definitions

For the purpose of this Code of Conduct, the following definitions apply:

Abuse of power includes any abusive behavior (physical, psychological, sexual or emotional) by a person in a position of authority and trust against someone in a position of vulnerability and/or dependency.

Accountability means responsible and transparent use of power. A process taking account of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders and primarily those who are affected by actions taken by ELIX.

Bullying is aggression expressed psychologically and emotionally rather than physically. The term is used to describe a repeated pattern of negative intrusive violational behavior against one or more targets and comprises constant trivial fault-finding criticism, refusal to value and acknowledge, undermining, discrediting and a host of other behaviors.

Child means any individual under the age of 18, irrespective of local country definitions of when a child reaches adulthood.

Discrimination means exclusion of, treatment of, or action against an individual based on social status, race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, political affiliation or disability.

Corruption is the "offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may improperly influence the action of any person".

Exploitation is using one's position of authority, influence or control over resources, to pressure, force or manipulate someone to do something against their will or unknowingly, by threatening them with negative repercussions such as withholding project assistance, not approving an employee's work support requests, threatening to make false claims about an employee in public.

Fraud is an intentional distortion, deceit, trickery, and perversion of truth or breach of confidence, relating to an organization's financial, material, or human resources, assets, services and/or transactions, generally for the purpose of personal gain or benefit. Fraud is a criminal deception or the use of false representations to gain an unjust advantage.

Harassment means any unwelcome comment or behavior that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual.

Sexual abuse is actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

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

Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Humanitarian/development worker demanding (or accepting) sex in exchange for material assistance, favors, or privileges.
- Teacher insisting on (or accepting) sex in exchange for passing grade or admission to class.
- Refugee leader demanding (or accepting) sex in exchange for safe passage.
- Driver demanding (or accepting) sex to give a female person a seat in the vehicle.

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advance, comment, expressed or implied sexual demand, touch, joke, gesture, or any other communication or conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, written or visual, by any person to another individual within the scope of work. Sexual harassment may be directed at members of the same or opposite sex and includes harassment based on sexual orientation. Sexual harassment can occur between any one or more individuals, employee or beneficiary, regardless of their work relationship.

Protection means ensuring that individual basic human rights, welfare and physical security are recognized, safeguarded and protected in accordance with international standards.

1. Introduction

ELIX is committed to prevent fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and abuse of power in any form. ELIX as an organization and all ELIX staff members personally are responsible for upholding and promoting the highest ethical and professional standards in their work.

The management of all organizational units in ELIX has a responsibility to ensure that all staff is aware of this Code of Conduct, that they understand what it means in concrete behavioral terms and how it applies to their program context.

2. Purpose

The main purpose of this Code of Conduct is to promote accountability to all our stakeholders, especially the people we work with in our programs. It seeks to protect staff as well as every woman, man, girl and boy with whom we work from abuse by individuals or groups within ELIX. The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as a guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives and at times in their private lives.

3. Scope

The ELIX Code of Conduct applies to all ELIX staff, including national and international, permanent or short-term employees, as well as volunteers, consultants and any others who work for ELIX. The word Staff is used in this document hereinafter in this purpose.

The Code of Conduct shall be signed by all Staff, and it is integral part of their individual employment contract.

ELIX will promote the spirit and principles of the ELIX Code of Conduct among its partner organizations. ELIX has set out relating partner requirements in the ELIX Accountability Framework.

4. ELIX Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is designed to assist Staff to better understand that obligations placed upon their conduct, as to prevent fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, all forms of harassment, security breaches, and unethical business practices.

Therefore, all staff shall at all times:

- Demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication and honesty in all actions,
- Respect and promote fundamental human rights without discrimination,
- Treat all communities with whom we work fairly and with respect, courtesy, dignity and according to International Laws and Standards,
- Promote the implementation of the ELIX Code of Conduct by contributing towards the creation and maintenance of an environment that prevents abuse of power, corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse,
- Report immediately any knowledge, concerns or substantial suspicions of breaches of the Code of Conduct to her/his line manager and/or senior management of ELIX, who is in turn expected to take prompt investigative action,
- Be aware that failure to disclose or knowingly withhold information about any reports, concerns or substantial suspicions of breaches of this Code of Conduct constitutes grounds for disciplinary measures,
- Feel protected by ELIX's commitment to providing a safe environment through which to voice a concern, without fear, reprisal or unfair treatment,
- Uphold the highest standards of accountability, efficiency, competence, integrity and transparency in the provision of goods and services in the execution of their job,
- When sharing images and messages (e.g. in social media) to respect the rights and dignity of the persons in concern, and not to compromise safety of these people, Staff or any other stakeholder,
- Cooperate when requested with any investigation into alleged breaches related to this Code of Conduct.

4.1 Fraud and corruption

ELIX has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption. Staff shall never take advantage of their position when working with communities, partners or other ELIX stakeholders. Therefore, staff shall:

- Promote a culture of honesty and openness among staff and management,
- Be transparent in all work-related financial transactions,
- Never steal, misuse or misappropriated funds or property, ensuring that financial and other resources are used solely for the intended purposes. This applies also to any other income generated such as any interest received/earned on the funds,
- Never engage in "Non-Arms Length Transactions", document or check forgery, money laundering, taking commissions and influencing tender process for improper benefit and theft,

- Create a work environment where communities and Staff can safely and confidentially raise and report all serious concerns about suspected fraud and corruption,
- Never knowingly support individuals or entities involved in illegal activities,
- Never deliberately destroy, falsify, alter or conceal evidence material to an investigation or make false statements to investigators in order to materially influence or impede investigations into corrupt, fraudulent, coercive or collusive allegations,
- Conduct all business in accordance with internationally accepted practices and procedures and uphold the highest standards of accountability and transparency in relations to finances, management and governance, where relevant.

4.2 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual exploitation and abuse is one form of gender-based violence. ELIX recognizes that sexual exploitation and abuse can occur in any development or humanitarian setting. In humanitarian crises, however, the dependency of affected populations on humanitarian agencies for their basic needs creates an additional ethical responsibility and duty of care on the part of all staff.

To protect ELIX stakeholders in all situations, Staff shall while on duty and off duty:

- Understand that sexual exploitation and abuse by staff involved in development and humanitarian work constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment,
- Never engage in any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Sexual activity with children is prohibited within the ELIX. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
- Not accept, solicit or engage in the "buying" of or profiting from sexual services. This is applicable to staff both within and outside of working hours.
- Never exploit the vulnerability of any target group in the context of development and humanitarian work, especially women and children, or allow any person/s to be put into compromising situations,
- Know that the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries,
- Never abuse a position to withhold development or humanitarian assistance, or give preferential treatment; in order to solicit sexual favors, gifts, payments of any kind, or advantage,
- Given the increased vulnerability of populations in crisis situations, Staff are prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with members of crisis-affected populations since such relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work,
- When working with children, avoid actions or behavior which may constitute poor practice and never act in ways that may place a child at risk of abuse,
- In countries where ELIX undertakes long-term development work, an employee who engages in a long-term sexual relationship with a member of the community which is

benefiting from an ELIX program, and/or with another employee, is encouraged to inform his or her manager about the relationship to prevent the perception of a conflict of interest.

4.3 Harassment

Staff shall never commit any act or form of harassment as it results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals, especially women and children. ELIX does not tolerate any form of workplace violation such as harassment (including sexual, gender and racial harassment), bullying and discrimination, that is, any unwelcome comment or behavior that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual.

Therefore, all Staff shall:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect in the workplace. Speak with civility and kindness, listen carefully, and consider other's wellbeing,
- Never commit any act or form of harassment as it causes physical, sexual, psychological or emotional harm or suffering to individuals, especially women, children and people with disabilities,
- Never engage in any behavior, deliberate or otherwise, that makes the recipient feel persecuted, vulnerable and powerless,
- Understand what constitutes harassment, recognize early signs of sexual, gender and racial harassment (among others) and take swift action to prevent and resolve,
- Understand what constitutes bullying, empower Staff that are affected by it, develop strategies for reducing and stopping it, and take necessary disciplinary action against those found to have committed an act or form of harassment,
- Violent, harassing or discriminatory behavior of any kind directed toward another person in the workplace or in the communities with whom ELIX works is unacceptable and shall not be tolerated.

4.4 Unethical business practices

ELIX promotes moral and ethical business practices. Therefore, all Staff shall:

- Always follow transparent, accountable and honest practices when receiving cash donations from the public earmarked for humanitarian or development purposes,
- Never use or accept a bribe in the form of money, goods and or services to secure a contract for services when dealing with suppliers in any development or humanitarian work,
- Never take part in activities that generate personal, organizational or collective profit such as buying or selling when such activities may affect or appear to affect ELIX's credibility or integrity,
- Never share in the profits or budget leftovers as kickbacks, cuts or discounts for personal or organizational benefits,
- Declare any known or potential conflicts of interest to their employer (e.g. direct relationship with service providers or suppliers of goods for ELIX programs, etc.)

- Never accept any gifts or other favors that may influence the performance of staff functions or duties. Gifts are defined, as but not limited to: services, travel, entertainment, material goods, among others. In order to respect national and local traditions and conventional hospitality, minor token gifts such as pens, calendars, desk diaries, etc. can be accepted,
- Never use illegal labor, child labor and forced labor in any work area,
- Always pay compulsory State taxes and comply with national business law and international standards,
- Always strive for the highest health, safety and environmental standards in all program work,
- Ensure, when possible, that goods purchased are produced and delivered under conditions that do not involve the abuse or exploitation of any persons and have the least negative impact on the environment,
- Never use or distribute known unsafe products or supplies in any development or humanitarian setting,

4.5 Security

ELIX places the security and safety of all Staff and those with whom we work as a top priority and will strive to do all that it reasonably can to ensure that Staff are secure as they go about their work.

Security is an individual as well as an organizational responsibility, therefore all Staff shall:

- Remain aware of and comply with the ELIX security principles, guidelines, and procedures,
- Always consider the safety of Staff in operational decisions,
- As a manager endeavor to ensure that the health and well-being of Staff and their families are not subjected to undue risk,
- When having doubts regarding an instruction that threatening one's safety or the safety of other persons, to bring this immediately to the attention one's manager,
- Never drive a vehicle while on duty under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance and comply with the laws of the country in which they are working in relation to both,
- Never use or possess weapons or ammunition of any kind while on duty.

5. Electronic and Online Safeguarding Principles (Social Media wise and/or otherwise)

ELIX adheres to strict Electronic and Online Safeguarding Principles, concerning the use of the internet and any electronic devices that give access to various social medias, electronic platforms and/or wider electronic community virtual environments, and especially to those electronic providers in which ELIX has created the appropriate virtually online learning environment, e-classes, and online courses.

According to minimum standards of child protection and technical details of safeguarding, the following principles apply to all groups and electronic platforms that ELIX is using as a tool to promote learning and education for its beneficiaries:

5.1 Accessibility

- All the principles of this Code of Conduct must apply in a virtual online learning environment, in the same way that are carefully followed in the regular everyday school.
- The virtual e-classes, and/or online lessons, must adhere to an adequate user friendly and secure environment.
- The registration, access, participation and communication of the beneficiaries through, and to, the electronic pages, classes, etc. (digital services) should be done with the consent of the parent/guardian and after signing a corresponding consent form for the digital services, which will be translated, and in mother tongues.
- Parents must be fully aware of the use and development of their children's use and participation of any e-classes, and/or online lessons, even if they are not present at the time of virtual interaction. They must also be made aware of the child protection policies that apply, according to MSCP rules.
- Lesson hours, as well as interaction hours, must be set up in advance not randomly set-up, neither by the teacher nor the student. Currently the time for lessons and communication is Monday to Friday 10:00 am to 18:00 pm.
- To avoid misuse of the e-classes, and/or the online lessons, only 3 administrators must have access to the abilities of updating, changing, deleting and customizing the online material. These three administrators will also monitor the participation of students and teachers and answer any questions or deal with any comments that may arise.

5.2 Safety

- In order to secure transparency in contact and communication, no e-class, and/or online lesson group, can have less than three people attending, including the teacher.
- All communication regarding teaching, sharing materials, solving any learning related questions, as well as the actual teaching itself, must be done through the official communication channels of ELIX and through corporate emails and telephone.
- ELIX staff is forbidden to the exchange of material and information regarding the courses toward third parties, as well as the use of personal details of students, such as telephone numbers, emails, addresses etc. No exchange, and/or publication, of teacher personal details (phone numbers, emails, social media accounts etc.) is allowed.
- Videos and photos of personal nature are not allowed to be exchanged, and/or distributed, between two single parties of interest, meaning either between students or between teachers.

5.3 Equal Opportunities – Children Safeguarding

- Ensure that each beneficiary will have the same opportunities and/or equal access to digital learning services.
- Every child who attends an online course has the right to leave the virtual learning environment at any time, if that does not suit their learning needs. Not all children are familiar with the internet and using it can cause stress or anxiety. The possibility of leaving is open at any time according to the will of the child.

- The risks involved in harassing a child online are increased compared to a school's usual routine. Monitoring of the virtual learning environment will be vigilantly active. Reporting mechanisms are in place on behalf of the social media, as much as on behalf of ELIX.
- ELIX has developed a PSS (Psychosocial Support) intervention plan for emergencies. Teachers can use this support if they realize that a child needs help and support.
- Through the PSS process, no quality data are recorded, unless it is indicated otherwise by the PSS professional in charge, when it is absolutely necessary in regard to the wellbeing of the student/beneficiary. And then again, the process of the PSS documents will not be made known, unless there is a consent by the parents.

5.3 Transparency

- E-learning processes are under constant evaluation by general manager, and/or project manager, to assure transparency. ELIX staff are continuously involved in the process with regular monitoring and evaluation procedures and feedback.
- Full compliance with the independent protocol emergency policies and procedures (GDPR, child protection, etc.)

6. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Violation of this Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may, in accordance with relevant legislation, lead to internal disciplinary actions, dismissal or even criminal prosecution.

The head of organizational unit or mission, as appropriate, shall be responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and abuse of power. S/he shall be responsible for taking appropriate action in cases where there is reason to believe this Code of Conduct has been violated.

All Staff are obliged to report to managers or to HO concerns or suspicions regarding criminal or ethical activities that are in conflict with this Code of Conduct and which may compromise ELIX.

Each member of the ELIX has a responsibility to handle and respond to any allegations of misconduct they receive from their stakeholders about their employees in line with their organizational policies and related disciplinary measures. ELIX has the responsibility to develop and maintain proper systems for investigating, recording and dealing with misconduct. Breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported immediately to senior management and in line with ELIX complaints handling procedures.

Those who wish to lodge a complaint about an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by a member of Staff should lodge their complaint to his/her line manager or designated complaints focal point as soon as possible after s/he becomes aware of the concern.

Any Staff person purposely making false accusations on any action by another Staff which is breach of the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the employer.

7. Personal Declaration - Understanding the Code of Conduct

I confirm that I have read, understood and shall abide by the Code of Conduct principles for the entire period I am working or associated with, and or represent, ELIX. I understand that violation of any of the above code of conduct can, depending on the degree of severity, result in immediate disciplinary action which can include dismissal.

I will raise through appropriate channels any matter which appears to break the standards contained within this Code of Conduct.

Place and date:/...../20.....

Signature:

Print Name: