

# ***Charter of Accountability of the Dianova Network***



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## **Foreword**

Dianova International, an NGO with Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, working in the fields of addiction, youth and education, its member organizations and foundations commit to respect and abide by Charter of Accountability presented herein, which derives directly from the first Charter of Accountability for NGO's approved by an assembly of prominent international NGO's meeting in London in 2006.

The Dianova Charter of Accountability is intended to supplement and complement the following documents previously approved by the Network:

- The Dianova network Cooperative agreement signed in Lisbon in 2007
- The Mission, Vision and Values of the Dianova Network
- The general policies relating to social issues addressed by Dianova

We, the nonprofit organizations that are signatory to this Charter, work globally to advance human rights and sustainable development in the fields of addiction, education and youth.

Our organizations are proud and privileged to work across a wide range of countries and cultures, with a diversity of peoples in varied economic, social and political systems. Our right to act is based on universally-recognized concepts of freedom of speech, assembly and association and contributes to the development of the democratic processes and to the values we seek to promote.

Our legitimacy is derived from the quality of our work, and the recognition and support of the people with, and for whom, we work, in addition to, our donors, the wider public, and governmental and other non-governmental organizations. By signing this Charter we seek to promote further the values of transparency and accountability that we stand for, and commit to respecting its provisions.

## ***How We Work***

Member organizations may complement, but not replace, the over-arching role, and primary responsibility, of governments to promote equitable human development and well-being, to uphold human rights and to protect ecosystems.

We also seek to promote the role and responsibilities of the private sector to advance human rights and sustainable development, and to protect the environment.

We can often address problems and issues that governments and others are unable or unwilling to address on their own. Through constructive challenge, we seek to promote good governance and foster progress towards our goals.

We seek to advance our mission through research, advocacy and programs. It is common for our work to be at international, national, regional and local levels, either independently or with partners. We work through mutual cooperation with other organizations in instances in which this is the best way to advance our mutual, individual objectives.

## ***The Purpose of the Charter***

This Charter outlines our common commitment to excellence, transparency and accountability. To demonstrate and build on these commitments, we also seek to:

- Identify and define shared principles, policies and practices;
- Enhance transparency and accountability, both internally and externally;
- Encourage communication with stakeholders; and
- Improve our effectiveness as organizations.

We recognize that transparency and accountability are essential to good governance, whether by governments, businesses or nonprofit organizations. Wherever we operate, we seek to ensure that the high standards which we demand of others are also respected in our own organizations.

The Charter complements and supplements existing rules. It is a voluntary charter and draws upon a range of accepted, existing codes, norms, standards and guidelines.

We agree to apply the Charter progressively to all our policies, activities and practices. The Charter does not replace existing codes or practices to which signatories may already be party, except as specified by them. Its adoption does not prevent signatories from supporting or using other tools to promote transparency and accountability. We will refine the Charter as and when appropriate, taking into account future developments, particularly those that improve accountability and transparency.



## ***Our Stakeholders***

Our first responsibility is to achieve our stated mission effectively and transparently, consistent with our values. In doing this, we are accountable to our stakeholders.

Our stakeholders include:

- Individuals, including future generations, whose rights we seek to protect and advance;
- Ecosystems, which cannot speak for or defend themselves;
- Our members and supporters;
- Our staff and volunteers;
- Organizations and individuals that contribute finance, goods or services;
- Partner organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, with whom we work;
- Regulatory bodies whose agreement is required for our establishment and operations;
- Those whose policies, programs or behavior we wish to influence;
- The media, and
- The general public.

In balancing the different views of our stakeholders, we will be guided by our objectives and the principles of this Charter.

## ***Our Principles***

### **Respect for Universal Principles**

Member organizations are founded on the rights to freedom of speech, assembly and association proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We seek to advance international and national laws that promote human rights, ecosystem protection, sustainable development and other accepted public rights. Where such rights do not exist, are not fully implemented, or abused, we will highlight these issues for public debate and advocate appropriate remedial action. In so doing, we will respect the equal rights and dignity of all human beings.

### **Independence**

We aim to be both politically and financially independent. Our governing bodies, programs and policies will be non-partisan, independent of specific governments, political parties and the business sector.

### **Responsible Advocacy**

We will ensure that our advocacy is consistent with our mission, grounded in our work and that it advances accepted public interests. We will have clear processes for adopting public policy positions and explicit ethical policies that guide our choices of advocacy strategy.

### **Effective Programs**

We seek to work in genuine partnership with local communities, NGOs and other organizations, aiming at sustainable development responding to local needs.

### **Non-Discrimination**

We value, respect and seek to encourage diversity and seek to be impartial and nondiscriminatory in all of our activities. To this end, each of our member organizations will have policies that promote diversity, gender equity and balance, impartiality and non-discrimination in all our activities, both internal and external.



## **Transparency**

We are committed to openness, transparency and honesty about our structures, objectives, policies and activities. We will communicate actively to stakeholders about ourselves, and make information publicly available.

## **Reporting**

We seek to comply with relevant governance, financial accounting and reporting requirements in the countries where we are based and operate.

We report at least once a year on our activities and achievements. Reports will describe each organization's:

- Mission and values;
- Objectives and outcomes achieved by programs and advocacy;
- Environmental impact;
- Governing structure and processes, including the main corporate office holders;
- Main sources of funding from corporations, foundations, governments, and individuals;
- Financial performance;
- Compliance with this Charter; and
- Contact details.

## **Audit**

The annual financial report will conform to relevant laws and practices and be audited by a qualified independent public accountant whose statement will accompany the report.

## **Accuracy of information**

We will adhere to generally-accepted standards of technical accuracy and honesty in presenting and interpreting data and research, using and referencing independent research in doing so.

## Good Governance

We should be held responsible for our actions and achievements. We will accomplish this: by having a clear mission, organizational structure and decision-making processes; by acting in accordance with stated values and agreed-upon procedures; by ensuring that our programs achieve outcomes that are consistent with our objectives; and by reporting on these outcomes in an open and accurate manner. The governing structure of each of our local organizations will conform to relevant laws and be transparent.

We seek to follow the principles of best practices in governance. Each of our local organizations will have at least:

- A governing body which supervises and evaluates the chief executive, and oversees program and budgetary matters. It will define overall strategy, consistent with the organization's mission, ensure that resources are used efficiently and appropriately, that performance is measured, that financial integrity is assured and that social commitment is maintained;
- Written procedures determining the appointment, responsibilities and terms of members of the governing body, and preventing, as well as managing conflicts of interest;
- A regular general meeting with the authority to appoint and replace members of the governing body.

In addition, Dianova International and the network member organizations have respectively an Assembly of Delegates and regular general meetings with the authority to appoint and replace members of the governing body. The Dianova network member organizations are subordinate to the laws of state authorities in the countries where their headquarters are located.

We will listen to stakeholders' suggestions regarding ways in which we can improve our work and will encourage input by people whose interests may be directly affected. We will also facilitate public comment on our programs and policies.



## ***Ethical Fundraising***

### **Donors**

We respect the rights of donors to be informed about causes for which we are fundraising and to be informed about how their donations are being utilized.

### **Use of Donations**

In raising funds, we will accurately describe our activities and needs. Our policies and practices will ensure that donations further our organization's mission. Where donations are made for a specific purpose, the donor's request will be honored. If we invite the general public to donate to a specific cause, each Dianova organization will have a plan in place for managing any shortfall or excess, and will make this plan known as part of its grant solicitation.

### **Donations In-Kind**

Some donations may be given as goods or services. To retain our effectiveness and independence, we will: record and publish details of all major institutional gifts and gifts-in-kind; clearly describe the valuation and auditing methods used; and ensure that these gifts contribute towards our mission.

### **Agents**

We seek to ensure that donations sought indirectly, such as through third party agents, are solicited and received in full conformity with our own practices. This practice will normally be the subject of a written agreement between the parties.

## ***Professional Management***

We manage our organizations in a professional and effective manner. Our policies and procedures seek to promote excellence in all respects.

## **Financial Controls**

Internal financial control procedures will ensure that all funds are used effectively and minimize the risk of funds being misused. We will follow principles of best practices in financial management.

## **Evaluation**

We seek to improve our effectiveness on an ongoing basis. We will have defined evaluation procedures for our boards, staff, programs and projects on the basis of mutual accountability.

## **Partners**

We recognize that our organizational integrity includes ensuring that our partners also meet the highest standards of honesty and accountability, and that they will take all possible steps to ensure that they have no dealings with organizations, or persons involved in illegal or unethical practices.



## **Human Resources**

We recognize that our performance and success reflect the quality of our staff and volunteers and management practices, and we are committed to investing in human resource development.

Remuneration and benefits should strike a balance between public expectations of nonprofit organizations and the need to attract and retain the staff that we need to fulfill our mission. Our human resources policies seek to conform fully with relevant international and national labor regulations, in addition to applying the best voluntary sector practices in terms of employee and volunteer rights and safety, health and hygiene at work. Human resources policies will include procedures for evaluating the performance of all staff on a regular basis

### **Bribery and Corruption**

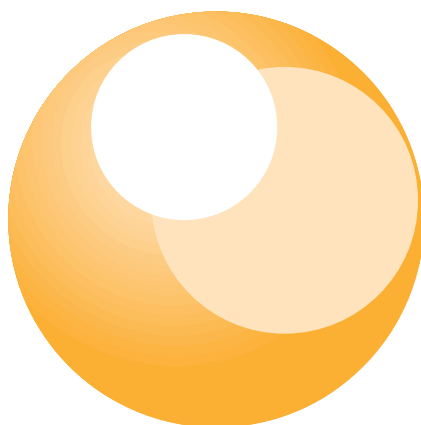
Human resources policies will specifically prohibit acts of bribery or corruption by staff or other persons working for, or on behalf of, the organization.

### **Respect for Sexual Integrity**

We condemn sexual exploitation, abuse and discrimination in all its forms. Our policies respect sexual integrity in all our programs and activities, and prohibit gender harassment, sexual exploitation and discrimination.

### **Whistle-blowers**

Staff will be enabled and encouraged to draw management's attention to activities that may not comply with the law, or our mission and commitments, including the provisions in this Charter.



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