

KSE Institute Partners' Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Kyiv School of Economics Institute (KSE Institute) is an independent think tank that implements research, educational, and socially important initiatives and programs with the support of the European Commission, the World Bank, FCDO, UN agencies, other international donors, governments of democratic states, foundations, and private philanthropists.

We share the principles of integrity, transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights, and we expect the same from all our Partners – suppliers, contractors, consultants, research institutions, civil society organizations, and other engaged parties.

This Code is a public document and is available for review on the KSE Institute website. Compliance with it is a mandatory condition of cooperation with us.

Principles of Integrity and Anti-Corruption

KSE Institute and its Partners commit to acting strictly in compliance with the law and international standards of integrity. This means the unconditional rejection of bribery, fraud, corruption, collusion, extortion, money laundering, or any other unlawful practices.

We expect that Partners will not offer or accept undue advantages and will avoid any situations that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where such a conflict is unavoidable, Partners must openly declare it.

Reference standards: UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, ISO 37001 (Anti-bribery Management Systems), UK Bribery Act 2010.

Human Rights, Labor Standards, and Equal Opportunities

We believe that the dignity and rights of every person are inviolable. Partners are required to respect and comply with, first and foremost, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the fundamental ILO Conventions. They must ensure equal opportunities for all and provide safe working conditions.

Discrimination on any grounds – gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, or any other protected characteristics – is strictly prohibited.

The use of child labor, forced or bonded labor, exploitation of vulnerable groups, human trafficking, or any form of cruel or inhumane treatment is categorically prohibited.

We expect Partners to ensure fair remuneration and to respect the rights to rest, collective bargaining, and freedom of association.

Reference standards: ILO Conventions No. 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138, 182; UK Modern Slavery principles; OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Gender Equality and Inclusion

We expect our Partners to integrate the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination across all programs.

Opportunities must be made accessible to women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Equal opportunity policies must be an integral part of governance and management.

Reference standards: CEDAW, UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, Gender Equality Act principles.

Safeguarding and PSEA

KSE Institute places particular emphasis on safeguarding children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Partners are required to act in ways that prevent any form of violence, exploitation (including sexual exploitation and abuse), harassment, or abuse of power or trust.

We require our Partners to:

- implement internal safeguarding policies and procedures;
- conduct rigorous staff recruitment and integrity checks;
- ensure respectful and safe treatment of all program participants and beneficiaries;
- establish clear and accessible reporting channels for violations.

KSE Institute upholds a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Reference standards: UN Secretary-General's Bulletin (2003): Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13); IASC Six Core Principles on PSEA (2019); Keeping Children Safe Standards (KCS 2014/2020); FCDO Safeguarding against SEAH Due Diligence Guidance.

Transparency, Accountability, and Use of Resources

We expect Partners to maintain accurate records of all financial and administrative operations, comply with international reporting standards, and be open to audits and verification by donors and KSE Institute.

Any misuse or misappropriation of funds, assets, or equipment must be promptly disclosed and remedied. Partners must ensure honesty and transparency at all stages of project implementation.

Reference standards: OECD DAC Principles on Aid Effectiveness.

Research Integrity and Intellectual Property

KSE Institute values academic integrity and scientific objectivity. We expect Partners to uphold the highest standards of research ethics, avoid falsification, fabrication, or plagiarism, and respect intellectual property rights and the confidentiality of information.

Reference standards: Singapore Statement on Research Integrity, Budapest Open Access Initiative.

The “Do No Harm” Principle

Partners must avoid activities that may cause harm to communities, exacerbate inequalities, or result in negative social impacts.

All projects must undergo risk assessment, taking into account their potential impact on people and the environment.

Reference standards: OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct.

Environmental Responsibility and Sustainable Development

We encourage Partners to act with respect for the environment and in line with the principles of sustainable development. This includes the rational use of natural resources, reduction of emissions and waste, adoption of environmentally friendly technologies and practices, and assessment of possible impacts on communities and ecosystems.

Reference standards: Paris Climate Agreement, ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems), UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Reporting Misconduct

KSE Institute encourages all its Partners to establish internal whistleblowing mechanisms and calls on Partners and their employees to report any potential violations of this Code, including cases of corruption, fraud, abuse of power, sexual exploitation, violence, or discrimination.

We guarantee confidentiality, protection of those who report in good faith, and prohibit any form of retaliation or harassment.

How to report misconduct:

- by email: compliance@kse.org.ua
- by post: 3 Mykoly Shpaka Street, Kyiv, Ukraine (NGO “Kyiv School of Economics Institute”, marked “Confidential: Partners’ Code of Conduct”)

All reports are reviewed by the designated Ethics and Compliance Coordinator of KSE Institute.

Confirmation, Enforcement, and Accountability

Compliance with this Code is a mandatory condition of cooperation with KSE Institute.

By entering into a contract or agreement with KSE Institute, the Partner confirms that they have reviewed this Code and undertake to comply with it.

We expect our Partners to adopt internal policies and procedures to ensure adherence to this Code.

KSE Institute reserves the right to verify partners’ compliance with the Code (through monitoring, audits, site visits, etc.). In cases of violation, the organization reserves the right to take disciplinary and legal action, including suspension of a contract, and in cases of serious or repeated violations, to terminate the cooperation.