



# Rift Valley Institute

## Code of Conduct

### Introduction

In keeping with its vision and values, Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is committed to maintaining the highest degree of ethical conduct amongst all its staff and associated individuals irrespective of the type and duration of the engagement. This Code of Conduct details RVI's expectations of employees and associated individuals. It complements other RVI documents that bind those that engage with RVI to uphold a high standard of ethical and professional behaviour during their relationship with RVI.

### Scope and purpose

This Code of Conduct applies to all individuals contracted by RVI. The Code of Conduct describes the conduct expected of personnel under contract to RVI, and forms part of all contracts of employment. The Code is applicable at all times. RVI staff are expected to uphold local law wherever they operate, except where the Code of Conduct is more stringent, in which case the Code applies. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal.

### Mission and values

RVI is an independent, non-profit organization. The aim of the Institute is to create a better future for the peoples of Eastern and Central Africa by advancing relevant knowledge of the region and its diverse communities through collaborative research, training, and public information, elevating local voices and bringing a better understanding of local realities to bear on social and political action.

### Code of Conduct Standards

As an RVI employee and in the performance of my work I will:

**Uphold the integrity and reputation of RVI by ensuring that my professional and personal conduct is consistent with RVI's values and standards**

- I will treat all people fairly with respect and dignity.
- I will be observant of all national laws and be sensitive to local customs in my location of work.
- I will ensure that my conduct does not bring RVI into disrepute and does not impact on or undermine my ability to undertake the role for which I am engaged
- I will not work under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances, or use, or be in possession of, alcohol or illegal substances on RVI premises or accommodation paid for by RVI.

### **Not engage in abusive or exploitative conduct**

- I will not engage in sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) and agree that mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.
- I will not exchange money, employment, goods or services, including the provision of assistance, for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- I will not engage in sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

- I will not engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults including child labour or trafficking.
- I will not physically, emotionally or psychologically assault or abuse a child or vulnerable adult.
- I will not discriminate against fellow members of staff, job applicants, training participants and partners and clients on grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or disability.

**Ensure the safety, health and welfare of all RVI staff and associated personnel (volunteers, partners, suppliers and contractors)**

- I will adhere to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements in force at my location of work.
- I will comply with RVI's security guidelines and be pro-active in informing management of any necessary changes to such guidelines.
- I will behave in a manner such as to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organisations and communities with whom we work.

**Be responsible for the use of information, assets and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with RVI**

- I will ensure that I use RVI assets and resources entrusted to me in a responsible manner and will account for all money and property using the eligibility criteria described to me during my induction with Finance and at the time of receiving any advance.
- I will not use RVI IT equipment, software or e-mail and social media platforms to engage in activity that is illegal under local or international law or that encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offence. This includes any material that intimidates or harasses any vulnerable individual or group.
- I will not use RVI IT equipment to view, download, create, distribute or save in any format inappropriate or abusive material including but not limited to pornography or depictions of child abuse.

**Perform my duties and conduct my private life in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest**

- I will declare any financial, personal or family interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of RVI.
- I will not be involved in awarding benefits, contracts for goods or services, employment or promotion within RVI, to any person with whom I have a financial, personal, family (or close intimate relationship) interests.
- I will not accept significant gifts or any remuneration from governments, communities with whom we work, partner organizations, donors, suppliers and other persons, which have been offered to me as a result of my employment with RVI.
- I accept that RVI is a non-political organisation and will not use my position in RVI to campaign on party political issues.
- I will inform RVI if I decide to stand for a political party or for public office, and acknowledge that this may affect my engagement with RVI.

**Other rules of engagement**

- I will fully adhere to the terms and conditions of the agreement I signed with RVI
- I will regularly attend all the sessions I am required to be present in, in-person or online as per the communication by the course coordinators

- I will respect deadlines and ensure that all dates agreed between my mentor and I are adhered to. Where I may have delays, I will inform my mentor in advance and negotiate a new deadline
- I will adhere to the financial regulations of RVI in accounting for the grants I receive from RVI and account for all advances in time and with eligible documents. I agree I will not be given additional funds until I have fully accounted for a previous advance
- I will not use RVI's funds on other not approved expenditures
- I will develop and maintain a professional and mutually respectful personal rapport with my mentors.

### **Uphold confidentiality**

- I will exercise due care in all matters of official business, and will not divulge any confidential information relating to my colleagues, or the business interests or affairs of RVI unless legally required to do so, while I am employed by RVI and after the termination of my employment with RVI.

### **Environmental Protection**

I agree to apply national laws, good international industry practice and RVI practices to protect and conserve the natural environment and to minimize unavoidable impacts.

### **Complaints and reports**

The Early Career Researchers are obligated to bring to the attention of the relevant manager any potential incident, abuse or concern that they witness, are made aware of, or suspect which appears to breach the standards contained in this Code. Staff or other individuals reporting concerns are protected by RVI's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace policy.

If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their line manager they may report to any other senior staff member, for example, a senior manager or a member of the Executive Management Team.

Staff members receiving reports or concerns are obliged to report immediately as per RVI's Complaints Policy and Procedures.

### **Related policies**

- Anti Bribery and Transactional Compliance policy
- Safeguarding policy

In accepting my engagement I undertake to discharge my duties and to regulate my conduct in accordance with the requirements of this Code

Name:

Signature:

Date: