

## THE CREATIVE CONTENT SUPPORT FUND

### Code of Conduct and Ethics

The Creative Content Support Fund works to foster and encourage plurality and balance in the Russian language media sphere through supporting media organisations who are independent of outside interests and arrangements and who uphold the universal values of democracy, human rights and freedom of speech.

This Code of Conduct and Ethics presents the standards of behaviour which are expected from all those working with the Fund. This includes people working for and on behalf of the Fund, including as part of the Secretariat, the Board of Governors, the Advisory and Co-ordination Committee, the Expert Panel of Jurors, consultants or contractors, volunteers, or other advisors or experts, and to those working in both paid or unpaid ('pro bono') capacities. It also includes individuals and organisations which the Fund collaborates with, and the people working for and on behalf of the media organisations which receive grants from the Fund. This Code of Conduct and Ethics is therefore included in all employment and grant contracts, and will be shared with all partners, so that all those involved in the Fund's work are aware of and commit to working in accordance with these standards in the course of their work for or funded by the Content Fund.

#### Standards of Conduct

This Code represents a commitment to the following standards of conduct:

- Uphold and respect the universal values of democracy, human rights and freedom of speech.
- Treat all people fairly and with professionalism, dignity and respect, and act without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, culture, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Behave professionally in a manner which avoids bullying or harassment, or any abusive or exploitative conduct, including avoiding: any sexual activity with anyone under 18 years of age (a child as defined by the United Nations) or anyone who benefitting from your organisation or grant; commercial exploitation, including modern day slavery, forced labour, child labour or other unethical treatment; and, physical assault or the emotional or psychological abuse of a child or adult in a vulnerable position.
- Behave with integrity and honesty, avoiding any corrupt or fraudulent practices, including the acceptance of bribes or significant gifts, and ensuring that any possible conflicts of interest due to personal or family relationships are declared in advance of any decision to award benefits, resources or employment.
- Respect confidentiality and ensure that sensitive information shared through work with or work supported by the Content Fund remains confidential unless there is a legal requirement to share it.
- Act and speak up if any of these commitments appear to have been breached, reporting to [concerns@contentfund.org](mailto:concerns@contentfund.org). Those reporting in good faith will not be disadvantaged in any way.

#### Journalistic Ethics<sup>1</sup>

The Content Fund expects the media organisations it funds to work with integrity and in accordance with professional journalistic ethics. In its support of content production and media organisations the

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<sup>1</sup> These key principles of journalistic ethics have been adapted from the Ethical Journalism Network's Core Principles; the Network also offers resources and free training modules on ethics, <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/who-we-are>, <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/aidan-white-leads-new-ethics-in-journalism-e-course>. Further resources and training modules on journalistic ethics are available, including at: <https://mediahelpingmedia.org/modules/module-editorial-ethics/>

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Fund is committed to advancing ethical media practice and both expects and encourages its partners and beneficiaries to work on an ethical basis in line with European best practice.

In undertaking work funded by the Content Fund, the Fund team and advisors, and the media organisation beneficiaries and partners, commit to working on the basis of:

1. **Truth and Accuracy.** Striving for accuracy, giving all the relevant facts available and ensuring that facts and sources have been properly checked and that information is honestly presented in a fair way. When information cannot be fully checked or corroborated then this should be stated. Reporting should differentiate between fact and opinion and always consider and minimise any risk of libel, defamation or slander.
2. **Independence.** Not acting, formally or informally, on behalf of special interests, whether political, corporate or cultural, and declaring any possible conflicts of interests.
3. **Fairness and Impartiality.** Ensuring impartial reporting and that stories and issues are balanced and presented with context and objectivity wherever possible. Information should be presented in a fair way and those criticised in reporting should be given a right to reply, with their comment presented.
4. **Accountability.** Listening to concerns and being accountable for poor practice – whether errors in media coverage or poor management of staff and organisations, offering remedies for unfair or unprofessional practice. Any harmful inaccuracies discovered should be corrected.
5. **Humanity and Duty of Care.** Ensuring that the media work and content production does no harm to any of those involved, including people quoted or represented, as well as the teams engaged; this will require risk assessments and careful consideration of the need for informed consent, particularly for those under 18 years old or adults in vulnerable situations. Material produced should not be likely to lead to hatred or discrimination, and sources who supply information in confidence should have their identity protected.
6. **Additional Duty of Care measures for children and adults in vulnerable situations.** Providing particular additional support to children (those under 18 years old) to ensure they are protected and supported when they are involved in media productions. Providing similar levels of support when adults in a vulnerable situation are involved; this can include adults who have learning disabilities, or adults who for other reasons are in a situation which means they need rely on others for basic needs and so are less able to speak up (e.g. victims-survivors of domestic violence, a precarious migration status, etc.). Taking additional care during a production and in relevant broadcasting decisions to ensure consent (for children this will usually also require parental consent), and to ensure that the welfare of any children or adults in a vulnerable situation involved remains a priority.

The Content Fund takes this Code of Conduct and Ethics seriously: breaches of these commitments may lead to termination of employment, partnership or grant funding.

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and Ethics and confirm I will work in accordance with these standards and principles.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_