

Code of Ethical Practice



International Cultural Youth Exchange

ICYE

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Introduction

The ICYE Code of Ethical Practice has been developed in a participatory process with ICYE National Committees (NC) in 41 countries across the world, building on their practical experiences. At the ICYE General Assembly in Denmark in 2017 the consultative process started, being followed by two Sub-Committee meetings and input given in regional trainings and individually by National Committees over a two-year period.

The Code should be regarded as a continuous process of dialogue among ICYE National Committees. It provides a common accountability framework for all ICYE stakeholders and defines nine commitments to work towards a global ethical practice through which ICYE National Committees are accountable to all their stakeholders for their approach, impact and organisational processes.

The Code is important for creating trust internally among NCs, with volunteers, host projects, host families and host communities, and externally with donors, NGOs, relevant ministries and other stakeholders. It promotes, strengthens and supports an ethical culture within ICYE, and helps make ethical decisions in the context of our work for ICYE and in personal interactions outside of our work.

The Code requires adaptation by every NC to its own cultural context and organisational capacity by way of developing policy documents and practices at the national level to implement it.

Those in leadership positions must demonstrate a commitment to the Code of Ethical Practice. It should be endorsed by the Board of Managers of each NC, implemented by the executive management team and embedded in the organisational culture for successful implementation. This can be achieved by consulting key stakeholders at the national level, disseminating and publicising the Code of Ethical Practice, and ensuring that it is part of the induction programme for new staff.

Summary



ICYE Code of Ethical Practice



To support our commitment for intercultural understanding, ICYE has developed a Code of Ethical Practice. The Code, which all ICYE Federation bodies (NCs, IO, BOM) are committed to achieving over time, is based on ICYE's vision and mission, values and the preamble of our constitution. The Code of Ethical Practice will assist us in our daily work, foster professionalism, openness and honesty, and build relationships of trust and respect between all stakeholders.

Responsibility to Volunteers

ICYE is committed to supporting our participants in their volunteering activities. This means ensuring their personal safety, security and wellbeing, as well as providing them the opportunity for intercultural learning experiences that support their personal growth and the development of their skills and competences. The volunteers are informed about their role and responsibilities, the realities of the programme and the expectations ICYE has of them.

Relationship with Host Communities

ICYE is committed to creating sustainable, supportive and mutually beneficial relationships with the host communities. This means jointly developing volunteering activities that respond to the host communities' economic, social, cultural and environmental concerns and reflect ICYE's vision, mission and the ICYE Code of Ethical Practice. The hosting NC informs the host communities about their responsibilities.

Communication and Cooperation

ICYE communicates and cooperates with colleagues, volunteers and others – both within and outside the Federation – with respect, dignity and integrity. Every NC gets to voice its opinions equally and without discrimination and is given the opportunity to influence decisions at Federational level.

Ensuring solidarity among stakeholders requires constant critical reflection on our stereotypes and prejudices based on social, cultural, economic, gender, historical and political power relations.

Inclusion and Diversity

ICYE is committed to promoting inclusion, active participation and equality of opportunity. We offer volunteering activities and intercultural exchange, primarily to young people, irrespective of geographical location, belief, gender, sexual orientation, health, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity or cultural background. Policies and practices covering the selection, recruitment and support of volunteers as well as of staff, board members and co-workers also reflect this commitment.

For ICYE, reciprocal cooperation between NCs and regions supports our commitment to inclusion.

We strive for a diverse workforce and an inclusive office environment.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Groups

ICYE respects the dignity of children and vulnerable groups. Our policies and practices ensure that ICYE staff and volunteers are not involved in acts that abuse, harm or otherwise have a negative impact on children or vulnerable groups.

In "Care to Engage – ICYE’s Policy on Safeguarding Children", we acknowledge that everyone working or engaging with ICYE has a responsibility to ensure that the children we work or are in contact with are safe.

Prevention of Sexual Violence

ICYE is committed to providing a safe environment for all its staff, co-workers and volunteers that is free from discrimination and all forms of sexual violence, including sexual harassment.

“Safer Together – ICYE’s policy on addressing sexual violence in international volunteering” sets out the rules and procedures to be followed by staff, volunteers, co-workers, and anyone connected with ICYE.

Environmental Regeneration

ICYE is conscious of the environmental impact of our activities and programmes and actively commits to minimise the negative impact, as well as promoting sustainability and environmental awareness among stakeholders.

“Greener Together – ICYE’s commitment for a sustainable and regenerative future” spells out our commitment to advance, sensitize on, and advocate for environmental sustainability and regeneration.

Integrity and Impartiality

ICYE works with integrity and impartiality and does not tolerate bribery, corruption or favouritism. It is not acceptable for individuals within ICYE to use their position to favour others or to convince or coerce someone else to provide favourable treatment in any way. Conflicts of interest are declared and managed.

Media and External Cooperation

In our mass and social media promotion, ICYE uses care and discretion, respects the privacy of others and avoids material that reinforces stereotypes.

ICYE does not cooperate with third parties (for example NGOs, media, donors), whose practices conflict with this Code.

Glossary

- BOM:** Board of Managers
- Bribery:** describes the act of giving or taking any kind of reward or favour in exchange for something that person wants (e.g. a volunteer placement, the award of a contract, becoming a host project).
- Corruption:** is defined in this guide as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.”
www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption
- Critical reflection:** entails identifying, questioning and deconstructing our own assumptions, experiences and beliefs while exploring different perspectives and learning from these.
- Dignity:** We understand by dignity that every person has the right to be valued and respected.
- Diversity:** is defined in this guide as: “...empowering people by respecting and appreciating what makes them different, in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, and national origin.”
www.globaldiversitypractice.com/what-is-diversity-inclusion/ It means engaging with each other and embracing our differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment.

- ICYE:** International Cultural Youth Exchange
- Impartiality:** is defined as treating everyone with the same respect and fairness.
- Inclusion:** is defined in this guide as: “(..) the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights”.
[United Nations 2016](#)
- Integrity:** refers to being honest, offering high quality in our work and living up to our values. It is related to our commitment of being accountable and transparent. By showing integrity in their public, professional and private lives, ICYE staff and BoM maintain and strengthen volunteers’ and partners’ trust and confidence in ICYE.
- IO:** International Office of ICYE, located in Berlin, Germany.
- NCs:** National Committees of ICYE, that is ICYE member organisations in more than 40 countries worldwide.
- Power relations:** refer to the interactions between people or groups and how they influence each other's actions, beliefs, decisions. This includes those relations where one person or group has control over the other.

- Respect:** With the word 'respect' we refer to the way we treat others with empathy and humility, valuing and appreciating them with all their differences.
- Stereotypes:** denote the widely held but oversimplified idea or belief regarding a particular group of people, based only on one common characteristic generally imposed upon this group e.g. their nationality, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation or class.
- Third parties:** entities that support ICYE in our work (e.g. by providing specific services) or with whom we cooperate for a certain activity/ project without being a host project.
- Volunteers:** are the participants of ICYE's volunteering programmes.
- Vulnerable groups:** are groups of people experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation because of being in a position of social disadvantage due to one or more factors. The result is individual, and sometimes collective, vulnerability due to differences in power. These factors include (but are not limited to) poverty, migrant status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, mental health, social status, religion, health, and age.

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