

Netherlands Institute for  
**Multiparty Democracy**

# Code of Conduct NIMD

Updated 28 August 2024

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### GENERAL NOTE

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) that are contracted in our offices around the world. By signing this document, they confirm their commitment to the conduct described in the code.

Where an NIMD country office wants to redefine specific aspects of this code, or if the local context requires an amendment of this code, this needs to get prior explicit written approval from NIMD Management at HQ

### SCOPE

The Code of Conduct applies to all NIMD staff members with a contract, including managers and coordinators; full-time, part-time, temporary, permanent, in The Hague (HQ) or in country offices (CO); including interns; student workers and formal volunteers, who are in this Code of Conduct referred to as *employees*. This Code of Conduct is directly linked to, and signed together with, the related NIMD labour contract or work agreement.

### 1. PROFESSIONALISM

I will discharge the duties entrusted to me with the highest degree of professionalism, ownership, integrity and loyalty to NIMD. I will comply with all internal and external regulations and lawful instructions regarding the work of NIMD given to me by the Executive Director, the Country Director, or my direct line manager, as the case may be.

I will devote my working hours to the work for NIMD, and will not undertake private work during working hours, unless duly authorized by the relevant manager.

*I, the undersigned (prospective) employee of NIMD, also commit to the following articles:*

### 2. OTHER POSITIONS

Employees are obliged to communicate their intention to carry out paid or unpaid (but possibly conflicting) work elsewhere to the employer in writing. If this work presents an issue in respect of the proper execution of the employee's work the employer must, within a month of said communication and after addressing the employee, notify the employee in writing, stating reasons that the employee is not permitted to perform that other work.

New employees who were already performing other work and who do not terminate that work after being employed by NIMD must communicate that fact to the HR department before signing the employment contract. If this work is conflicting with the NIMD work, the NIMD employment contract cannot be signed.

### 3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No employee shall engage in any business or activity that would undermine his/her performance or conflict with the interests of the organisation. NIMD shall as a rule not enter into agreements with or procure goods or services from employees, directors, supervisory council or their relatives (within the local context), apart

from in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated to be in the best interest of NIMD and no viable alternatives are available.

No employee, including the Executive Director/ Country Director may be involved in any decision-making process, or seek in any way to influence it, where he/she may be in a position to gain privately from the decision or his/her relatives are involved.

All employees shall disclose forthwith any potential conflict of interest and seek management approval before proceeding.

#### **4. COMPETENCE, ETHICS & RECTITUDE ACROSS NIMD NETWORK**

Work performed in the countries in which NIMD operates, must be carried out with respect for the local culture, structures, laws and customs, insofar as these are not counter to international human rights standards, humanitarian law or NIMD values.

Any dealings with partner organizations must be professional and strictly business-related.

All employees shall act at all times in a manner that enhances the reputation and wellbeing of NIMD as an impartial and independent organization. No employee shall act in a manner that could bring the reputation of NIMD into disrepute or otherwise jeopardise its good standing.

#### **5. ACCEPTING GIFTS AND BENEFITS**

Employees are not permitted to accept or demand gifts, remunerations, attendance fees or commissions, whether directly or indirectly, or to accept inheritances or testamentary gifts from persons with whom the employee only comes into contact by virtue of the employee's position.

This applies to gifts of a value of over EUR 50.00 or the local currency equivalent, or an other amount formally agreed on in accordance with the local context. All gifts must be reported to line-manager, even if they have a value of less than EUR 50.00.

#### **6. BRIBES AND OTHER ILLEGAL PAYMENTS**

NIMD has a zero tolerance policy towards the payment of bribes. This includes, but is not limited to, illegal charges imposed for the release of goods from customs, taxes levied by local authorities in addition to or in excess of the legal maximum or illegal charges imposed by local authorities in exchange for mission registration, programme approval and visa or work permits. Likewise, accepting any of these kind of illegal payments by employees for work or services rendered by NIMD is unacceptable.

Accepting or awarding bribes or illegal payment is a ground for immediate cessation of the employment agreement, and NIMD will pursue and support and criminal prosecution of these acts

#### **7. CORRUPTION AND FRAUD**

NIMD has a zero tolerance policy for any form of corruption, theft, fraud and dishonesty. No employee may falsify information or otherwise provide false information. An employee who engages in such illegal actions shall be subject to summary dismissal and any relevant legal prosecution. An employee who has caused a

loss to NIMD through such illegal actions may be held liable for reimbursing the cost of the loss or damage caused.

## **8. THIRD PARTY INVITATIONS**

Invitations by third parties to go on a (foreign) trip must be reported to the first manager in line. The manager will determine whether the trip serves a functional purpose, and the invitation may only be accepted if that is the case. If relevant, travel and accommodation expenses are claimed back by the employee through the normal expense claims procedure.

## **9. USE OF ORGANIZATION FACILITIES**

NIMD property, equipment and other assets may only be used for the work (objectives) of the organization, unless otherwise authorized in writing by the Executive Director, or the first manager in line, as the case may be. Taking home consumables, such as office supplies or snacks, without the explicit approval of a director or manager is not permitted and is considered theft. All employees shall safeguard all NIMD property and materials entrusted to them and exercise utmost care in their use.

## **10. ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

The possession or use of illegal drugs in the territory where the employee is during work for NIMD, or being under the influence of drugs or any other substance that influences behaviour during working hours, such as alcohol, is prohibited. The personal use of alcohol during office working hours is prohibited, unless this is explicitly authorized by a line-manager, such as during a reception, lunch or dinner.

For a meeting hosted by NIMD where alcohol is served, the responsibility for alcohol consumption lies with the user. The consumption of alcohol during NIMD meetings or business trips should be kept to a minimum, and the employee must be aware of his/her status as a representative. In all cases a responsible attitude toward the use of alcohol is expected, with the guideline of maximum two alcoholic beverages per day applicable.

## **11. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

NIMD has a zero tolerance for any form of misbehavior that includes sexual exploitation, harassment, sexual harassment (SEAH), and discrimination, violence, aggression and abuse of authority in any form. The following two articles are complemented, and should be read in parallel, to the more extensive separate SEAH policy section in the NIMD Integrity Policy.

NIMD is committed creating and maintaining a working environment that respects the inherent dignity of all persons, affording them the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and empowering them to deliver the best possible results for NIMD and the people that we work with. NIMD aims for the highest possible integrity in contact with partners, suppliers, clients, among staff, and in respect of our business property.

## **12. NON-DISCRIMINATION, ABUSE OF AUTHORITY, AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Every employee shall conduct themselves with courtesy, respect and integrity towards all persons in the course of performing their work. This includes the explicit prohibition of acts of discrimination, including on grounds of ethnicity, religion, personal beliefs, political opinion, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

All employees commit to the basic principle of mutual respect, whereby aggression and violence is not tolerated. Any abuse of authority derived from hierarchical positions in NIMD are prohibited. Any romantic relations between colleagues must be reported to the HR department or line-manager.

Employees must actively avoid any actions or behaviour involving children under the age of 18 constituting, or to be perceived as, poor practice or as (potentially) abusive behavior or practice. For articles 12 and 13, a more extensive description and details are presented in the SEAH section in the NIMD Integrity Policy.

### **13. INTERNET, EMAIL, AND DATA**

The internet and the email systems are available to employees for business use. This means that they should be used for work-related duties. Limited (occasional and brief) personal use is permitted, provided this does not disrupt normal daily activities and/or the technical infrastructure.

The employee is not permitted to gain unauthorised access to non-public sources on the internet and to visit internet sites that contain pornographic, racist, discriminating, insulting or offensive material. Employees are also not permitted to download and install such content.

The employee is not permitted to use the email system for spamming, sending messages of a pornographic, sexually or otherwise harassing, racist, discriminating, insulting or offensive nature or messages that incite hate and/or violence or may do so.

Content monitoring will only take place in the event of compelling reasons. If an employee is suspected of violating the rules, monitoring may only be performed by the Executive Director for a fixed (short) period and is limited to internet and email traffic data.

When data traffic monitoring has to be performed by IT staff at NIMD, the task must be authorised by the Executive Director. Such a decision clearly indicates when this temporary authorisation ends. An intention to monitor the content of email is communicated in advance to the employee concerned, unless this is not reasonably possible.

If an employee is found to have made unauthorized use of internet or email, they will immediately be called to account by the superior and measures will be taken, depending on the nature of the abuse.

### **14. SOCIAL MEDIA**

Use of social media during working hours is allowed limitedly, and when this relates to work. Private use of social media should be avoided during working hours. For the use of social media the following applies:

- Realize that the information you put on the internet can be read by everyone (also for example by competitors or opponents of NIMD).
- Never put information on the internet that could cause harm to NIMD.
- Always take into account the privacy settings of communities, blogs etc. We advise you to change these settings and limit the sharing of your information to your familiar circle of friends and to limit your visibility beyond that circle.
- Keep business and private information separate.
- Never place confidential or classified information on the internet.
- Never place internal or classified information on an internet channel without approval.

- If you post something about NIMD on a blog or forum, make sure that your opinion is recognizable as a personal opinion and avoid any impression that it is an official statement of NIMD.
- Do not share confidential or sensitive information about our country offices, customers, partners or suppliers.
- Take into account copyright, quotes or any other legal rights.
- Formulate correctly, do not distort facts, do not make obscene or otherwise insulting remarks.
- Paid ancillary activities via the Internet need permission from a line manager beforehand

## 15. INFORMATION

NIMD expects all employees to manage and report their business data in a reliable, honest and meticulous manner. All employees have a duty of confidentiality regarding information that he/she learns of in his/her position and profession, insofar as such an obligation arises from the nature of the matter at hand or has been expressly imposed on the employee. Every employee of NIMD signs the confidentiality clause in the labour contract. Any breach of confidentiality will lead to disciplinary action.

Requests from (news) media for NIMD information or on our work should be responded to in close cooperation with the NIMD communications department at HQ.

## 16. PRIVACY

NIMD handles all privacy-sensitive data from employees, partners and stakeholders in a reliable, honest and meticulous manner, in accordance with internal and legal privacy laws and regulations (such as the GDPR). Employees must also act in accordance with internal and legal privacy regulations. Data on employees is only made available as far as there is a necessity for it and only to those persons for whom this is relevant in terms of their position.

## 17. REPORTING MISCONDUCT

All employees have an obligation to report misconduct based on the principles of this Code of Conduct in or with NIMD and its employees. Likewise each employee has a right to do so without fear of reprisal or retribution. To allow for this, there is the NIMD Whistleblower Facility and Complaints procedure that are part of the Integrity Policy. Through this, NIMD commits to protect individuals who report or protest the occurrence of irregularities and malpractices which undermine NIMD's objectives or policies.

**ACKNOWLEDGE FOR CODE OF CONDUCT AND INTEGRITY POLICY**

Employee acknowledgement, awareness and accountability statement for NIMD Code of Conduct and Integrity Policy.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
Designation : \_\_\_\_\_  
Country : \_\_\_\_\_  
Line Manager: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department : \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct and integrity policy by my supervisor. I have read and understood the policies and I will conduct my work on behalf of NIMD with highest integrity and commitment to the principles of NIMD and those listed down in the code of conduct and integrity policies as well. I understand that any violation from my end will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, as determined to be appropriate.

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I am aware of and am accountable for adhering to the code of conduct and integrity policy referred above.

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As a line manager, it is my responsibility to ensure that all employees under my supervision are aware of the above referenced policies. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to ensure that all employees comply with the policy and to advise/ inform the management at Country level and/ or Headquarters level of any violations.

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_