

## Safeguarding policy

Safeguarding is the action that an organisation takes to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm including physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm and neglect. JRRT will take all reasonable steps to prevent harm that arises from our activities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every person who works for or comes into contact with the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust is treated with respect and feels that they are in a safe and supportive environment. There will be a zero-tolerance approach towards harm, including abuse.

The policy sets out JRRT's commitments and the responsibility of the Board to take reasonable steps to proactively safeguard the welfare of staff, grantees and those they may interact with, and outlines staff responsibilities.

This policy applies to all Board members, staff, consultants, interns and anyone working on behalf of JRRT.

The policy covers harm including physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm and neglect including sexual harassment.

The best interests of children and vulnerable adults will be central in all decisions and actions relating to safeguarding.

In formulating this policy, the Trust has considered guidance by the Association of Charitable Foundations [Safeguarding Framework for Foundations](#), produced to help grant-making Trusts. The ACF framework does not set rigid standards but instead poses questions to prompt discussion and help Foundations decide what is appropriate and proportionate for their organisation.

### Risks

Concerns could be raised in relation to:

- organisations or individuals applying for or receiving funding
- donors and partners
- employees, Board members, consultants and volunteers

JRRT in its normal activities does not work directly with children or vulnerable adults.

JRRT grant making is primarily for campaigning rather than service delivery and few of our grantees have direct contact with minors or vulnerable adults. However, some grantees may work with these populations: campaigns focussed on democracy education or support for 16- and 17-year-olds in Scotland or Wales to vote, for example, may be higher risk.

Additionally, there may be risk associated with JRRT organised or funded events, including online meetings.

## **Grant making**

The Trust seeks to ensure, through proportionate and reasonable due diligence, that grantee organisations take their responsibility seriously and that safeguards are in place in these organisations to protect vulnerable people from abuse.

While safeguarding is a key part of our grant assessment process, the Trust does not directly advise organisations on effective safeguarding practice, nor do we investigate safeguarding concerns ourselves. Instead, we signpost organisations to appropriate sources of advice and training.

As part of our due diligence process, the Trust makes appropriate enquiries as follows: On areas of funding which are most relevant, the Programme Manager or Head of UK Democracy Fund will satisfy themselves that the organisation is compliant with safeguarding responsibilities.

Many JRRT applicants are small organisations, sometimes individuals, and may not have adequate systems in place. JRRT should ensure that the level of questioning is reasonable and proportionate and if gaps in an applicant's approach are found, signpost the applicant to resources to help them develop and implement safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff have discretion to use the capacity budget to enable grantees to pay for training or advice needed.

Unusual or significant risks will be drawn to the Board's attention ahead of a funding decision and we will request whatever information is necessary. This may include:

- ensuring the organisation demonstrates a commitment to safeguarding
- copies of the applicant's safeguarding policies and details of the person in the organisation responsible for safeguarding
- whether there have been any safeguarding incidents within the past year
- whether any matters have come to the attention of the applicant's regulatory body where applicable (Care Quality Commission, Ofsted)

Our grant terms and conditions, as set out in the grant offer letter, will require grantees to maintain adequate safeguarding policies and procedures and to notify us of any safeguarding incident and how this was dealt with.

## **Events**

Children and vulnerable adults at JRRT events or meetings must be accompanied by an appropriate representative of an organisation whose safeguarding arrangements we have checked, or by a family member or carer. We will take reasonable steps to ensure we know who is attending an event or meeting in advance.

## **Awareness of safeguarding**

The Board should ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge of safeguarding (what to look for and what questions to ask) in order to be assured that an applicant's approach is adequate.

It is the CEO's responsibility to monitor sector information resources and stay abreast of developments in safeguarding law and practice. Staff and consultants will be required to be familiar with the safeguarding policy. All staff are encouraged to take part in safeguarding training and to access the broader range of resources that ACF signposts to.

Recruitment is managed by the Chief Executive. JRRT will ask for references from two previous employers and will conduct appropriate background checks as and when required by law. JRRT does not currently have any posts which qualify for a standard or enhanced DBS check.

## **Raising and acting on concerns**

In the event of becoming aware of a safeguarding concern, Board members, staff, consultants, partners or grantees should immediately inform the CEO of JRRT who will be responsible for assessing what steps to take.

Any alleged breach of this policy by an employee will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

Any alleged breach of this policy by a consultant will be dealt with under the clause in the Trust's standard contracts which enables the agreement to be terminated if the consultant commits any act of "Gross Misconduct" (this is defined to include physical violence, actual or threatened; acts of bullying, harassment or discrimination' and harm as defined in the safeguarding policy).

Any alleged breach of the policy by a Board member will be investigated by the Chair, or Board members the Chair appoints, and could result in disqualification from the Board.

In an emergency and where neither the Chief Executive or Programme Manager are available, and any individual covered by this policy considers that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of an incident, the individual should contact one of the following services:

- a) police;
- b) The Local Authority Designated Officer and relevant children's services;
- c) Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre;
- d) NSPCC.

Any child or vulnerable adult or their family concerned about abuse may contact the Chief Executive on [fiona.weir@jrirt.org.uk](mailto:fiona.weir@jrirt.org.uk)

Confidentiality shall be maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. It is important to keep accurate factual notes surrounding any allegations or incidents; these should not constitute any form of investigation, however. They should be a record of what happened and/or was said by whom and in what context, and clearly indicate any dates or times – both for the incident/allegation and any subsequent referrals. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

JRRT will encourage a culture of accountability by implementing a Whistleblower Policy, giving confidence to Board members, staff, consultants, interns, anyone working on behalf of JRRT and grantees that they can raise matters of concern without fear of reprisal, knowing that matters will be investigated appropriately and regarded as confidential.

### **Policy status**

This policy is reviewed and approved by the Board.

This policy will be made available on the Trust's website to be accessed by applicants, grantees, staff, Board members, consultants, volunteers, and partners.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Previous review	March 2025
Next review due	March 2028