



## Code of Ethics

In brief FOS opts for an economic and social system where people are top priority, with respect for everyone's fundamental rights, including labour and health rights.

The following principles are a central touchstone:

1. Respect for each and everyone
2. Integrity
3. Responsibility

As employees, we commit ourselves to comply with these in our daily work.

This code is not a repetition of the aspects already covered by law (in particular, labour law), except for those to which FOS wishes to draw extra attention.

### 1. Respect

Both within FOS and in the programme, we implement, we treat each other in a respectful way. **Respect** means accepting everyone's individuality, which means that the principles of **non-discrimination** and **gender equality** are of the utmost importance to us. Everybody is equal. We operate in a global and multicultural context, where diversity is an asset to any society, including our own. Any discrimination based on origin, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, birth, age, religion, political and philosophical conviction, current or future health condition, language, social background, pregnancy, is therefore out of the question. We strive for **maximum access** of the target groups to our interventions.

Within our programmes, too, we help to enforce respect for the **fundamental labour and health rights** of the target groups. In Belgium, we try to inform our supporters about the **global** link between (in)equality here and in other countries.

Our programmes are being drafted based on **the needs of the target groups** and their communities, while respecting the **autonomy of the partners** who represent these target groups.

Our employees in Belgium and in other countries **avoid any form of exploitation** or disrespect for other people's integrity. We refrain from engaging in or accepting sexual activities, defilement, and exploitation in exchange for money, employment, goods, or services.

In each and every action we also avoid wherever possible to endanger our own health and that of others.

### 2. Integrity

FOS respects the **privacy** of all its employees and partners. However, behaviour, activities or relations (political or otherwise) outside the professional scope may in no way affect the **dignified, objective, and loyal execution of the assignment**. Each person involved makes sure **to avoid** any situation of a possible **personal conflict of interest** and certainly not to actively pursue it, so that we can carry out our mission (e.g., purchasing, recruiting, allocating grants, partnerships, and projects) in an impartial and objective

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manner. By personal interest we also mean any form of interest for family members, acquaintances, friends, own organisations, or enterprises, political or other relations.

### 3. Responsibility

**Responsibility** is the duty of each individual employee. Everybody takes full responsibility in all activities at all levels. Integrity issues are reported to the appropriate persons and/or submitted to the Integrity Counsellor.

Everyone can take responsibility provided they have the necessary and correct information about the assignment. Since we make daily decisions based on information available within FOS, it is very important that **we have the correct information in order to deliver high quality work**. We update our professional knowledge and skills and develop our professional competencies. We always use the available information in an appropriate manner and, if necessary, confidentially. We do not take any action ourselves to obtain information that is not intended for us.

Our **heads of service** involve employees in an **open and transparent way** within the possibilities of the organisation to carry out the work correctly and well. To this end, they provide employees with the necessary resources, information, competences, and responsibilities.

FOS supports the **partner organisations** in a professional way. They are informed on a regular basis about the policy, mission, and goals to be achieved.

In **external communication** we avoid any form of stigmatisation or negative stereotyping. Official positions and official statements on behalf of FOS are only made by authorised employees.

Everyone at FOS handles the **organisation's financial resources in a responsible way**. FOS has procedures regarding expenditure and authority to sign. All parties involved comply with these.

Gifts should never have any apparent influence on possible decision-making. To guarantee impartiality, it is forbidden to give or receive gifts related to the assignment. An exception to this are small tokens of attention on the occasion of, e.g., participation in debates and lectures.

FOS does not permit bribes. By bribes we mean unofficial payments to speed up (administrative) processes.

FOS accepts sponsorships and gifts from companies. FOS can deviate from this if it deems the policy and practice of the (parent) company to be contrary to the organisation's objectives and core activities or if the public image and reputation of FOS could be threatened by it.

FOS pursues to be a **sustainable organisation**, both at its headquarters in Brussels, in its local offices and in its programmes with partner organisations.

For agreement,

Surname and first name:

Date:

Signature,