

US-UK Fulbright Commission Safeguarding Policy

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1.0 Introduction

The US-UK Fulbright aims to provide a safe environment for staff and all those associated with its programmes.

At the Commission we are committed to protecting from harm and abuse all those in the Fulbright and wider community with whom we have dealings in the UK, the US and elsewhere internationally as applicable.

In particular, we have zero tolerance for harm or abuse which arises from any form of power imbalance. We are alert to the danger that our work may result in individuals being placed in a position of trust and authority which could be open to abuse.

We recognise a right to protection from abuse, exploitation and harassment of all with whom the Commission has dealings, regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious belief or civil status.

Our culture and values commit us to an environment where we respect and safeguard the rights and dignity of everyone who has dealings with the Commission and where incidents and concerns can freely be reported without fear of repercussion or retribution and in the certain knowledge of proper investigation and follow up.

2.0 Definitions

The following definitions apply:

- 2.1 By '**Commission**' we mean the US-UK Educational Commission, also known as the US-UK Fulbright Commission.
- 2.2 A '**child**' is anyone who is under the age of 18.
- 2.3 A '**vulnerable adult**' is anyone aged 18 or over who is unable to adequately protect themselves against abuse, exploitation, neglect or mistreatment.
- 2.4 By '**safeguarding**', we mean the actions taken to protect individuals from abuse, exploitation, neglect or mistreatment including, but not limited to, actions for preventing and responding to harm caused by sexual exploitation, violence, emotional abuse, harassment or bullying.
- 2.5 '**Staff**' means commissioners, employees (temporary or permanent), volunteers, interns, contractors and consultants or any other person working for or on behalf of the Commission in the UK or overseas.
- 2.6 By '**applicant**' we mean those individuals who have applied for a Fulbright award or programme either directly to the Commission or via the Institute for International Education (IIE), IREX or World Learning.
- 2.7 By '**grantee**' we are referring to those individuals whose application for a Fulbright award resulted in a grant which is currently in the process of being paid.
- 2.8 By '**programme participant**' we mean those individuals who have participated in or are participating in a Commission sponsored programme.
- 2.9 By '**alum**' or '**alumni**' we mean those individuals who have previously been the recipient of a Fulbright award or who have participated in a Fulbright sponsored programme.
- 2.10 By '**host institution**' we are referring to those educational institutions who are hosting or have hosted a Fulbright grantee.

3.0 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect all those with whom the Commission has dealings from harm arising from the conduct of staff, grantees and programme participants or from the design and execution of the Commission's programmes, events and activities
- ensure that everyone who is associated with the Commission understands their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding
- support everyone associated with the Commission in meeting their safeguarding obligations; and
- establish a framework for the reporting and investigation of any safeguarding related incidents and subsequent action

This policy applies to all Commission staff, grantees and programme participants as defined in section 2.

Commission staff and grantees will be asked to confirm their acceptance of and willingness to adhere to this policy.

This policy is made available on the Commission's website for the benefit of our partner organisations and the entire Fulbright Community.

4.0 Our Safeguarding Principles

In dealing with all safeguarding related issues, we will adhere to the following principles and values.

4.1 **The personal safety of all involved**

In executing this policy, the Commission will have regard first and foremost to the personal safety, health and security of all involved

4.2 **Professionalism, respect and fairness**

All involved will be treated professionally and fairly, adhering to best practice, and with respect including individuals against whom an allegation has been made

4.3 **Responsiveness**

All allegations and concerns reported under this policy will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely manner

4.4 **Confidentiality and information sharing**

All information received in relation to safeguarding will be treated confidentially and in full compliance with data protection legislation. In exceptional circumstances, the Commission may be required to share information with other agencies such as the Police.

4.5 **Adherence to all relevant legislation and Charity Commission pronouncements**

The Commission, in applying this policy, will always comply with relevant legislation and industry best practice.

5.0 Policy Statement

The Commission recognises its responsibility to safeguard all those individuals, including, but not limited to, staff, applicants, grantees, programme participants and alumni with whom the Commission has dealings. We are particularly sensitive to our heightened responsibility when dealing with a child or vulnerable adult.

In carrying out our safeguarding responsibilities, the Commission commits to:

- ensure that this policy is known and understood by everyone associated with the organisation, that they are aware of their obligations under this policy and know how to report any incidents they may have knowledge of or safeguarding concerns they may have
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that our staff and grantees behave appropriately towards each other and all those with whom they come in contact in the context of their association with the Fulbright programme, never abusing any position of trust conferred upon them
- carry out appropriate risk assessments on our various programmes and reduce/manage the risks to participants, particularly children or vulnerable adults
- make clear in all our policies our zero tolerance for harm or abuse which arises from any form of power imbalance
- investigate thoroughly any allegations of misconduct that arise under this policy and take appropriate action in relation to the findings of such investigations
- carrying out DBS checks on staff where their duties make such checks appropriate

6.0 Reporting and Investigating Incidents or Concerns

In order to facilitate the reporting and investigation of safeguarding concerns or incidents, the Commission has designated Rowena Boddington as its Safeguarding Officer.

Any individual having dealings with the Commission who becomes aware of, or suspects, a breach of this policy or has any safeguarding concern in relation to Commission business is encouraged to report to the Commission's Safeguarding Officer.

The contact details of the Safeguarding Officer are as follows:

Ms. Rowena Boddington
US-UK Fulbright Commission
Camelford House
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP

Email: rowena@fulbright.org.uk

Reporting by staff may, alternatively, be through their line manager.

All safeguarding concerns, allegations or reported incidents are to be taken seriously and fully investigated.

Investigations will be pursued as set out below:

- any allegation or incident which involves only members of staff will be dealt with under the Commission's HR policies
- any allegation or incident which involves a grantee but not a staff member and which allegedly occurred on the premises of a host institution will be passed, with any relevant consents, to be investigated in the first instance under the procedures of that host institution
- all other incidents will be investigated by the Chairman of the Commission and the Executive Director except in the case that either of these individuals is the subject of the allegation in which case a suitable third-party investigator will be engaged

Upon conclusion of any safeguarding related investigation, the Commission will take appropriate action based upon the findings.

In the event that an investigation reveals evidence of criminal misconduct, the Commission will involve the Police as appropriate.

7.0 Associated Policies

Sutton Trust US Programme Safeguarding Policy
HR Policies
Whistleblowing Policy