

CI Connects for Change Policy Handbook



CI Connects for Change Policy Handbook

Comprehensive Policies For Ethical Operations | 2025



This handbook outlines the policies that guide CI Connects for Change in maintaining ethical, transparent, and effective operations. Adherence to these policies is expected of all staff, board members, volunteers, and contractors.

1. Whistleblower Policy

CI Connects for Change encourages the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or unethical behavior. This policy ensures that individuals can report concerns without fear of retaliation.

Key Principles:

- **Protection:** Whistleblowers are protected from retaliation for reporting in good faith.
- **Confidentiality:** Reports will be handled with discretion and confidentiality to the extent possible.
- **Investigation:** All reports will be promptly and thoroughly investigated.
- **Prohibition of Retaliation:** Any form of retaliation against a whistleblower is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

CI Connects for Change encourages all board members, volunteers, and staff to report suspected wrongdoing or unethical behavior without fear of retaliation. The organization ensures protection for whistleblowers who report violations in good faith:

- Reports should be submitted confidentially to the Board President or designated Compliance Officer.
- Investigations will be conducted promptly, confidentially, and fairly.
- Retaliation against whistleblowers is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation will lead to disciplinary action, including termination.

2. Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy requires all individuals associated with CI Connects for Change to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, ensuring impartiality in decision-making.

Key Components:

- **Disclosure:** Individuals must disclose any relationships, affiliations, or financial interests that could potentially influence their decisions.
- **Management:** Conflicts of interest will be managed through recusal from relevant discussions and votes.
- **Annual Review:** All individuals are required to complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure form.

All board members, staff, and volunteers must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest annually and immediately upon recognition.

- A conflict of interest exists when personal or financial interests may influence or appear to influence organizational decisions.
- Conflicts must be disclosed to the Board, documented, and managed through recusal from decisions where conflicts exist.

3. Gift Acceptance Policy

CI Connects for Change accepts gifts that align with its mission and values. This policy provides guidelines for accepting donations, ensuring ethical fundraising practices.

Key Provisions:

- **Alignment:** Gifts must be consistent with the organization's mission and values.
- **Evaluation:** Non-cash donations will be carefully evaluated to determine their suitability and market value.
- **Authority:** CI Connects for Change retains the authority to refuse any gift that does not align with its mission or presents unacceptable risks.

4. Document Retention Policy

This policy establishes guidelines for maintaining records in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. It ensures the proper preservation and disposal of documents.

Retention Periods:

Specific retention periods are defined for different types of records, including financial documents, contracts, and personnel files. These periods comply with applicable laws and regulations.

CI Connects for Change maintains records according to legal, operational, and historical requirements.

- Financial records: Retained for 7 years.
- Employment and volunteer records: Retained for 5 years after separation.
- Governance documents (Board minutes, bylaws): Retained permanently.
- Records will be securely destroyed upon reaching the end of their retention period.

5. Code of Conduct and Ethics

CI Connects for Change is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards. This code of conduct outlines the principles that guide our actions and decisions.

Core Values:

- **Ethical Conduct:** Adherence to ethical standards in all activities.
- **Transparency:** Openness and accountability in operations.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

All associated individuals must adhere to the highest ethical standards:

- Demonstrate respect, honesty, and integrity in all interactions.
- Ensure transparency and accountability.
- Report unethical behavior promptly.
- Foster a culture of diversity, equity, belonging and inclusion.

6. Financial Management Policies

These policies ensure sound financial management and accountability. They cover various aspects of financial operations.

Key Areas:

- **Financial Oversight:** Establishes a system of checks and balances to ensure responsible financial management.
- **Budgeting:** Outlines the process for developing and monitoring the organization's budget.
- **Compensation:** Defines policies for determining and administering employee compensation.

Regular financial oversight provided by the Board Treasurer.

Annual budgeting, quarterly financial reporting, and external audits conducted annually.

Compensation Policy

Board members and volunteers serve without compensation

Expense Reimbursement Policy

Expenses must be pre-approved, reasonable, necessary, and documented with receipts.

Reimbursement requests submitted within 30 days of incurred expenses.

7. Fundraising and Donor Relations Policies

These policies govern fundraising activities and donor relations, ensuring compliance with laws and ethical standards.

Key Aspects:

- **Compliance:** Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations regarding fundraising.
- **Donor Privacy:** Protection of donor information and preferences.
- **Ethical Standards:** Commitment to ethical fundraising practices.

Fundraising Policy

- Fundraising practices must comply with applicable laws and ethical standards.
- Transparent communication with donors regarding use of funds.

Donor Privacy Policy

- Donor information (names, contributions, contact details) will remain confidential. Information is
- never shared externally without explicit donor consent.

8. Confidentiality Policy

This policy safeguards confidential information and prohibits unauthorized disclosure. It applies to all staff, board members, volunteers, and contractors.

Scope:

- **Confidential Information:** Includes any information that is not publicly available and could harm the organization or its stakeholders if disclosed.

Unauthorized Disclosure: Prohibits the sharing of confidential information without proper authorization.

All board members, volunteers, and staff are responsible for safeguarding confidential information:

- Confidential information includes donor data, internal discussions, employee and volunteer records, and strategic plans.
- Unauthorized disclosure may lead to disciplinary action.

9. Risk Management Policies

These policies identify and manage potential risks to the organization, ensuring its long-term stability and sustainability.

Key Components:

- **Risk Identification:** Process for identifying and assessing potential risks.
- **Insurance Coverage:** Maintenance of adequate insurance coverage to mitigate potential losses.
- **Data Security:** Measures to protect sensitive data from unauthorized access and cyber threats.

10. Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

CI Connects for Change is committed to providing a safe and respectful workplace. This policy prohibits sexual harassment and ensures prompt investigation of any allegations.

- **Prohibition:** Sexual harassment in any form is strictly prohibited.
- **Reporting:** Procedures for reporting incidents of sexual harassment.
- **Investigation:** Prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations.

This handbook is a living document and will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. All personnel are responsible for understanding and adhering to these policies.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these policies, please contact the CI Connects for Change Executive Director.

Partnership Vetting Criteria for Central Islip Connects for Change

Purpose: To ensure that all partnerships (sponsorships, collaborations, co-hosted events, etc.) align with the mission, values and long-term vision of CI Connects for Change and protect the organization's positive reputation

Evaluation Checklist

1. Mission Alignment

Does the potential partner's mission and values align with ours?
(Pride, Advocacy, Education, Trust, Community Commitment)

2. Community Impact

Will the partnership provide direct or indirect benefits to the Central Islip community, especially students, families, or underserved residents?

3. Integrity & Reputation

Has the partner demonstrated integrity and transparency in their work?
Are there any public controversies, legal issues, or community concerns associated with them?

4. Equity-Centered Approach

Does the partner respect cultural diversity and equity?
Have they demonstrated a commitment to inclusion and serving marginalized communities?

5. Power Dynamics

Will this partnership allow for shared decision-making, or is there risk of being overshadowed or tokenized?

6. Financial Transparency (if funding is involved)

Are terms clear and mutually beneficial?
Are funds unrestricted, or are there limiting conditions that could impact our independence?

7. Long-Term Value

Is this a one-time event, or could this evolve into a sustainable relationship that contributes to our long-term goals?