



## Impact Europe Code of Conduct

Impact Europe and its member organizations are expected to develop and uphold the highest standards of practice in conducting their affairs with their donors, the investee organisations they work with, authorities and society at large. Impact Europe business conduct is founded on the principles of **honesty, integrity, trust, respect** and commitment to **universal human rights**.

All Impact Europe members contribute, in everything they do, towards **building a reputable impact space**, making lasting positive impact for people and the planet. In pursuit of setting the highest ethical standards for the sector, Impact Europe endorses this Code of Conduct as a set of minimum principles for all Impact Europe staff, Impact Europe members and their employees.

Impact Europe members are encouraged to share the Code with investees and other stakeholders and to report situations where the Code of Conduct is not fully applicable or does not provide sufficient guidance.

### Basic Principles



**Compliance:** Acting within the rule of law and within the laws and conduct of business rules of jurisdictions in which we operate is the minimum expected of Impact Europe, its members and their employees.



**Impartiality:** Impact Europe engages in policy discussions that matter to our members and stakeholders. We strive to help policy makers understand our approach and practices related to social finance and social innovation. Strategic decisions about advocacy are made at the highest level, by the CEO, in coordination with the Impact Europe Board. Impact Europe does not make political contributions.

### Guiding Principles



**1. Honesty:** Honesty entails openness about the operations of the organisation and enables the development of trust between actors in a community of practice as well as the exchange of knowledge within the sector. Transparency should act as a guiding principle for the engagement with stakeholders, with special attention to the relationship with the following:

- Investee organisations: clear information should be provided about expectations, balance of influence, rights and responsibilities.
- Funders: clear information should be provided about investment strategy, return expectations and measurement systems.

Within business or operations, conflicts of interest inevitably arise and occur when a person who has a duty to another also has a personal or professional interest that might interfere with the exercise of independent judgement.

There should be sound mechanisms for identifying and dealing with potential conflicts of interest and disclosing them to all parties concerned.



**2. Integrity:** Integrity is the fundamental building block of trust in business relationships. Trust is built upon repeated interactions between individuals which involve transparency, reliability and honesty. Integrity implies that competitive advantage and commercial success are derived from the application of superior individual and collective skill and not through the use of manipulative or deceptive devices or practices.



**3. Trust:** Trust means keeping promises regardless of whether there is a legal obligation to do so. Within our sector, commitments are made subject to the provision of further information, carrying out due diligence, the results of uncertain external events and other matters. This means that clarity about what is committed and what is subject to further investigation is very important. Rules for operating in our sector may vary between countries, regions, societies, legal systems and transactions. It is important that members understand the different rules that apply to their particular operation and situation.

In the ordinary course of business and in the carrying out of due diligence, individuals and organisations will obtain sensitive information from others. In an effort to safeguard the interests of disclosing parties, reasonable steps should be taken to protect such information.



**4. Respect:** Our sector is a meeting place between professionals from diverse backgrounds; it is especially important to keep an open mind and stay away from prejudices. Members are encouraged to treat each other and any other player with mutual respect. Part of this mutual respect should be manifested in the partnership nature of the relationship between investor and investee organisations.

Impact Europe stands against any form of harassment or discrimination based on a personal trait (including race, national origin, religion, creed, age, mental and physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other characteristic protected by law). We are against violence of any kind. We are dedicated to maintaining a creative, culturally diverse and supportive work environment, contributing to a free, inclusive and equitable society.



**5. Human Rights:** Impact Europe is committed to respecting and protecting universal human rights, based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Impact Europe members should avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities and address such impacts when they occur. They should further seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations, products or services by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts.