

**FREE
FREE
FREE
PRESS
UNLIMITED**

People deserve to know

**CODE OF CONDUCT
JANUARY 2012**

CODE OF CONDUCT FREE PRESS UNLIMITED

Background

A) **The mission of Free Press Unlimited** was incorporated in the founding statutes in 2011 and has been adapted in this Code of Conduct and approved by the Board of Free Press Unlimited.

B) **The core values of Free Press Unlimited.** Based on the mission and strategy which was created during the merger of the predecessors of Free Press Unlimited, the directors have established a code of conduct. The code is based on five core values:

Independent: Free Press Unlimited has its own independent strategy aimed at a diversity of services to independent (media)partners. Free Press Unlimited does not take on assignments from financial pressure groups or political groups.

Inspirational: Free Press Unlimited aims to inspire local media professionals and organisations to get the best out of their talents and opportunities by sharing knowledge and ideas. We are result-oriented, we make a difference and reach more people.

Inventive: Free Press Unlimited looks for smart and creative solutions for the benefit of free access to information, regardless of obstacles or barriers.

Dedicated: We are personally involved and persistent where local inhabitants, situations and organisations are involved.

Tailor-made: Starting point for Free Press Unlimited is the local situation and culture. We are looking for partnership and participation and we take into account the local capacity and technological development.

C. A Code of Conduct for Free Press Unlimited. The following outlines have been taken into account while drafting the Code of Conduct:

- The Board, the directors and the employees of Free Press Unlimited attach the greatest possible value to the trustworthiness of Free Press Unlimited's activities and the good name and reputation of the organisation. We therefore believe it is understandable and essential to develop a code of conduct which sets out the standards for ethical behaviour of Free Press Unlimited's representatives.
- Free Press Unlimited is a small organisation which develops media initiatives and supports (media) partner organisations in developing countries and fragile and repressive states. The strength of Free Press Unlimited lies in its close involvement with southern partners and the use of experts for tailor-made solutions.
- The code of conduct is therefore uniform for all positions and field of business. The code has a general character and must also be understandable and manageable for temporary employers and southern partners.

A: Mission of Free Press Unlimited

Mission

Free Press Unlimited strives to provide people and media with more room to express themselves freely by promoting freedom of the press, pluralism and diversity. We focus on developing countries and fragile and repressive states. Free Press Unlimited works in accordance with the following core values:

- Independent
- Inspirational
- Inventive
- Dedicated
- Tailor-made

Strategy

Free Press Unlimited focuses on strengthening the capabilities of people and organisations (in and for media) to express themselves freely, to create, enhance and use to the full the space around them.

The focus is therefore on people and organisations that make a difference - *change agents* who are forerunners and who act as catalysts for change. Free Press Unlimited will support them in the (further) development of their knowledge and skills. Special emphasis is therefore placed on developments in the fields of information and communications technology and innovative (educational) methods.

Core activities

Free Press Unlimited works with three clusters of core activities:

- A. Strengthening capacity at individual level;
- B. Sustainable media development aimed at making the partner organisations, in and for media, independent;
- C. Journalism initiatives in repressive lands and fragile states striving for professional, independent provision of information.

Ancillary activities

In addition to these core activities, Free Press Unlimited provides small-scale, non-sustainable help in suddenly emerging crisis situations.

Free Press Unlimited also facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experience between individual journalists in The Netherlands and developing countries and countries in transition.

Support activities

To support the main activities of Free Press Unlimited, activities will be developed with a view to sharing knowledge, skills and experiences in the field of media development, for example through participation in international forums and platforms.

B: Core values of Free Press Unlimited

Independent

Free Press Unlimited does not accept assignments from financial pressure groups or political groups and follows her own independent strategy. This implies that Free Press Unlimited works with independent (media) partners who are able to execute their activities freely and independently and whose aim is to search for the truth and provide informative services to the general public. This independency is supported by the endorsing of a number of (legal) principles in the work of Free Press Unlimited:

- I. Human Rights: to respect the universal declaration of human rights, even in situations where this cannot be enforced, focusing on freedom of speech and press freedom;
- II. Equality by law: to work on the notion that all human beings are equal by law and should be treated as such. Discrimination on any ground is prohibited;
- III. Act ethically: to stop (sexual) harassment and intimidation between journalists and their subjects, between teachers and students and at the workplace.

Inspirational

Free Press Unlimited strives to inspire local media professionals or organisations to get the best out of their talents and opportunities by sharing knowledge and ideas. We are result-oriented, we make a difference and reach more people.

- I. Individual expertise: aimed at capacity strengthening of individuals who are the driving forces behind better provision of information to the local population;
- II. Social change: aimed at actors who support the mission of Free Press Unlimited and bring it within reach of their own community.
- III. Result & impact: aimed at initiatives within the context mentioned to improve provision of information to all civilians.

Inventive

Free Press Unlimited searches for smart, creative solutions for the benefit of free access to information, even if there are obstacles or barriers.

- I. Less is more: aimed at implementation of low cost and efficient solutions for complicated issues through a good (in-depth) analysis and tailor-made solutions;
- II. Pragmatic: aimed at finding effective solutions which are safe for those involved and which don't stand in the way of the primary process;
- III. Exchange: stimulates exchange of knowledge of a diversity of partners aimed at collective learning and accountability.

Dedicated

Free Press Unlimited is personally involved and persistent in matters concerning local inhabitants, situations and organisations. This is expressed in:

- I. Involvement: aimed at an intensive relationship with (media) partners in which we search - in mutual coherence - for the best solutions;
- II. Persistence: aimed at long term involvement with a focus on educating and training individuals and media organisations to become autonomous;
- III. Realistic: aimed at measurable, time-limited, realistic and feasible objectives.

Tailor-made

Starting point for Free Press Unlimited is the local situation and culture. We are looking for partnerships and participation, support pluriformity and diversity and take into account the local capacity and technological development.

- I. Social change: aimed at (media) partners who are involved with and create support within their local community;

- II. Financial sustainability: aimed at promoting a sustainable and sound financial structure that supports the capacity of the partners;
- III. Technological progress: taking into account balanced and ethical use of new technology such as mobile communication.

Free Press Unlimited also endorses the need for good governance and financial transparency. For all of our research activities, consultancy, training etc. we have developed professional standards. Those standards match the standards developed by Free Press Unlimited based on the above mentioned core values.

C. Code of conduct professional practice Free Press Unlimited

The culture at Free Press Unlimited is based on trust, mutual respect, open communication and high standards with regard to professional conduct. These key words play an essential role in achieving our mission. We place our trust in the common sense of our staff and partners and trust that they will act within the bounds of the law, with integrity, and will do everything in their power to ensure that the good reputation of Free Press Unlimited is never questioned. In this code of conduct we make clear what we expect of our representatives (i.e. staff, partners and all other parties with whom we work) and also what they can expect of Free Press Unlimited.

Global Scope

The code of conduct is tailor-made for Free Press Unlimited and applies to Free Press Unlimited, affiliated organisations and all employees, regardless of the contractual basis of their employment relationship with Free Press Unlimited. The code also applies to independent third parties who are hired by Free Press Unlimited or act in the name of Free Press Unlimited, in all cases where Free Press Unlimited may be held responsible for their actions. Worldwide all Free Press Unlimited representatives are obliged to strive for the same high personal and ethical standards everywhere.

Involvement in the community

On the basis of these core values, Free Press Unlimited strives to be an organisation that is a trustworthy member of society. The activities of Free Press Unlimited focus on serving the countries and communities where it is active and not damaging their interests. Therefore, Free Press Unlimited also aims to be accountable to the societies and communities where it is active.

Sustainable development

In the light of the objective for sustainable development of prosperity and well-being, Free Press Unlimited is committed to respectful treatment of mankind, nature and the environment. Free Press Unlimited invests in people and focuses on sustainable business practices.

Fair trade

We carry out our national and international activities in an honest and fair manner in order to achieve a high level of transparency and accountability. The principles of justice, trust and integrity are of the utmost importance. We respect the law and legislation and governing practices and show consideration for the norms and values upheld in the countries and communities where we are active. We expect the same from our representatives. Within Free Press Unlimited no one has the right to encourage others to break the law or act in contradiction with the principles defined in this code of conduct.

Integrity and corruption

Bribery and corruption of government officials are serious crimes. The headquarters of Free Press Unlimited are based in The Netherlands. Dutch laws and legislation regarding corruption of government officials also apply where persons are guilty of this outside of The Netherlands. The law therefore also extends to the representatives of Free Press Unlimited. They are under no circumstances permitted – either directly or indirectly – to bribe or to offer, promise, give, ask for or accept other inappropriate privileges with the intention of receiving or keeping an unauthorized privilege. Representatives of Free Press Unlimited are also not permitted to engage the services of third parties to bribe government officials, business contacts or their families by means of procurement contracts, purchase orders or consultancy agreements. The Director or the Board must be consulted when doubts arise concerning integrity and corruption.

Staff

Free Press Unlimited aims to create a working environment where people treat each other with trust and respect and where everyone feels responsible for the results and reputation of Free Press Unlimited. Free Press Unlimited stands for a working environment that is free of intimidation, discrimination, sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment.

We will recruit, hire and promote staff exclusively on the basis of the capabilities and skills necessary for the job. We aim to create a safe and healthy (both in the material and immaterial sense) working environment for our staff and expect them to contribute to this. Free Press Unlimited shall in no way be involved in any form of forced or child labour. Free Press Unlimited strives to develop and increase the skills and capabilities of its staff. Free Press Unlimited respects the dignity of the individual and the

right of its staff to the freedom of association. Free Press Unlimited provides good communication with its staff in The Netherlands and in the field by means of information and consultation procedures.

Free Press Unlimited provides the necessary work tools, including office and ICT facilities. Staff are expected to use these facilities exclusively within the context of performance of tasks and not for private objectives of any nature whatsoever.

Offer or acceptance of gifts, contributions or favours

In the business world it is quite normal to give gifts. Representatives of Free Press Unlimited must refuse to accept these gifts where acceptance could create the appearance of unethical enticements or unacceptable behaviour. Representatives of Free Press Unlimited may not offer or accept gifts that deviate from the norm, the norm being the standard protocol within accepted ethical norms. Gifts or favours in exchange for services or unacceptable reciprocal acts must always be refused.

The guideline is that gifts of more than € 50 are unacceptable and must be refused. If a friendly refusal to accept a gift would insult the giver or jeopardise the work relationship, the director/chairperson or the board must be consulted. If the gift is accepted, it becomes the property of Free Press Unlimited. If representatives of Free Press Unlimited invite (government) officials they must adhere to the expenditure pattern as determined by Free Press Unlimited. Local standards are determined in accordance with the national laws, regulations and customs and are drawn up in accordance with this code of conduct. The director-chairperson or the board must be consulted when

- (i) gifts are offered or requested that are in conflict with the relevant directives or when
- (ii) any doubt arises as to their acceptability.

Avoidance of a conflict of interest

Free Press Unlimited relies on the complete trustworthiness of its representatives, suppliers and other stakeholders. Conflict of interest, or the appearance thereof, damages the good name of Free Press Unlimited. A conflict of interest means every situation in which representatives of Free Press Unlimited use their contacts and their position within Free Press Unlimited to serve their own professional or financial interests, regardless of whether or not this might be detrimental to Free Press Unlimited.

Representatives of Free Press Unlimited must avoid all situations where a conflict, or appearance thereof, may arise between personal interests and the interests of Free Press Unlimited.

A conflict of interest can take on many forms and these cannot all be dealt with separately in this code. It is each Free Press Unlimited representative's responsibility to avoid a conflict of interest by applying his or her own judgement, integrity and ethical standards. It is also the responsibility of the representative to report situations that are completely justified, but that could be seen as a conflict of interest. The Director-Chairperson or the board is the right person to contact to assess potential conflict of interest cases.

Confidential information protection and accurate reporting

Specific information pertaining to the activities, projects, strategies and company details of Free Press Unlimited is subject to property rights, such as personal details of representatives of Free Press Unlimited, students, clients, research participants, and interviewees. Unauthorised disclosure may be detrimental to Free Press Unlimited, representatives and clients or may give others an unfair advantage. Thus, Free Press Unlimited expects its representatives to respect and actively protect the confidentiality of such information.

The integrity and completeness of reports is not just a policy of Free Press Unlimited, but also a legal requirement. Our financial transactions are recorded in a correct, accurate and honest manner. The management is responsible for the integrity of the reporting and has the reports audited externally in order to meet this responsibility.

Reporting inaccurate, unethical or illegal behaviour

Free Press Unlimited strives to create a culture based on trust and individual responsibility. Nonetheless, representatives may be confronted with unethical or illegal behaviour in the context of the work of Free Press Unlimited. We place high value on offering our representatives the opportunity to report such behaviour in a safe and honest manner. Representatives must report violations to the Director-Chairperson, the board or the trust commission, possibly anonymously.