



## **Whistleblowing Policy 2025-2026**

Future Roots have a Whistleblowing Policy that protects staff members who report colleagues they believe are doing something wrong or illegal, or who are neglecting their duties. All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns where they exist.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988 was enacted to bring about a climate of greater openness between employees and employers so that irregularities could be identified and addressed quickly and to strengthen employment rights by protecting responsible workers who “blow the whistle” about wrongdoing or failures in the workplace.

### **Aims and Scope of this Policy**

This Policy aims to:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising concerns and to questions and act upon concerns about practice;
- Provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken;
- Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to take the matter further if you are not satisfied with Future Roots response;
- Reassure you that you will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for any disclosure that you have made in good faith.

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance relating to your employment.

This policy is intended to cover any serious concerns that you have about any aspect of the operation of Future Roots, any member of staff, volunteer, Board member or participant.

These include:

- Conduct which is an offence or breach of the law
- Health and Safety risks, including risks to the public
- Damage to the environment
- Fraud or unauthorised use of funds
- Sexual or physical abuse
- Unethical or improper conduct
- Welfare of any participants is negatively affected

### **Safeguards and Confidentiality**

Future Roots recognises the decision to report a concern can be difficult and we will respond sensitively. We will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith. We will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the appropriate procedures.



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All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity unless you wish otherwise. If a situation arises where a concern cannot be resolved without revealing your identity, we will discuss this with you beforehand.

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation which the investigation indicates may have been made frivolously, maliciously or for your personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

### How to Raise a Concern

Where you have a concern, you should report this internally, in the first instance to your line manager/supervisor. If the concern is regarding your immediate line manager/supervisor then the concern should be escalated to the next management or Board level. Resolving and reporting concerns internally should be the first step before using an external “prescribed person or body”.

Making a report to an external person or body should only be undertaken where the staff member thinks the organisation will not deal with the matter with integrity and/or would treat them unfairly if they complain. An external prescribed person or body may be used if the matter has been raised before and the concern has not been satisfactorily dealt with.

Staff members with a concern should report the matter with regard to the levels as follow:

- To a Senior Worker, DSL or line manager/supervisor
- Specified Person – Julie Plumley (Director)
- If concern is about the specified person, report to Board Member
- Board Member
- Local Authority – LADO – if safeguarding matters relating to care of a child.
- Prescribed Person or Body (e.g. OFSTED, Education Funding Agency, Children’s Commissioner, NSPCC, Safeguarding for Adults Local Authority Social Services), Care Quality Commission.
- Alternatively contact the whistleblowing charity, *Public Concern at Work* [www.pcaw.org.uk](http://www.pcaw.org.uk)

Please see also Future Roots Managing Allegations Policy and Process Flow Chart.