Digni

B - Governing document

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Ethical guidelines for Digni

Digni's foundational values

Digni is an organization founded on Christian values, which, along with its member organizations, works toward the shared vision of a just and fair world; a world in which God's creation is actively being safeguarded; a world in which all people are treated with dignity and respect; and a world in which no-one is suffering due to poverty. The name 'Digni' is derived from the Latin word *dignitas*, which means dignity. The inviolable dignity of each person is to be a governing principle in all our work. The ethical principles of the Christian-humanistic tradition, together with the United Nations' human rights protections, builds the foundation for Digni's ethical reflection generally and for this document specifically.

Purpose

Digni's reputation and trustworthiness is reliant on the behavior of each of its staff, and on the basis of its daily operations being performed with professionalism and excellence. The purpose of these guidelines is to increase awareness around the ethical dilemmas faced by the individual worker in his or her daily work for Digni, as well as to hold each worker accountable to adhere to these guidelines. In other words, we want to clarify the behavior we expect – and the behavior we do not accept – from our workers, as they face certain challenges in their daily work and lives while working for Digni. All of us, both personally and communally, are responsible for keeping high ethical standards and accomplishing our tasks in line with the principles and guidelines presented in this document. These guidelines are not meant to replace the existing laws, either in Norway or outside of Norway; instead, they are meant to complement existing laws. These guidelines are not exhaustive, in that they do not cover every ethical problem that may arise. When the validity of these guidelines come in doubt in the face of a specific ethical challenge, it is the responsibility of the worker facing such a challenge to immediately consult with his or her leader.

Comprehensiveness

The guidelines given in this document are valid for all of Digni's workers and for everyone who works for Digni, whether on a permanent or temporary basis, or in paid or unpaid position. The guidelines also valid also for anyone who does work on Digni's behalf, or who represents Digni, such as Digni's board members. The term 'worker' in this document will include everyone mentioned in this paragraph.

Every worker in Digni is required to familiarize themselves with these guidelines and is responsible to ensure that the guidelines are followed. For employees of Digni, the ethical guidelines compose part of the employment agreement, and a signed copy of the guidelines is to be archived in the employee's file.

For those hired as external consultants, the guidelines are to be included in the employment contract and will be valid as long as a person does work on behalf of Digni.

Responsibility

The leadership of Digni, through its general secretary, has a particular duty to ensure that all of Digni's workers are acquainted with the contents of these ethical guidelines, as well as ensure that ethical awareness within the organization is continuously maintained and developed. Digni's leadership are required to implement an immediate investigation into any alleged violation of these guidelines, and then implement measures that will address the

alleged violation. The investigation is to be undertaken professionally and confidentially in regard to internal routines and rules for reporting such an ethical violation. The investigation is to conscientiously take into consideration the anonymity of the person who has reported the situation to leadership, in order to protect the individual from any retaliatory action. Follow-up and support is to be given to the person or persons who have suffered because of a violation of Digni's ethical guidelines.

Reporting

Digni desires an open culture in its organization, a culture in which it is acceptable and encouraged to bring up worrisome situations. Digni has an internal reporting channel and an information poster that details how a person can report a situation, and to whom, and how the warning is to be followed up in the organization. In addition to this system, each person in the organization has the right and opportunity to confidentially report directly to his or her leader.

Everyone who has signed these guidelines has the right and duty to give warning should they discover or suspect a significant breach of these guidelines.

Everyone who gives warning about an alleged violation is to be treated with utmost confidentiality, and no one who has warned in good faith is to experience any kind of retaliation. All workers are required to cooperate in the investigation of an eventual case.

Sanctions against the violation of ethical guidelines

It is expected that Digni's workers commit themselves to consciously promote these guidelines. A violation of an ethical guideline may lead to negative consequences in the perpetrator's employment relationship with Digni. Perpetrators who exercise duties for or have a contract with Digni may lose these duties or see their contract with Digni terminated.

Should a violation of a Digni ethical guideline also be considered a violation against a Norwegian law or that of another country, Digni will hand over the case to the relevant enforcement agencies for possible legal action. In the event of alleged financial misappropriation, Norad will be warned through its reporting channel in compliance with Digni's agreement with Norad. An investigation will be initiated in compliance with the demands included in this agreement.

Fundamental expectations for Digni's workers

Digni's workers are to act in such a way that respects and defends a person's God-given intrinsic value, as well as the human rights guidelines of the United Nations. In our service, we have a particular responsibility to protect those who are vulnerable, discriminated against or marginalized. All of our workers should seek to influence their environment to uphold high ethical standards in all they do.

As a Digni worker, I commit myself to:

1. **Contribute to preserving Digni's integrity and reputation by ensuring that my professional and personal behavior complies with Digni's foundational values.**

- In addition to respecting the requirements inferred in these guidelines, I will respect the culture, legal system and customs of the nations I visit in my service to Digni, so that my conduct does not in any way offend the culture, legal system and customs of these nations.
- I will maintain a professional and ethical awareness of the obligations Digni has to its cooperating partners. I will be consciously aware of how I speak of and treat Digni's cooperating partners, member organizations and their partners, each person that works in a Digni project, and everyone else that is associated with Digni's work.
- I will work in a way that strengthens the competence and capacity of Digni's local partners, so that we can cooperate as equal partners with mutual respect.
- I will perform my duties in a way that strengthens Digni's cooperation with the Norwegian authorities, and with Digni's cooperation with the national and local authorities in the nations where our members operate projects.
- I will do everything in my power to a produce work of high quality that is delivered on time, in order to contribute to reaching Digni's common goals and objectives.

2. Treat all people with respect and dignity, and refrain from all forms of favoritism, discrimination, exploitation and harassment

- I will treat all people fairly, with dignity and respect. I will ensure that I do not discriminate or harass anyone, whether through my behavior or in my relationships with others, on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disability, or political or religious affiliation.
- Digni's management of substantial development funds means that Digni and its member organizations disperse large sums of money to their cooperating partners in the South. I will therefore be consciously aware of the power relationship Digni has as the provider of financial grants to its members, to its partners and to specific individuals. I will ensure that Digni is perceived as a just and fair organization, an organization that does not show partiality to specific groups, organizations or members, but works conscientiously in compliance with the criteria and guidelines ratified by Digni's board of director and advisory board.
- I am aware that sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and sexual offenses[1] are not to occur in any way, shape or form. Sexual contact with children and youth under the age of 18 years old is not tolerated, even when the laws of the land allow for a lower age of sexual consent than what is legal in Norway. The same applies to the personal consumption of material that abuses children and/or the distribution of such material. Ignorance or misperception of a child's true age does not not pardon a person from being held legally responsible for such a violation.
- I am also aware that paying for sex is strictly forbidden – whether through the exchange of money, goods, privileges or services, or any other form of transaction.

3. Perform my duties in a manner that avoids possible conflicts of interest or partiality

[1] Sexual abuse refers to procuring for oneself or for someone else sexual contact through the use of force or threatening behavior, or the attempt at doing so. Sexual exploitation refers to procuring for oneself or for someone else sexual contact through the misuse of position, a relationship of dependency or trust, through the misuse of someone's position of vulnerability, or the attempt at doing so. Sexual offenses refer to sexually offensive behavior such as indecent exposure, offensive movements or speech.

- I commit to being open about personal relationships, financial interests, positions of influence or other circumstances that may influence my partiality and decisions, either professionally or financially in Digni.
- I will not misuse the authority inherent in my position with Digni to acquire for myself or for Digni unwarranted advantages, through the giving or receiving of gifts, the promise of travel opportunities, or any other benefit used to influence my decisions, whether it be in the form of financial support, goods or services. Gifts that comply with accepted cultural norms will be generally allowed.

4. Be responsible for the financial funds, resources and information I have access to through my relationship with Digni

- I will use Digni's funds and resources in a responsible and reasonable way, and in compliance with the internal regulations and agreements Digni has made with public authorities.
- Digni actively battles against all forms of corruption and financial improprieties, in line with the Norwegian government's 'zero tolerance' policy. I commit myself to work according to these principles and notify the proper authorities should I, during my work, be orientated to financial impropriety, such as corruption, embezzlement, theft, fraud, nepotism, inaccurate financial reporting methods, or any other financial unfaithfulness.
- I will ensure that budgeting, management and control of monetary funds will be performed with transparency, according to Norwegian laws and in compliance with Digni's agreement with Norad. I will endeavor to act truthfully and openly with public authorities as well as with all other organizations and cooperating partners.
- I understand the confidentiality I have concerning information on Digni's member organizations, their partners and other service-related relationships that I become acquainted through my work with Digni. Confidentiality also applies to internal confidential information concerning Digni's operations.
- I understand that confidentiality does not apply to circumstances that warrant notification of a potential violation of a nation's legal system.
- Digni is to be an open, approachable and accountable organization in situations of general interest. This also applies to the management of the organization's resources. This is best accomplished through a consistent and coordinated approach to the media and the political arena. I therefore commit myself to never share information with the media, participate in political meetings or give interviews on behalf of Digni without first receiving approval from leadership.
- Should I publish matters of interest through Digni's own channels, I will respect the dignity of the individuals being presented. I will follow normal journalistic ethics tied to copyrights and the handling of sources. With the use of pictures, I will, as far as it is possible, present the source of the picture and the names of those who are pictured.
- The presentation of individuals, either in written or visual form, is to occur in a way that is not perceived as offensive.
- The boundary between being an employee of Digni and being a private person can be challenging to delineate in social media. Rules for confidentiality, journalistic ethics and personal privacy also apply to the use of social media. As an employee of Digni, I have the right to participate in debates, but commit myself to making it clear that I am presenting my own opinion as a private person, as well as ensure that I express myself in social media in a way that does not contradict the foundational values of Digni.
- I will carefully consider the consequences for Digni before I publish something on social media that deals with the organization. Situations within Digni that are worthy of critique and criticism are to be communicated through Digni's own channels, and not through traditional or social media (see the organization's reporting procedures).

5. Working to protect personal health, the work environment and security in Digni

- Digni commits to do everything it can to ensure that its employees are kept safe and healthy, both in Norway and when they are traveling abroad. As a Digni worker I am responsible for following Digni's guidelines for work-related travel and HSE (health, security and environment) work generally, and to act in a way that does not put my own or another's safety in danger.
- I will not work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or use alcohol or drugs in a way that affects my judgment and behavior while in service for Digni.
- I will not use or be in the possession of illegal substances on Digni premises, or when I am representing Digni while traveling, in accordance with Norwegian law.
- I am aware that the use of alcohol or other substances is forbidden when driving vehicles, also in nations with more liberal regulations.
- As an employee of Digni I have a responsibility to contribute to a healthy work environment by showing respect and trust to my colleagues, and will be willing to cooperate with others to achieve common goals.
- I will have a high threshold for speaking about others, and a low threshold for speaking about problems with leaders and colleagues. When I find myself in a conflict with a colleague, I will look for a speedy solution through Digni's official channels.

6. Protecting the environment and work conditions, locally and globally

- Out of respect for God's creation, Digni is highly aware of our use of resources so that we avoid damaging the environment. When choosing external suppliers, I will evaluate the supplier's environmental record and its work conditions when at all possible, in addition to price and quality.

I have read and have familiarized myself with the contents of this document, and will comply with these guidelines in my work for Digni. I accept the potential consequences associated with the violation of any of these guidelines.

Name:
Position:
Date:
Place:
Signature:

For Digni employees:

I am familiar with the following Digni governing documents that underpin these guidelines:

Digni's reporting poster and reporting channels
Digni's quality protection system (ISO 9001:2008)
Digni's personnel handbook
Policy for faith-based approaches and rights
Policy for gender and equality
Principles for the battle against corruption

Signature: