

21 Research Center Child Protection Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this 21 Research Center Child Protection Policy (hereinafter “Policy”) is to protect people, particularly children from any harm and discrimination that may be caused due to their coming into contact with 21 Research Center (hereinafter “21RC”). This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with 21RC,
- The design and implementation of 21RC’s programmes and activities.

The Policy lays out the commitments made by 21RC, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to minimising the risk of harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

Scope

- All 21RC staff
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to 21RC, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians.

Legal framework

- In accordance with national laws.
- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The European Social Charter
- The European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights
- The Convention on the International Protection of Adults
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- EU Directive 95/46/EC - GDPR Directive

Policy Statement

21RC believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. 21RC will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

The Policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

21RC commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the several pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

21RC will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within the Policy.

- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with 21RC. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Child safeguarding

21RC staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit children.
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.

Child safeguarding in research

21RC staff and associated personnel must:

- Ensure participation in research is voluntary.
- Obtain fully informed consent for their participation.
- Parental/guardian consent is required for a child to participate in research.
- Make participants aware of their entitlement to refuse/withdraw at any stage.
- Not exclude any group from consideration.
- Maintain participants' anonymity and confidentiality.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

21RC staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, 21RC staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Child Protection Policy.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a 21RC staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

Enabling reports

21RC will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with. 21RC will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their direct superior. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their either of these, (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member or the President.

Response

21RC will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to internal rules outlined in our strategic documents. 21RC will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy. 21RC will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.