

HR 14: Whistleblowing

Purpose

Arts Project Australia (APA) is committed to conducting its affairs with integrity, honesty, and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. As part of this commitment, APA encourages its employees, volunteers, contractors, and other stakeholders to report any concerns regarding unethical behaviour, illegal activities, or violations of organisational policies and procedures. The purpose of this whistleblowing policy is to provide a different mechanism for individuals associated with Arts Project Australia to report such concerns without fear of reprisal and to ensure that information provided is handled in a fair, confidential, and timely manner.

Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals associated with Arts Project Australia, including but not limited to employees, volunteers, contractors, board members, families, support staff and artists.

Individuals who become aware of any misconduct, fraud, corruption or wrongdoing within APA are encouraged to report their concerns promptly.

Arts Project Australia provides different options for individuals to report concerns, depending on the nature of the concerns and whom it may involve. APA provides a Feedback and Complaints process as well as access to an external Whistleblowing Service to ensure fairness and confidentiality is maintained.

The 'Complaints and Feedback Policy' provides an internally managed process and may apply to instances of perceived unfair treatment. An external report to the Whistleblowing Service may be more applicable for instances such as criminal activity or when anonymity is considered a priority.

Reporting Procedures

External reports using the whistleblowing hotline can be submitted anonymously or by submitting an identified report to an independent whistle blowing provider administered by an external third party (process detailed below).

Process:

- REPORT HOTLINE: 1300 687927
- online via: <https://www.whistleblowingservice.com.au/arts/>
 - click on the 'Make a Report' button to be directed to the reporting page.
 - enter 'Arts' in the 'Unique Key' field
 - enter 'Arts2024' in the 'Client Reference Number'
 - Click on 'next'

Whistleblowers can choose to remain anonymous or reveal their identity when making a disclosure.

Protection Against Retaliation

Arts Project Australia prohibits retaliation against any individual who makes a good faith report of misconduct or cooperates in an investigation. Any acts of reprisal, bullying, harassment or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or other relationship with the Organisation.

Investigation and Resolution

All reports will be investigated by the appropriate personnel or an independent investigator, as deemed necessary in line with the policy settings articulated in the chosen reporting mechanism.

Investigation outcome

Once the investigation has been finalised, the investigator will provide a report of the investigation findings to the most relevant role holder within APA, which will be dependent on the nature of the complaint and report findings, including the President of the Board and/or Executive Director and/or Chair of the Finance and Risk (F&R) Committee. The appropriate role holder, including the President and the Executive Director or Chair of F&R will review the report and determine the action to be taken in consultation with other relevant role-holders as appropriate. The actions could include:

- possible disciplinary outcomes
- referral to Victoria Police for criminal investigation;
- referral to another external agency for investigation; or
- civil action.

Confidentiality

To the extent possible, the confidentiality of individuals making reports and those involved in investigations will be maintained, subject to legal and regulatory requirements and the need to conduct a thorough investigation.