



Safeguarding & Code of Conduct in the **Arts Sector**

Several recent high-profile cases have highlighted the need for a concerted focus on safeguarding in the Arts and the third sector. At GGI we are unwavering believers in the role of good governance in protecting the vulnerable. We know that it is only through ensuring reliability and integrity that Boards can take the best decisions for those for whom they have a duty of care.

Arts organisations have particular challenges to face. The workforce may be temporary not permanent; there is limited professional regulation; performance may demand activities and actions that would not normally be accepted in everyday life; rehearsal may necessitate prolonged periods of one to one working; competition to succeed is extreme, raising the potential for individuals to prey on the vulnerable; the audience is diverse, transient and difficult to control.

In that context, **how can organisations best discharge their responsibilities?**



Board Responsibilities

Safeguarding is every organisation's and everyone's responsibility. Any organisation that provides work or work experience, is involved in mentoring or offers charitable activities, or provides services or any other public offering should have a clear understanding of the needs and views of vulnerable people, whether or not they are under or over 18 years of age.

Trustees have two basic duties:

- To act in the best interests of their organisation, in furtherance of its charitable objectives, and
- To protect the assets of their organisation.

To deliver the first of these, Boards are vested with the responsibility to assess the risks that arise from their organisation's activities and put in place appropriate policies and procedures. They require deliberate and strategic actions at Board level and a steadfast recognition of the importance of safety in organisational culture.

Board Assurance Prompt (BAP)

GGI's approach for matters of significance such as safeguarding is to devise and to facilitate use of a Board Assurance Prompt. These are documents that describe the key questions we believe Boards should be asking themselves and their organisations to ensure that good governance practices are in place.

At the heart of a BAP is a matrix that allows Boards to self-assess the appropriateness of their policies, processes and behaviours. When it comes to safeguarding, we recommend that a Board aims to be either 'mature', able to demonstrate that comprehensive assurance is in place, or 'exemplar', able to provide leadership to other organisations on the back of consistent achievement.

In the coming few weeks GGI will be developing the Board Assurance Prompt for Safeguarding with specific reference to the Arts and the third sector. The Prompt will consider how a Board might seek assurance on issues including:

- The suitability of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy
- The level and frequency of training
- Risk awareness, reporting and management
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Self-assessment of organisational maturity and culture
- Recognising, responding to, reporting, raising and recording incidents
- Learning from incidents and near misses
- Policies for remote working, e.g. overseas
- Rules for interaction with the public, including the use of social media

Working with GGI

We invite you to share your experiences and expert knowledge as we develop the BAP. If you are willing to be involved, or would like to discuss how GGI could help your organisation, please contact Andrew Hughes, Change Director at GGI either via email at Andrew.Hughes@good-governance.org.uk or call 07732 681130.