



OSAAT® Educational Charitable Trust

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LEGAL AND ETHICS POLICY OF THE TRUST

(Approved & adopted by the Board of Trustees on 19.05.2022 by circulation through email)

Purpose and Goal

The purpose of this document is to keep the vision of OSAAT®, a sustainable, progressive, law abiding and also ethical. The activities of OSAAT® should integrate self-development and service to society at large balancing individual and public concerns and keep focus on the organization's higher, broader goals.

Standards to measure against

- The organization and representatives will be responsible for maintaining itself and OSAAT® members will conduct organization activities only for purposes in alignment and as mentioned by organization charter and bye-laws.
- Money and funds collected from 3rd parties, donors and members will not be used for selfish or other organization's benefit, purposes. Such funds need to be trusted with utmost seriousness as a public trust.
- OSAAT® member conduct as part of organization's activities should be mindful of public perception, so as not to slur the image of organization.
- OSAAT® as an organization should exhibit caring attitude to other relevant topics like environment, social justice in all its activities.
- Uphold Human Rights and Dignity
 - Should not violate any person's fundamental human rights
 - Recognize all people are born free and equal in dignity
 - Be sensitive to moral values, religion, customs, traditions and culture of communities they serve
 - Respect integrity of families and support family based life.
- Respect Religious Freedom – Religion or non-religion should not become a factor for OSAAT® to interact with other people, communities in its efforts.
- Transparency and accountability – OSAAT® should strive for openness and honesty internally and while dealing with donors, members of public as well as those who interact with OSAAT®.
 - Except for personnel matters and proprietary information, financial, accounting practices should be transparent and accountable.
 - Financial information, governance structure, activities, listing of officers, partnership should be open and accessible to public scrutiny.

- Should be accountable not just to donors and government, but also to the people, communities it serves, organization members and public at large.
- Truthful and Legal
 - Follow the law in letter and spirit
 - Should not engage in activities that are unlawful – like bribery, corruption
 - Should have a policy of confidentiality – while reporting and bringing evidence to a governing body in case of misconduct of anyone associated with the organization.
 - Meet all legal obligations in terms of raising funds, health and safety standards, privacy rules, trademark and copyright use, etc.
 - Take prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered with members, governing body, volunteers, partners, etc.
- Maintain Integrity as per core principles of the organization as stated and agreed by Organization.
- Non profitability
 - Maintain organization status as not-for-profit. Any surplus that is generated through its operation is utilized solely to help organization fulfill its mission and objectives as stated in its charter and not any other purpose. Net earnings should not be for the benefit of governing board or officers, members except for reasonable compensation, re-imburement for services provided to the organization.
 - Not operated for purpose of carrying on a trade or business which are unrelated to the mission and stated objectives.
 - Should not distribute profit or assets for the benefit of individuals both during operation as well as when winding up.
- Identity of organization needs to be maintained as non-governmental and politically independent. Foreign policy, if any, needs to be clearly articulated and maintained.
- Maintain the organization standards – clear definition of governing body, organization documents (bylaws, memorandum of association etc.), which clearly define mission, objectives, membership rights and obligations, rules of procedure. Be legally registered.
- Mission and Activities
 - Be consistent with Organization mission at all times
 - Be Effective and efficient in organization goals
 - Feedback channels are open from project beneficiaries, donors and all stakeholders (private and public).
 - Periodic Evaluation – Organization functioning should be critically examined from time to time with regards to relevancy to mission, efficiency, effectiveness.
 - Be professional.
 - Percentage of expenditure – Organization should have clear guidelines and ways of measurement. At least 65% of its total expenditure and ideally more than 80% should be direct expenses (to meet core goal of One School at a Time).

Administrative, indirect costs should be evaluated from time to time and steps taken to minimize the same.

- Conflict of Interest
 - Always act keeping best interest of Organization. If there are situations which could harm OSAAT®, step back.
 - Matters impacting a governing members. Governing body members should not participate in deciding a matter directly impacting that individual (such as re-election to governing body, personal remuneration, etc.).
 - Disclosure. Each governing body member and officer of OSAAT® should disclose any potential and actual conflicts of interest such as institutional affiliation, sitting on a board of another partner/collaborating agency, contracting agency, NGO etc.,
 - Gifts policy should be clear. Both receiving and giving Gifts while interacting with partners other organization should be not significant (Not more than 2000 Rupees worth). If there are larger gifts, that should belong to the organization rather than the individual.
 - Using position for personal benefit is not allowed. Members of the organization should refrain from using official position either regular or volunteer to secure special privilege, gain or benefit for themselves.
 - Best interest of the organization to be maintained. Members should always put organization goals before personal goals. The best interests of the organization should be ahead of individual desires and goals.
- Financial and Legal
 - Fiscal responsibility – Governing body hold fiscal responsibility in making sure organization is financially sound.
 - Annual budgets are approved and organization operates in accordance with the budget.
 - Internal financial statements are prepared regularly, reviewed by the governing body.
 - Internal controls and procedures so that there are safeguards against one person having power to issue check to self. Reasonable restrictions on using of petty cash and drawing out and disbursement of funds.
 - Audit of organization when it has substantial annual revenue, by an independent and qualified accountant.
- Fund Raising
 - Involvement of Governing body in fund raising efforts.
 - Be consistent with the mission and not compromise on its core principles.
 - Be truthful in all matters relating to raising of funds and their use.
 - Non-tolerance of unethical actions. Organization should not tolerate unethical activities like diversion of dedicated funds to uses other than the project for which funds were approved, overstatement of achievements etc.

- Relationship with Donor
 - Governing body and members should not exploit any relationship with a donor or prospective donor for personal benefit or benefit of any relative, friends, associates, colleagues, etc.
 - Maintain Confidentiality. Privileged or confidential information regarding a donor or donation should not be disclosed to unauthorized parties.
 - Respect Donor privacy. Donors are to have opportunity to remain anonymous.
 - Maintain a Privacy Policy. While interacting with community, beneficiaries, lots of personal information could be collected. Limits on how this information can be used and disclosure on how it will be used need to be made with such persons.
- General principles of Partnership and collaboration
 - Maintain mission consistency while working with other parties and organization.
 - Work with organizations and individuals who have shared values.
 - Work with organizations and individuals on the basis of equitable and mutual benefit.
 - Maintain transparency in terms of two-way flow of information, ideas and experiences.
 - Be adaptive to change – within legal, ethical framework.
