

Professional conduct and integrity

Code of Conduct Theaterfestival Boulevard and Bosse Nova

Foreword

The strength of an organization lies in many things: its mission and vision, but also its openness, authenticity, creative and adaptive capacity, financial stability, reputation, and history. Yet one factor rises above all others: the people who work there.

People can only truly thrive when they are assured of a safe environment. They have a right to it. More than that—it is the responsibility of leadership to provide, safeguard, and, when necessary, enhance that safety. However, a safe environment does not arise naturally. That is why codes of conduct are essential.

This Code of Conduct of Theaterfestival Boulevard and Bosse Nova provides clarity - on our agreements, on respectful interactions, and on integrity. But also, on compliance with laws and regulations. This code applies to everyone connected to Theaterfestival Boulevard and Bosse Nova: our employees, volunteers, and performers, as well as our board members, partners, and suppliers.

An open and diverse culture, which we actively uphold, also means creating space to address irregularities, inappropriate behavior, and misconduct. If you experience or witness such issues, you can report and discuss them with a supervisor or the designated confidential advisor of Theaterfestival Boulevard/Bosse Nova.

This Code of Conduct is a practical adaptation of the document 'Policy on Conduct and Integrity'. If you wish to read the full policy, including procedural guidelines, you can [download](#) it.

To avoid any misunderstanding: our policy is not optional. A safe workplace requires continuous commitment from everyone. We hope this Code of Conduct inspires you to contribute to that effort.

We consider this a matter of the highest importance—it is essential, and it makes a difference.

Dana Kibbelaar and Josine Gilissen
directors of Theaterfestival Boulevard and Bosse Nova

's-Hertogenbosch, April 2025

1. A Safe Workplace

We are committed to ensuring safe working conditions, respectful interactions, and an open, diverse organizational culture. Above all, your work should never cause you harm. The following principles apply:

1. Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated. We do not accept expressions of racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, body shaming, ableism [discrimination against people with disabilities – ed.] or any other form of unequal treatment.
2. Challenge your own assumptions and biases - whether about someone's gender, identity, health, needs, or background. If you are unsure how to address someone, simply ask.
3. Respect the physical and emotional boundaries of others. No means no. And body language is universal: no means no.
4. Take responsibility for your actions. Be mindful of your intentions and your language.
5. Act with integrity and look out for one another.

Inappropriate Behavior

Every individual has their own style of interaction. However, safety requires clear and consistent rules. Inappropriate behavior includes any actions or communication - verbal, non-verbal, or written - that are experienced as unwelcome or hurtful, making someone feel unsafe in their work environment.

Naturally, this includes aggression and violence, as well as (sexual) harassment and discrimination. But bullying is also a form of aggression. Our guiding principle: it is not the intent of the person acting that matters, but how their behavior is perceived by others. What may seem harmless or humorous to one person can be distressing, unwelcome, or intimidating to another.

Misconduct

Misconduct is unacceptable. But so are misunderstandings. For this reason, the Dutch Act Huis voor Klokkenuiders (*House for Whistleblowers Act*)¹ provides a clear definition of what constitutes misconduct. First, there must be a reasonable suspicion based on knowledge or information. Second, the matter must be of public interest. This applies in cases of (suspected) criminal offences, as well as threats to public health, personal safety, environmental damage, or – in the case of improper action or negligence - risks to the proper functioning of an organization.

Breaches of Integrity

In 1992, then-Minister of the Interior Ien Dales famously stated: *"There is no such thing as being 'a little bit' honest. You either are, or you aren't."* This remains a timeless truth: integrity is about being honest, trustworthy, and incorruptible.

Breaches of integrity take many forms, including corruption, fraud, theft, embezzlement, questionable gifts or promises, negligence, and the misuse or waste of (public) funds. Conflicts of interest, abuse of authority, and misconduct in one's private life may also constitute breaches of integrity if they damage the organization's reputation.

¹ Law enacted in July 2016. Its purpose: to improve the conditions for reporting societal misconduct within organizations by (a) enabling investigations into wrongdoing and (b) providing better protection for whistleblowers.

2. What You Can Do

Reporting

We have a procedure for reporting inappropriate behavior or misconduct. There are different ways to take action.

A possible first step: you address the person responsible for your discomfort or grievance directly. If you do not wish to do this alone, you can ask a colleague for support. Other options include informing your manager or reporting the matter to the confidential advisor. If your manager's behavior is the cause of concern, you may escalate the matter to a managing director. Should the concern involve a managing director, you can contact the Supervisory Board.

Confidentiality and Discretion

Speaking up can take courage. To reassure you: all reports are handled with care and diligence. Information will only be shared with the reporter's explicit permission - this safeguard also applies to the accused. Furthermore, no steps will be taken without the reporter's clear consent.

Breaking confidentiality will only occur in cases involving a crime, a serious offence, (imminent) danger to others, or if the recipient of the report faces a moral dilemma. Any breach of confidentiality will always be discussed with the reporter beforehand.

It is important to recognize that the accused is also entitled to safety, fair treatment, and impartiality. Their identity remains protected, and information will only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Reporting Inappropriate Behavior

Wherever possible, inappropriate behavior should be reported verbally. This allows for immediate clarification and discussion. The person receiving the report - whether a manager or a confidential advisor - can also gain a clearer understanding of the steps you wish to take.

To clarify: a manager may act as a mediator between the parties involved, whereas the confidential advisor's sole role is to support the reporter.

Reporting Integrity Violations

Integrity violations may be reported either verbally or in writing. If reported verbally, the recipient will document the report in writing. You will then receive a copy, which you may review, amend, or supplement before signing the final version. This document is then submitted to the managing directors.

The managing directors will assess the report and determine the next steps. There are two possibilities: they may handle the matter internally or initiate a formal investigation. The reporter will always receive a definitive response regarding this decision.

The managing directors will also inform the person(s) concerned, unless doing so would compromise the integrity of the investigation. If an investigation follows, the reporter will be given an opportunity to respond to its findings. Both parties will be informed of the final decision resulting from the investigation.

3. Everyone's Role

The Managing Director

The managing director serves as a role model, keeps the issue at the forefront, observes, intervenes, and holds people accountable. Additionally, the managing director ensures the protection and support of all parties involved, sometimes conducts a hearing for both sides, and may offer coaching when necessary.

The Confidential Advisor

The confidential advisor has four key responsibilities. The first two: providing support and guidance to the reporter and identifying inappropriate behavior. The other two: advising managers and informing or educating both managers and staff.

You can approach the confidential advisor to safely discuss and report any experience of inappropriate behavior, suspicions of misconduct, or irregularities. The confidential advisor is on your side when handling reports and will only act with your explicit consent. In some cases, however - whether for legal or moral reasons - the confidential advisor may be required to break confidentiality, as outlined in Chapter 2.

The confidential advisor helps you weigh the advantages and disadvantages of possible next steps, assists in decision-making, and provides support throughout the process. You may also choose to simply share your experience without taking further action.

The Counselor of the Alleged Offender

A report or accusation can have a significant impact on the accused. For both emotional and substantive support, an external counselor - trained for this role - is available. To be clear: this cannot be the confidential advisor of Theaterfestival Boulevard/Bosse Nova.

The counselor conducts an initial conversation, assists in gaining insight into one's behavior if found at fault, and helps with rehabilitation in cases of wrongful accusations.

The Volunteer

We assume a positive and cooperative working environment. However, if a volunteer's behavior conflicts with the Code of Conduct, a discussion will be held to clarify the facts and circumstances. In cases of incidents or conflicts, the volunteer coordinator is the primary contact to address the issue. If an immediate solution is not available, they may present the case - anonymously if necessary - to the managing directors or the external confidential advisor.

Sometimes, it may not be possible or necessary to report an issue during the festival itself due to time constraints or other circumstances. In such cases, it remains possible to address the matter at a later stage.

If discussions with the volunteer do not lead to a resolution, Theaterfestival Boulevard may be forced to end the collaboration. Temporary suspension is also a possibility.

The Colleague

You may witness a fellow volunteer—or a staff member—failing to adhere to the Code of Conduct. You may even be personally affected. In such cases, the volunteer coordinator is the first point of contact. They will attempt to resolve the issue collaboratively, provided all parties are open to it.

If approaching the volunteer coordinator is not possible, you may report your concern to another staff member, a managing director, or Meldpunt Mores via <http://mores.online/>.

4. Useful Information

Whistleblower Protection Act

You can find this law on the Dutch government's website [overheid.nl] by searching for it online. Articles 1 through 6, in particular, provide information on the law's scope and the protection of your data.

Managing Director

Dana Kibbelaar | +31 (0)73 - 6 124 505 | Dana@festivalboulevard.nl

Josine Gilissen | Josine@festivalboulevard.nl

Supervisory Board

Supervisory Board (Raad van Toezicht/RvT) | rvt@bossenova.nl

(This email is monitored by members of the Supervisory Board. If your report concerns the management, you may contact the Chair of the Board.)

Confidential Advisor

Sabine van Pelt | +31 6 - 156 998 39 or +31 251 - 212 202 [Facit] | sabine.van.pelt@facit.nl

A clear explanation of the role of the confidential counselor can be found in a video by Van Oss & Partners at www.opleidingvertrouwenspersoon.nl.

Volunteer Coordinators

Sofie Smit | Sofie@festivalboulevard.nl

Arlet Langewender | Arlet@festivalboulevard.nl

Mores

Mores is the support and advisory center for inappropriate behavior in the cultural, creative, and media sectors: <https://mores.online/>