

# ARPO Organisational Policies

This outlines various policies of the Archival and Research Project (ARPO)

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# Procurement Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this procurement policy is to ensure that all purchases made by The Archival and Research Projects (ARPO) are conducted ethically, transparently, and in compliance with applicable laws and donor requirements. This policy aims to ensure fairness, cost-effectiveness, and accountability in the use of funds.

## Scope

This policy applies to all procurement activities undertaken by ARPO, including goods, services, and works, regardless of funding source. It is mandatory for all staff and stakeholders involved in procurement processes to adhere to the guidelines outlined herein.

## General Principles

1. **Transparency:** All procurement processes must be open and transparent.
2. **Accountability:** All procurement decisions must be documented and justified.
3. **Value for Money:** The organization will seek the best value for money while maintaining quality.
4. **Non-Discrimination:** Suppliers and service providers will be selected without discrimination based on race, religion, gender, or nationality.
5. **Compliance:** All procurement activities must comply with applicable laws, regulations, and donor requirements.
6. **Green Procurement:** ARPO is committed to environmentally sustainable procurement practices, prioritizing the reduction of plastic waste. Procurement decisions will consider environmental factors, including minimizing plastic usage, alongside cost, quality, and other relevant

criteria. This includes prioritizing products with minimal packaging, long lifespans, and recyclability, as well as supporting suppliers with strong environmental and social responsibility practices. We will actively promote the use of second-hand goods and refurbished equipment whenever feasible to reduce reliance on new plastic products and minimize our environmental footprint.

## **Procurement Categories**

1. Goods: Includes office supplies, equipment, and materials.
2. Services: Includes training, and professional services.
3. Works: Includes construction, renovation, and other infrastructural projects.

## **Procurement Methods**

1. **Petty Cash Purchases:**
  - For purchases below INR 5,000.
  - Requires approval from the designated officer.
2. **Quotations (Competitive Bidding):**
  - For purchases of INR 5,001 and above.
  - Requires a minimum of three written quotations.
3. **Single-Source Procurement:**
  - Allowed only under exceptional circumstances, such as proprietary goods or urgent requirements,
  - with written justification and approval.

## **Documentation Requirements**

1. Requisition form with detailed specifications.
2. Written quotations or tender documents.
3. Evaluation and recommendation reports.
4. Purchase orders or contracts.
5. Proof of delivery or completion of service/work.
6. Payment receipts and invoices.

## **Conflict of Interest**

1. Staff or committee members involved in procurement must disclose any personal or financial interests that could influence the process.
2. Suppliers with known affiliations to ARPO employees or board members are prohibited unless approved in writing by the Executive Director.

## **Vendor Management**

1. A vendor database will be maintained with details of pre-qualified suppliers.
2. Vendor performance will be periodically reviewed, and underperforming vendors will be removed from the database.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. Internal audits of procurement processes will be conducted annually.
2. Donor representatives may review procurement documentation upon request.
3. Corrective actions will be taken for any non-compliance identified.

## **Amendments**

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in organisational needs.

donor requirements, or applicable laws.

# Prevention Of Sexual Harassment Policy

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this procurement policy is to ensure that all purchases made by The Archival and Research Project (ARPO) are conducted ethically, transparently, and in compliance with applicable laws and donor requirements. This policy aims to ensure fairness, cost-effectiveness, and accountability in the use of funds.

## **POSH Policy for ARPO**

### **I. Preamble**

ARPO is committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all employees, contractors, and fellowship holders free from any form of sexual harassment. This policy outlines the organisation's commitment to preventing and addressing sexual harassment, in compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).

We are committed to fostering a workplace culture that unequivocally rejects all forms of sexual harassment and promotes gender equality. This policy reflects our unwavering commitment to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all individuals, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.

### **II. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of ARPO, including permanent, temporary, contractual, and part-time employees, fellowship recipients, as well as interns, trainees, and any other individuals who work on the organisation's premises or are otherwise associated with its business.

### **III. Definitions**

**Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome act or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) of a sexual nature that:

- Creates a hostile or offensive work environment.
- Interferes with an individual's work performance.
- Affects an individual's employment opportunities.
- Violates an individual's dignity and self-respect.

**Complainant:** The individual who alleges sexual harassment.

**Respondent:** The individual accused of sexual harassment.

**Internal Committee (IC):** A committee established by the organisation to investigate complaints of sexual harassment.

#### **IV. Prohibited Conduct**

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- **Physical Contact:** Unwelcome touching, grabbing, or any other form of physical contact of a sexual nature. This includes non-consensual physical contact of any kind, even if not explicitly sexual in nature, if it creates a hostile or intimidating environment.
- **Verbal Harassment:** Lewd comments, jokes, or remarks of a sexual nature; making sexually suggestive remarks about a person's appearance or body; using sexually derogatory language or slurs; making offensive comments about an individual's gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- **Non-verbal Harassment:** Unwanted sexual gestures, leering, displaying sexually suggestive material, or making sexually suggestive sounds. This also includes displaying content that is specifically discriminatory or offensive towards LGBTQIA+ individuals.
- **Psychological Harassment:** Making threats or demands of a sexual nature; stalking or cyberstalking; spreading rumors or gossip of a sexual nature; excluding or isolating an individual based on their gender or sexual orientation.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Demanding or requesting sexual favors in exchange for employment, benefits, or any other advantage related to the workplace or fellowship.
- **Gender-based Discrimination:** Any form of discrimination based on gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, including but not limited to:
  - Unequal treatment in hiring, promotion, or other employment opportunities.
  - Denial of equal access to resources or benefits.

- Creation of a hostile or intimidating work environment based on gender stereotypes or prejudice.
- **Quid Pro Quo Harassment:** Conditioning employment, volunteering opportunities, benefits, or any other organizational decisions on sexual favors or the acceptance of unwelcome sexual conduct.
- **Cyber Harassment:** Using electronic communication (emails, social media, messaging apps) to engage in any of the above behaviors, including sending offensive or discriminatory content related to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- **Disclosure of Private Information:** Revealing someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or sexual history without their explicit consent, particularly if done with malicious intent or in a way that could lead to harm, discrimination, or humiliation without their explicit consent, particularly if done with malicious intent or in a way that could lead to harm or discrimination.

## **VII. Scope of Coverage :**

### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all individuals associated with ARPO, regardless of their status or location when the harassment occurs, if it is connected to their association with the organization. This includes:

- Conduct within the workplace (including office spaces, project sites, and during work-related travel).
- Conduct at work-related social events or gatherings.
- Conduct in online communication related to work or the organization.
- Interactions between colleagues, supervisors, subordinates, volunteers, interns, consultants, partners, and beneficiaries.

## Responsibilities

- **ARPO Leadership:** Is responsible for creating and maintaining a workplace culture that prevents harassment and discrimination, ensuring that complaints are addressed promptly and fairly, and providing resources and support to those affected.
- **Coordinators and Managers:** Are responsible for ensuring a respectful work environment within their teams, addressing any observed or reported incidents of harassment, and promoting awareness of this policy.
- **All Individuals Associated with ARPO:** Are responsible for upholding this policy by treating everyone with respect and dignity, and for reporting any incidents of harassment or discrimination they experience or witness.

## V. Internal Complaints Committee (IC)

The organization shall establish an IC to investigate complaints of sexual harassment. The IC shall consist of:

1. A Presiding Officer who shall be a woman employee at a senior level.
2. One woman employee from a different department.
3. One male employee.
4. An external member who is a social worker.

The IC shall be responsible for:

- Receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.
- Providing counseling and support to the complainant.
- Taking appropriate action against the respondent, if the complaint is found to be valid.

## VI. Complaint Procedure

Any employee who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment may file a complaint in writing to the IC.

- The complaint shall be kept confidential and treated with sensitivity.
- The IC shall investigate the complaint promptly and impartially.
- The respondent shall have the opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- The IC shall submit its findings and recommendations to the organization's management.

## **VII. Remedial Actions**

If the complaint is found to be valid, the organization shall take appropriate disciplinary action against the respondent, which may include:

- Warning
- Suspension
- Termination of employment

The organization may also provide counseling and support services to the complainant.

## **VIII. Prevention**

The organization shall take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment, including:

- Conducting regular awareness programs on sexual harassment.
- Providing training to employees on the POSH Act and this policy.
- Displaying posters and notices on sexual harassment prevention.
- Maintaining a safe and respectful work environment.

## **IX. Non-Retaliation**

ARPO strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who reports harassment or participates in the investigation process. Any act of retaliation will be treated as a separate offense and will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **IX. Grievance Redressal**

If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the IC's investigation, they may file a complaint with the appropriate legal authorities.

## **X. Review and Amendment**

This policy shall be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure its effectiveness.

## **XI. Dissemination**

This policy shall be communicated to all employees through various channels, such as:

- Employee handbooks

- Notices
- Workshops
- Email

## **XII. Contact Information**

Employees may contact the IC or any of the following individuals for assistance:

- Amrutha M
- Vysakh Seluraj

By adhering to this policy, ARPO aims to create a safe and respectful work environment for all employees.

# Employee Conduct Policy

## Purpose

This policy outlines the expected standards of professional and ethical behavior for all employees of ARPO. It aims to:

- Maintain a positive and respectful work environment.
- Ensure the integrity and reputation of the organization.
- Protect employees from harassment and discrimination.
- Guide employee behavior in all work-related situations, including field work.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees of ARPO, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract employees, regardless of their location or position.

## Core Values

ARPO is guided by the following core values:

The following core values serve as the foundation for all of ARPO's activities:

- **Inclusivity:** Embracing diverse perspectives, ensuring equitable opportunities for all, and fostering an environment that is welcoming to individuals of all backgrounds, including religious beliefs and sexual orientations. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Respecting and honoring the traditions, practices, and expressions that define India's rich and diverse cultural heritage, including religious and cultural diversity and respecting diverse sexual orientations.
- **Integrity:** Upholding honesty, transparency, and ethical conduct in all its endeavors. **Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships, teamwork, and shared goals across disciplines and communities.
- **Sustainability:** Prioritizing long-term, sustainable solutions that benefit both people and the planet.
- **Innovation:** Leveraging technology and creativity to advance the mission of preserving cultural heritage while respecting diversity and inclusivity.

## Conduct Expectations

- **Professionalism**

1. Maintain high standards of ethical conduct.
2. Treat all colleagues, beneficiaries, and stakeholders with respect and dignity.
3. Communicate effectively and professionally, both verbally and in writing.
4. Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.
5. Adhere to all organizational policies and procedures.
6. Represent the organization positively in all interactions.
7. Be punctual and reliable in fulfilling work responsibilities.
8. Maintain a professional appearance and demeanor.

- **Workplace Conduct**

1. Refrain from any form of harassment or discrimination. This includes but is not limited to:

**Sexual harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other

verbal, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

**Discrimination:** Unfair or prejudicial treatment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual

orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected characteristic. For Sexual Harassment, refer to the POSH policy.

2. Refrain from any form of bullying or intimidation.
3. Maintain a safe and healthy work environment.
4. Refrain from the use of alcohol or drugs during work hours.
5. Refrain from any form of personal misconduct that could bring disrepute to the organization

- **Field Work Conduct**

1. Adhere to all safety and security protocols for field work.
2. Respect the cultural sensitivities and customs of the communities being served.
3. Obtain informed consent from beneficiaries before any data collection or intervention.
4. Maintain confidentiality of beneficiary information.
5. Avoid any behavior that could exploit or harm beneficiaries.

6. Build and maintain trust with the communities being served.

7. Report any safety or security concerns immediately.

## **Reporting Violations**

- Employees are encouraged to report any suspected violations of this policy to:
  - 1.Amrutha M
  - 2.Akshai Augustine
- All reports will be treated confidentially and investigated promptly and fairly.

## **Consequences of Violations**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature and severity of the violation.

## **Training**

All employees will receive training on this policy as part of their onboarding process and on an ongoing basis.

## **Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

## **Disclaimer**

This policy is intended to provide general guidance and may not cover all possible situations. Employees are expected to use their best judgment and common sense in all work-related situations.

# Reimbursement Policy

## Policy Statement

ARPO is committed to ensuring that its staff, contractual associates, freelancers, and authorized volunteers

are reimbursed for reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred while conducting official

ARPO business. This policy aims to provide clear guidelines for expense approval, submission, and reimbursement, promoting transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of ARPO's resources.

## Purpose

- The purpose of this policy is to:
- Establish clear procedures for the reimbursement of business-related expenses.
- Ensure fair and consistent treatment of all individuals incurring expenses on behalf of ARPO.
- Promote fiscal responsibility and efficient use of ARPO's funds.
- Minimize administrative burden while maintaining necessary controls.
- Comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

## Scope & Eligibility

This policy applies to all ARPO employees, contractual associates, freelancers, and volunteers who incur

expenses on behalf of ARPO, provided these expenses are pre-approved or fall within clearly defined

permissible categories and limits.

## General Principles

- **Pre-Approval:** Wherever practicable, significant expenses (e.g., major travel, large purchases) must be pre-approved in writing by the designated Approving Authority before being incurred.
- **Necessity & Reasonableness:** All expenses must be necessary for official ARPO business and reasonable in amount. Extravagant or luxury expenses are not reimbursable.
- **Documentation:** All reimbursement requests must be supported by original, itemized receipts or other acceptable proof of purchase, unless explicitly covered by a per diem allowance.
- **Timeliness:** Expense claims must be submitted within 15 days of incurring the expense. Claims submitted after this period may be subject to review or denial.
- **Non-Reimbursable Expenses:** Personal expenses, fines, penalties, unapproved entertainment, and expenses for which a personal benefit is derived are not reimbursable.
- **Budget Alignment:** Expenses should align with approved project or departmental budgets.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Individuals should avoid situations where personal interests conflict with ARPO's financial interests.

## Reimbursable Expense Categories & Guidelines

### 1. Travel Expenses

Airfare: Domestic and international airfare. Economy class is generally required. Any upgrade to

business or first-class requires exceptional pre-approval from the Executive Director.

Train fare

Bus fare

Taxi/auto-rickshaw fare

Toll charges

Parking fees

Fuel expenses

**2. Accommodation Expenses :** Hotel/lodging costs.

**3. Food and Beverage Expenses :** Reasonable meal expenses incurred during official travel,

excluding

alcoholic beverages.

**4. Miscellaneous Expenses :** Conference fees , workshop fees , book and stationery purchases , printing and photocopying costs , courier charges , communication expenses (phone bills, internet charges) , and other expenses as prior-approved by the administrative manager.

**Reimbursement Process:** The process for reimbursement involves three steps:

- **Expense Claim Submission:** Employees and volunteers must submit expense claims within 15 days of incurring the expense. Claims must be submitted on the Organization's vouchers along with original receipts and supporting documents. For per diem rates and maximum limits, refer to Annexure A.
- **Approval:** Expense claims will be reviewed and approved by the administrative manager, with additional approvals required for significant expenses.
- **Reimbursement Disbursement:** Reimbursements are processed only through account payee cheques or online bank transfers. The Finance Department will review and process claims within 15 days of submission.
- **Receipt and Documentation:** Original receipts are required for all expenses. Photocopies may be accepted in certain cases, provided original receipts are retained for audit purposes.

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses:** Expenses that are not reimbursable include:

- Personal expenses (e.g., entertainment, leisure activities).
- Expenses exceeding approved rates or policies.
- Expenses not directly related to official duties.
- Costs for family members or companions traveling with the member.

**Tax Implications and Compliance:** Employees and volunteers are responsible for complying with all applicable tax laws. ARPO reserves the right to verify the authenticity of all claims and supporting documents. All members are expected to adhere to this policy, and non-compliance may result in denial of reimbursement or disciplinary action.

# Environmental Policy for ARPO

## Preamble

ARPO recognizes its environmental responsibility and is committed to minimizing its ecological footprint. This policy outlines our commitment to environmental sustainability across all aspects of our operations, including our offices, field activities, and engagement in tribal areas. Given the significant challenge of plastic waste in our state, this policy prioritizes the reduction and responsible management of plastic.

## Core Principles

- **Minimizing Environmental Impact:** We strive to minimize our environmental impact through all our activities, including energy consumption, waste generation, water usage, and transportation.
- **Conservation and Preservation:** We are committed to conserving natural resources and preserving biodiversity.
- **Compliance and Responsibility:** We will comply with all applicable environmental laws, regulations, and standards.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We will continuously review and improve our environmental performance through regular assessments and the implementation of best practices.
- **Education and Awareness:** We will raise awareness among our employees, stakeholders, and communities about environmental issues, with a strong focus on the dangers of plastic pollution and the importance of sustainable waste management.
- **Respect for Indigenous Knowledge:** In our work with tribal communities, we will respect and integrate traditional ecological knowledge and practices wherever possible.
- **Addressing Plastic Pollution:** We will prioritize the reduction and responsible management of plastic waste throughout our operations.

## Office Environment

- **Energy Conservation:**
  - Implement energy-efficient lighting and appliances.
  - Encourage the use of natural light and ventilation.

- Promote the use of electronic devices in lieu of paper whenever possible.
- Implement a policy for the responsible use of office equipment and electronics.
- Waste Reduction and Management:
  - Plastic Reduction:
    - Ban single-use plastics: Prohibit the use of single-use plastics such as plastic bottles, cups, cutlery, and straws within the office.
    - Promote reusable alternatives: Encourage the use of reusable water bottles, coffee mugs, and lunch containers.
    - Refill stations: Install water refill stations to discourage the use of plastic water bottles.
  - Comprehensive Waste Management: Implement a comprehensive waste management program, including:
    - Recycling: Separate collection and recycling of all recyclable materials, including paper, plastic (where possible), glass, and metal.
    - Composting: Implement a composting program for organic waste.
    - E-waste Disposal: Ensure responsible disposal of electronic waste through certified e-waste recyclers.
  - Minimize the use of single-use plastics and disposable items.
    - Promote the use of reusable containers and utensils.
  - Encourage the use of electronic communication and minimize paper usage.
- Water Conservation:
  - Implement measures to conserve water, such as low-flow fixtures and efficient irrigation systems.
  - Encourage employees to conserve water in their daily activities.
- Indoor Air Quality:
  - Maintain good indoor air quality by ensuring proper ventilation and minimizing the use of harmful chemicals.
- Green Procurement:
  - Prioritize the procurement of environmentally friendly products and services, with a focus on products with minimal plastic packaging.

## **Field Operations**

- Sustainable Transportation:
  - Minimize travel distances and optimize travel routes.
  - Encourage the use of public transportation, carpooling, and cycling.
  - Utilize fuel-efficient vehicles and minimize vehicle idling.
- Water Bottles: All field trip participants are required to carry their own reusable water bottles. Refill stations will be identified at field sites where safe drinking water can be accessed.
- Beverages: Foldable cups provided by ARPO or personal reusable cups/tumblers should be used for tea, coffee, and other beverages to avoid the use of disposable cups.
- Food Packaging:
  - When ordering food from restaurants or caterers at documentation sites, prioritize ordering in bulk quantities using steel containers to minimize the use of single-use plastic packaging.
  - Avoid individual packaged meals and opt for bulk orders whenever possible.
- Utensils: All participants, including fellows, are required to carry their own steel plates for meals (provided by ARPO)
- Resource Conservation:
  - Minimize the use of natural resources such as water and fuel during field activities.
  - Plastic Reduction:
    - Minimize single-use plastics: Avoid the use of single-use plastic bags, bottles, and containers during field operations.
    - Pack lunches in reusable containers.
    - Properly dispose of all plastic waste.
    - Properly dispose of waste generated during field operations.
    - Avoid disturbing natural habitats and minimize the impact on local ecosystems.
- Community Engagement:
  - Engage with local communities in the planning and implementation of field activities.
  - Seek input from local communities on environmental concerns and best practices, including the management of plastic waste.
  - Conduct awareness campaigns with local communities on the dangers of plastic pollution and the importance of waste reduction.
- Emergency Preparedness:

- Develop and implement emergency response plans to minimize environmental impacts in case of unforeseen events, including the proper disposal of any hazardous materials.

## **Tribal Areas**

- Respect for Indigenous Knowledge:
  - Acknowledge and respect the traditional knowledge and practices of tribal communities regarding environmental management and waste disposal.
  - Seek input from tribal communities on environmental issues and incorporate their perspectives into our decision-making processes.
- Sustainable Livelihoods:
  - Support the development of sustainable livelihoods for tribal communities, such as ecotourism, sustainable agriculture, and traditional crafts that minimize plastic usage.
- Conservation of Natural Resources:
  - Work with tribal communities to conserve and sustainably manage natural resources, such as forests, water, and wildlife.
- Community-Based Conservation:
  - Support community-based conservation initiatives that empower tribal communities to protect their environment, including the reduction and management of plastic waste.
- Addressing Environmental Justice:
  - Address environmental justice concerns in tribal areas, such as the impacts of plastic pollution and climate change on vulnerable populations.

## **Monitoring and Reporting**

- Regular Environmental Audits:
  - Conduct regular environmental audits to assess our environmental performance and identify areas for improvement, with a specific focus on plastic waste

reduction and management.

- Data Collection and Analysis:
  - Collect and analyze data on our environmental impacts, including data on plastic waste generation and reduction.
- Reporting and Transparency:
  - Publicly report on our environmental performance and progress towards our sustainability goals, including our efforts to reduce plastic waste.

## **Employee Training and Awareness**

- Environmental Training:
  - Provide training to all employees on environmental awareness, best practices, and emergency response procedures, with a strong emphasis on the dangers of plastic pollution and the importance of plastic waste reduction.
  - Organize workshops and seminars on plastic pollution and sustainable waste management.
- Communication and Engagement:
  - Encourage employee participation in environmental initiatives and provide opportunities for feedback.
  - Recognize and reward employees for their contributions to environmental sustainability.

## **Continuous Improvement**

- Regular Review and Updates:
  - Regularly review and update this policy to reflect evolving environmental challenges and best practices, with a particular focus on addressing the plastic waste crisis in our state.
- Innovation and Adaptation:
  - Encourage innovation and explore new technologies and approaches to improve our environmental performance, including the development of innovative solutions for plastic waste reduction and management.

## **Compliance**

- Adherence to Laws and Regulations:
  - Ensure compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations, and standards, including those related to plastic waste management.
  - Maintain accurate records of environmental performance and compliance.

## **Consequences for Non-Compliance**

- Warnings: Initial violations may result in verbal or written warnings.
- Disciplinary Actions: Repeated violations may result in more severe disciplinary actions, which may include:
  - Deductions from pay or bonuses.
  - Suspension from field trips or other work-related activities.
  - Termination of employment or fellowship (in severe cases).

## **Whistleblower Policy**

- Any employee or individual associated with ARPO can utilize the organization's Whistleblower Policy to report any observed violations of this environmental policy, including the non-adherence to the plastic reduction measures.
- The Whistleblower Policy ensures the confidentiality of the whistleblower's identity and protects them from any retaliation for reporting legitimate concerns.

By adhering to this policy, ARPO aims to be a responsible environmental steward, minimizing our impact on the planet and contributing to a more sustainable future, particularly in addressing the critical issue of plastic pollution in our state.

# Leave Policy

ARPO is committed to fostering a healthy work-life balance for its employees. The following leave policy outlines the different types of leave available to all staff members:

## 1. Sick Leave (SL):

Entitlement: Employees are entitled to 9 days of SL per year.

Availment: A medical certificate is required for absences exceeding 3 days.

## 2. Casual Leave (CL):

Entitlement: Employees are entitled to 12 days of CL per year.

Availment: CL is intended for short-term absences and cannot be combined with other leaves with a maximum of 2 per month.

## 3. Period Leave:

Female employees are entitled to 12 days of paid period leave per year, which can be taken up to 2 days per month. This leave is intended to support employees experiencing menstrual discomfort. No medical certificate is required for period leave.

## 4. Maternity Leave:

Female employees are entitled to 26 weeks of paid maternity leave. This leave can be taken before and after the birth of a child, as per applicable laws and regulations.

## 5. Paternity Leave:

Male employees are entitled to 6 weeks of paid paternity leave upon the birth of their child.

## 6. Special Leave:

In special circumstances, employees may request unpaid leave beyond their annual, period maternity, and paternity leave entitlement. Requests for special leave (between 5 and 10 days) will be considered at the discretion of ARPO management and may be granted based on factors such as:

Accidents, health issues (beyond the specified sick leave entitlement)

The nature of the request (e.g., family emergency, bereavement)

Project workload and deadlines

**7. Leave Request Process:**

Employees must submit all leave requests in writing via email to hr@arpo.in or leave request form on ERP Next to HR at least 2 days in advance, except in cases of emergencies. In the case of an emergency, employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible. For period leave, employees should notify their supervisor via email or leave request form on ERP Next to HR. For maternity and paternity leave, employees should provide reasonable notice to HR, as per legal requirements and company policy.

**8. Carryover of Unused Leave:**

Unused annual leave may be carried over to the next year (up to a maximum of 5 days) with prior approval from ARPO management. Sick leave and special leave cannot be carried over.

**9. Payment During Leave:**

Employees will receive their regular salary for approved paid leave days (annual, sick, period, maternity, and paternity leave). No compensation will be provided for unpaid special leave.

**10. Responsibilities:**

Employees are responsible for ensuring a smooth handover of their duties during leave periods. This may involve delegating tasks to colleagues and providing clear instructions to ensure continuity of work.

**11. Compliance:**

Employees are expected to comply with all terms and conditions outlined in this Leave Policy.

**12. Review and Updates:**

ARPO reserves the right to review and update this Leave Policy at any time. Any changes will be communicated to employees in writing.

# Research Ethics Policy for Documenting Tribal Cultures

## Introduction

This Research Ethics Policy outlines the ethical principles that will guide all research and documentation activities conducted by Archival and Research Project related to the festivals, culture, art, dance, and song of tribal communities in India.

This policy aims to:

- Protect the rights and cultural integrity of tribal communities.
- Ensure the ethical and responsible collection, use, and dissemination of cultural information.
- Build trust and respectful partnerships with tribal communities.
- Contribute to the preservation and revitalization of tribal cultural heritage.

## Guiding Principles

- **Respect for Tribal Cultures and Traditions:**
  - Prioritize Community Engagement: Obtain prior informed consent from the community as a whole, followed by individual consent from participants.
  - Culturally Appropriate Methods: Utilize culturally sensitive methods for data collection, respecting local customs, beliefs, and social structures.
  - Language and Communication: Ensure clear and respectful communication in local languages, using qualified interpreters when necessary.
- **Beneficence:**
  - Maximize Benefits: Ensure that the documentation process benefits the community, such as through cultural revitalization, tourism development, or community empowerment initiatives.

- **Minimize Harm:** Avoid any practices that may be detrimental to the cultural integrity or well-being of the community.

- **Justice:**

- **Fair Representation:** Ensure fair and accurate representation of tribal cultures, avoiding stereotypes and misrepresentations.
- **Equitable Access:** Ensure equitable access to the benefits of the documentation process for all members of the community.

- **Autonomy:**

- **Respect for Decision-Making:** Respect the right of tribal communities to make decisions about how their culture is documented and shared.
- **Right to Withdraw:** Allow participants to withdraw from the documentation process at any time without any negative consequences.

- **Transparency and Accountability:**

- **Open Communication:** Maintain open and transparent communication with tribal communities throughout the documentation process.
- **Data Security and Privacy:** Ensure the confidentiality and security of all collected data, respecting the privacy of individuals and the community.
- **Intellectual Property Rights:** Acknowledge and respect the intellectual property rights of the community, including traditional knowledge, art forms, and cultural expressions.

## **Specific Considerations for Cultural Documentation**

- **Informed Consent:**

- **Community-Based Consent:** Obtain informed consent from the community as a whole through culturally appropriate mechanisms, such as community meetings or consultations with tribal elders.
- **Individual Consent:** Obtain individual informed consent from all participants, clearly explaining the purpose of the documentation, potential uses of the materials, and the implications for privacy and confidentiality.
- **Consent Forms:** Use culturally appropriate consent forms that are easy to understand and available in local languages.

- Community Participation:
  - Involve Community Members: Actively involve community members in all stages of the documentation process, including planning, data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
  - Community-Based Archives: Consider establishing community-based archives to preserve and share cultural materials within the community.
  
- Intellectual Property Rights:
  - Acknowledge and Respect: Acknowledge and respect the intellectual property rights of the community, including copyright, trademark, and traditional knowledge.
  - Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms: Explore mechanisms for sharing the benefits of the documentation process with the community, such as through royalties, licensing agreements, or community development projects.
  
- Culturally Sensitive Documentation:
  - Respect for Sacred Sites: Avoid documenting or photographing sacred sites without proper permission and respect.
  - Sensitivity to Cultural Taboos: Be mindful of cultural taboos and avoid any practices that may be considered disrespectful or offensive.
  - Accurate Representation: Strive for accurate and authentic representation of tribal cultures, avoiding stereotypes and sensationalism.

#### 4. Prevention of Harm and Promotion of Safety

- Physical Safety:
  - Ensure the physical safety of all research team members and community members during data collection activities.
  - Take necessary precautions to prevent accidents, injuries, and exposure to hazards.
  - Provide appropriate medical care and support in case of any unforeseen incidents.
  
- Psychological Safety:

- Avoid any practices that may cause psychological distress, trauma, or embarrassment to community members.
  - Create a safe and respectful environment for all interactions with community members.
  - Be mindful of the potential impact of the documentation process on individual and community well-being.
- Social, Economic and Cultural Safety:
    - Avoid any practices that may disrupt or undermine the social fabric of the community.
    - Respect local customs, beliefs, and social hierarchies.
    - Minimize the potential for social conflict or disruption within the community.
    - Actions that may cause socio-economic harm, including but not limited to a participant's loss of livelihood, insurance, or benefits due to the researcher's failure to maintain confidentiality; putting people from marginalised communities at risk by disclosing personal information; and if applicable, failure to reimburse participants for expenses they may have incurred for the study.
- Environmental Safety:
    - Minimize the environmental impact of research activities.
    - Avoid practices that may harm the natural environment of the tribal community.
- Sexual Safety:
    - Maintain professional and respectful boundaries at all times.
    - Avoid any behavior that could be construed as sexual harassment or exploitation.
    - Ensure that all interactions with community members are conducted with utmost sensitivity and respect.
    - Implement clear policies and procedures for addressing any concerns or complaints related to sexual harassment or exploitation.

## 5. Ethical Review Process

- Internal Review: All documentation projects will undergo internal ethical review by a designated committee within ARPO.

- External Consultation: Where appropriate, seek external consultation from tribal experts, anthropologists, or other relevant stakeholders.

## 6. Monitoring and Enforcement

- Regular Monitoring: Regularly monitor all documentation activities to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Addressing Violations: Investigate and address any violations of this policy promptly and appropriately.

## 7. Resources and Training

- Training for Staff: Provide staff with training on cultural sensitivity, ethical research methods, and best practices for working with tribal communities.
- Access to Resources: Provide staff with access to relevant resources, such as guidelines on ethical research with indigenous peoples and information on tribal cultures and traditions.

## 8. Dissemination and Sharing

- Community Input: Involve the community in decisions regarding the dissemination of documented materials.
- Benefit-Sharing: Ensure that the benefits of dissemination are shared equitably with the community.
- Culturally Appropriate Platforms: Utilize culturally appropriate platforms and channels for disseminating information, such as community events, local media, and community-based websites.

## 9. Collaboration and Partnerships

- Collaborate with Tribal Organizations: Collaborate with tribal organizations, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that documentation activities are conducted ethically and effectively.

## 10. Continuous Improvement:

- Regular Review: Regularly review and update this policy to reflect evolving ethical standards and best practices.

#### 11. Declaration of Adherence

All research studies, reports, and activities conducted at ARPO are required to have a declaration stating that the provisions of this policy have been followed entirely, along with a disclosure of the steps taken to adhere to this policy.

#### 12. Relationship with other policies

This policy is to be read and implemented in collaboration with other policies at ARPO.