

# Complaints Policy

This Complaints Policy describes the principles and process to file a complaint or to report a (suspected) infraction or irregularity in the activities or conduct of the Organic Cotton Accelerator (“OCA”) and/or of any other person or organisation directly involved in the delivery of OCA’s work.

OCA aims to be a transparent organisation, providing a high-quality service to its Contributors, implementing organisations, consultants, other partners and stakeholders, and creating a safe working environment to its employees. However, at OCA we are aware that we may not always succeed in this to everyone’s satisfaction. To learn from our mistakes and continue to improve our performance, we would ask you to advise and inform us of any complaints you may have about our work or any suggestions for improving our work.

This procedure applies to external complaints and objections, from outside OCA. There is a separate procedure for internal complaints.

## Definition of terms

The terms of this policy are defined as follows:

**Complaint:** in the context of this policy, a complaint is any written expression of grievance or a report of a (suspected) infraction or irregularity by or on behalf of a complainant, regarding:

- the communications, business conduct and/or working methods of OCA in general
- any behaviour, actions or negligence of any staff of OCA (including the management, exclusive contractors and the members of Board of Trustees and its Committees)
- any behaviour, actions or negligence of partners, consultants and/or general contractors of OCA, involved in the implementation of programmes under responsibility of OCA
- any infringement of the principles stated in the Code of Conduct by OCA and its Contributors

that has not been corrected after initial steps to raise the complaint have been taken informally.

**Complainant:** any natural or legal person who files a complaint.

**Complaints Coordinator:** Operations Manager. The Operations Manager is entrusted to implement this Complaint Policy and monitor and report on its processes and execution. In case the Operations Manager is object of complaint, the Executive Director will replace the Operations Manager as Complaints Coordinator.

## Letter of Complaint

For your complaints and suggestions, please write us via a letter or email with your suggestion for improvement or your complaint.

Your email should be sent to: [secretariat@organiccottonaccelerator.org](mailto:secretariat@organiccottonaccelerator.org)

Your letter should be sent to OCA’s postal address in the Netherlands: Organic Cotton Accelerator, Rokin 102, 1012 KZ, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Please include the subject of the complaint and a detailed description in the complaints form, your letter or e-mail, such as:

- name and address of complainant
- a description of complaint: conduct, statement and/or action that refer to the complaint
- site/dates on which conduct, statement and/or action referred to took place
- person/event complained against

## Proper handling

For all your complaints and suggestions, our Complaints Coordinator will see to it that your complaint or suggestion is properly handled by sending it to the appropriate expert. All complaints will be treated in confidence.

When the complaint concerns the conduct of the Executive Director or a member of the Board of Trustees, or when the complaint is considered to be of high risk to the organisation, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall be informed and involved in drafting the response to the complaint.

Within two weeks you will receive a written acknowledgement of receipt and a proposed solution which adequately addresses the complaint. Or you will receive a response which explains why we are still not in a position to make a final response, giving reasons for the further delay and indicating when we expect to be able to provide a final response; and informs you that you may refer the handling of the complaint to another OCA contact if you are dissatisfied with the delay.

In order to promote wider access, the complaints procedure shall be maintained on the OCA website. OCA will endeavour to respond to all complainants, but this may not be feasible in all cases.

## Registration in the complaints register

All complaints are recorded in the complaints register. Per complaint, a file is created containing all relevant documentation, including the report and the judgment. This register is administered by the Complaints Coordinator, at the office of OCA in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.