



**Accountable
Now**

GLOBAL STANDARDS LOCAL TRUST

Open Information Policy



Policy Statement

Accountable Now relies upon the trust of its stakeholders to fulfil its purpose of making civil society more transparent, responsive to stakeholders and focused on delivering impact. We therefore commit to be open and objective in assessing our own work and in our dealings with all of our stakeholders.

Our approach is to share information about our activities and operations openly. By adopting this approach, we enable our stakeholders to assess how we have made decisions, how we have managed our finances and how effective our work has been.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we endeavour to make available a wide range of information via our website: www.accountablenow.org. Types of information which we will publish include:

- ▶ **THE BASICS** – details of our organisational set-up, how and where we work and our objectives.
- ▶ **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT** – including biographies of our Trustees and members of the Independent Review Panel.
- ▶ **CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS** – the Accountability Commitments, Accountable Now's Articles of Association and the Independent Review Panel's Terms of Reference, together with any supporting guidance.
- ▶ **ACCOUNTABLE NOW POLICIES** – such as Membership Policy, Environmental Policy, Reporting Requirements for Members
- ▶ **COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS** – the reports of our Members against the Accountability Commitments and the evaluation thereof by the Independent Review Panel.
- ▶ **FINANCES AND PERFORMANCE** – our Annual Report.
- ▶ **FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS** – our Complaints Handling Mechanism.

Last updated and approved by the Board on 7 March 2012



Guidance on the Open Information Policy

How to make a request for information

If you cannot find the information you are looking for, you may make a request for information to Accountable Now's Secretariat: info@accountablenow.org

Timescale for responses to requests for information

Accountable Now will endeavour to respond to requests for information within 10 working days. You will be kept informed of any delays to investigation of an issue.

Reasons for declining a request for information

If Accountable Now does not disclose information, we will give reasons for this. These reasons could be:

- ▶ **PRIVACY** – certain information is by its nature private to the individuals concerned.
- ▶ **SECURITY** – we will not disclose any information which may jeopardise our ability to operate or the safety of our staff.
- ▶ **INTERNAL WORKING PAPERS** – we will generally not disclose internal working papers that address future plans, or drafts of work, or information which we consider is of ephemeral interest such that the work involved in disclosure is in our view disproportionate.
- ▶ **COPYRIGHT** – where information is protected by someone else's copyright we are not entitled to publish it.
- ▶ **COSTS** – there may be circumstances in which we consider that the cost of disclosure, in terms of monetary or resource commitment, to be disproportionate to the request.
- ▶ **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION** - information may be confidential because of legal, commercial or contractual reasons, or because its premature disclosure would jeopardise action that Accountable Now is planning to take.

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Accountable Now and Freedom of Information legislation

Accountable Now is registered as a company limited by guarantee in the United Kingdom. However, it is not a public body and so is not subject to the United Kingdom Freedom of Information Act 2000. Nevertheless, in framing this policy we have had regard to the policy aims behind the Freedom of Information Act, and our general approach is in keeping with the Act's assumption that information should be disclosed unless there is a good public policy reason for withholding it, or the cost of disclosure would be disproportionate.

Accountable Now and Data Protection and privacy legislation

This policy is subject to United Kingdom and European Union data protection and privacy legislation. Accordingly we will not disclose data about living individuals where this is prohibited under applicable law.

Complaints about the handling of a request for information

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled, you may request a review of the decision by the Independent Review Panel. Such a complaint must be submitted, and will be dealt with by the Independent Review Panel, in accordance with Accountable Now's Complaints Handling Mechanism, which is available on the website under www.accountablenow.org.

No contractual rights

This policy is not a binding contract and does not confer legal rights on any person. Individuals may however have rights concerning their personal data held by Accountable Now under applicable law.

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