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Organization background

Srijanalaya was established in December 2013 as a non-profit Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) with a mission to create safer, more inclusive, spaces of learning through the arts – visual, performing, and language arts - as each person has the right to express and be heard. The organization consists of a large network of artists and educators who advocate the use of the creative arts and storytelling in learning spaces in Nepal's diverse communities through workshops, artist collaborations and residencies, production of picture books, design and implementation of exhibitions, conducting teacher seminars and trainings, conducting educational outreach programs and events, design of short courses and curricula, and performances. Through storytelling and strengthening marginalized voices, this community of artists and educators creates bridges and connections to motivate, empower, and bring about long lasting social norm changes. The team encounters children and young people under the age of 18 years during this work, which has raised an awareness for the need for a Child Protection Policy. www.srijanalaya.org

Policy Statement

1. Srijanalaya recognises that children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and all children have the right to be safe and protected. Srijanalaya acknowledges that preventing children from exploitation and abuse is a shared responsibility.
2. Srijanalaya is committed to protecting children from exploitation and abuse regardless of their nationality, culture, ethnicity, gender, religious or political beliefs, socio-economic status, family or criminal background or physical or mental health.
3. Srijanalaya is committed to ensuring that it, and anyone in contact with children in connection with the activities and programs of Srijanalaya, is obliged to abide by national laws relevant to child protection.
4. When dealing with children, Srijanalaya staff must recognize their special needs and must:
 - take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
 - be guided by the principle of in “the best interests of the child” in all work involving children and students
 - while working in school, work in partnership with school, teachers, principals to ensure the protection of children; and
 - listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this policy is to protect children from all forms of abuse and exploitation, in all of Srijanalaya's activities and programs.
2. This policy outlines Srijanalaya's:
 - scope and responsibility to protect children from child abuse;
 - recruitment and screening processes;
 - Code of Conduct;
 - reporting procedures;
 - risk management; and
 - definitions of terms used in the policy (e.g. “child abuse”).

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Board members, staff and volunteers of Srijanalaya; and
- Contractors providing services to or working with Srijanalaya.

Child Safe Recruitment and Screening

1. Srijanalaya follows child safe recruitment and screening for:
 - Board members, staff, and volunteers of Srijanalaya; and
 - Contractors providing services to or working with the Srijanalaya.
2. Anyone in these categories will be briefed about the child protection policy of the organization before they are in contact with the children.

Standards of Conduct and Child Protection Code of Conduct

1. Srijanalaya provides guidance about ways to minimize risk to children. It has established standards of behaviour which must be followed at all times when a person is in contact or working with children. These standards are set out in the Child Protection Code of Conduct (see **Child Protection Code of Conduct** at Annexure 2).
2. Anyone providing services to or working with Srijanalaya who have contact with or works with children must be provided with the Child Protection Code of Conduct in their contract at the beginning of the service.
3. A failure to comply with the Child Protection Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action and/or legal action.

Training and Awareness

All Board members, staff, and volunteers of Srijanalaya who may have contact with or who are or may be working with children, must participate in regular child protection awareness training.

Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

1. A report of child abuse may include any disclosure, concern or allegation made by a child, a Board member, staff member, volunteer or contractor or by any other person, of child abuse or a breach of the Child Protection Code of Conduct.
2. Srijanalaya is committed to ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of the child and their dignity and rights remain the overriding concern at all times. Srijanalaya will:
 - make every effort to protect the rights and safety of the child throughout the investigation of any report of child abuse;
 - treat a report of child abuse seriously and ensure that all parties are treated fairly;
 - deal with a child abuse report in a confidential, fair and timely manner; and
 - ensure that the interests of anyone reporting in good faith are protected.
3. A member of staff, volunteer, board member or a contractor who intentionally makes a false or malicious report may be subject to disciplinary action.

Making a report

If a member of staff, a volunteer, a contractor or a Board member becomes aware of:

- child abuse through disclosure from a child, third party and/or direct observation; and/or
- a breach or possible breach of the Child Protection Code of Conduct

they must immediately report it to Srijanalaya's Chairperson/Director and/or Program Manager.

Acting on the report

1. Any Srijanalaya Board member, staff, volunteer or contractor who becomes aware of a report must:
 - discuss concerns with Srijanalaya's Chairperson/Director and/or Program Manager; and
 - complete an incident sheet which details who made the report, and/or other witnesses or persons who may have relevant information (see **Incident Sheet** at Annexure 3).
2. The Chairperson/Director and/or Program Manager will discuss the concern with the person/s who made the allegations or other witnesses to gather more information so as to be in an informed position to:
 - identify immediate and potential risks to the child or young person; and
 - develop and implement an action plan to ensure the child's safety.
3. The Action Plan will include but is not limited to the following:
 - inform a responsible person close to the child; **and/or**
 - manage internally in accordance with its processes if not a criminal matter; **or**
 - report the matter to local police and/or the child protection authority together with the responsible person (independently if there is no responsible person) ; **and/or**
 - ensure referral and support for the child; **and/or**
 - take no further action.

Risk Management

1. Srijanalaya will identify any child protection risks in all activities (including programs, projects and positions) and adopt strategies for managing perceived risks. A risk assessment must:
 - identify risks;
 - classify any high risk activities; and
 - document steps to be taken to reduce or remove risks.
2. Risk assessments are to be reviewed and updated over the life of the assessed activities.
3. Srijanalaya will not permit any person to work or have contact with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing.

Employment Contract Provisions

Each employment contract must include an entitlement for Srijanalaya to dismiss, suspend or transfer to other duties a member of staff who breaches the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

Policy Monitoring and Review

1. Monitoring application of the policy is the responsibility of all staff, particularly the Chairperson/Director and/or Program Manager.
2. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years and earlier if there are changes to relevant national and/or international standards, so that it remains current, effective and appropriate.

Definitions

'adult'	a human being aged 18 years or more
'child'	a human being under the age of 18 years
'child abuse'	one or more of the following: • physical abuse • sexual abuse • emotional abuse • neglect • exploitation
'child abuse material'	material that depicts (expressly or implicitly) a child as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse.
'child exploitation and abuse'	one or more of the following: • committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child • possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material • committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming
'child exploitation material'	material, irrespective of its form, which is child abuse material or child pornography material
'child pornography'	any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes
'child pornography material'	material that depicts a person, or is a representation of a person, who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age and is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity, or is in the presence of a person who is engaged in a sexual pose or activity, and does that in a way that a reasonable person would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive
'child protection'	an activity or initiative for the purpose of preventing or responding to a specific incident of child abuse

'contact with children'	working or participating in an activity or in a position that involves contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.
'contractor'	any person or organisation working jointly with or providing services to Srijanalaya, including consultants and partner organisations
'emotional abuse'	an act of inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child
'grooming'	behaviour that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child for sexual activity (including online grooming)
'online grooming'	the act of sending an electronic message with indecent content to a recipient who the sender believes to be under 18 years of age, with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person including but not necessarily the sender
'neglect'	the failure by anyone responsible to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional well-being
'physical abuse'	the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviour includes shoving, punching, hitting, beating, kicking, biting, burning, shaking, throwing, strangling and poisoning
'sexual abuse'	the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or a significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviours can include inappropriate touching, fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography

Attachments

Annex 1: Child Safe Recruitment

Annex 2: Child Protection Code of Conduct

Annex 3: Incident Reporting Sheet

Annex 4: Risk Management

Annex I: Child Safe Recruitment

For all Board members, staff, volunteers, and contractors, who will work with or who may have contact with children, the following process applies:

Screening

- Targeted behavioral interview questions that are specific to positions which involve working or having contact with children, will be included in the interview schedule.
- The preferred candidate will be asked to provide contact details for two referees, one of which is the preferred candidate's most recent employer. A referee for a preferred candidate will always be asked if they hold any concerns about the applicant (or if complaints were made about the applicant), in connection with working or having contact with children. If the candidate does not have any work experience, the referees can be the preferred candidate's teacher/ professor or anyone connected from their educational background.

For international staff and volunteers

- In regards to international person/s, preferred candidates are interviewed and hired only with reference.

Annex 2: Srijanalaya Child Protection Code of Conduct

The Child Protection Code of Conduct applies to Board members, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors associated with Srijanalaya.

It defines standards of behaviour expected by Srijanalaya in order to protect children.

I agree that while working with or engaged in activities funded by Srijanalaya I will:

- treat every child with dignity and respect of his or rights regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- encourage children to express their views and opinions and enable them to participate in defining decisions affecting their lives;
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- not engage a child (under the age of 18 years) in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts;
- refrain from remaining alone with a child and when directly interacting or working with a child ensure that another adult is present at all times. Where circumstances require a one-on-one interaction ensure that such interaction is visible by at least one other adult at all times;
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child exploitation material through any medium (see also 'Use of children's images for work related purposes', below)
- not use physical punishment on children
- not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse and exploitation in accordance with Srijanalaya's Child Protection Policy; and
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with Srijanalaya that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

Use of children's images for work related purposes

When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work related purposes, I must:

- assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;
- actively endeavour to obtain informed consent from the child and a parent or guardian of the child, or a release form before publishing a photograph or film of a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner.
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts; and
- ensure the file labels or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with Srijanalaya, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse.

I acknowledge that I have been provided with and read the Child Protection Policy and that a failure to comply with the Child Protection Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, legal action.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Annex 3: Incident Reporting Sheet

Please complete this form if you believe that child abuse or exploitation, or a breach of the Child Protection Code of Conduct, may have occurred or that a child's safety is in danger. All child protection concerns should be reported immediately to Srijanalaya's Chairperson/Director and/or Program Manager. The report must be treated in strict confidence.

One can also report the incident through an email.

Reporting Source Person: _____
Reported date: _____
Reported Time: _____
Reporting Venue/Address _____
Name & Age of Child: _____
Name of parents or guardian: _____

Name of organisation involved: _____

Details of Concern / Suspicion / Incident:

Please fill out as many sections as possible with as much detail as you can.

1. Describe what happened: time / dates / names of persons) involved/ behaviour or signs observed / any other details.

2. Details of any conversation with the child:

3. Have you contacted anyone about this concern? Yes No (*Please circle one*)

4. If so, who have you contacted?

Name of person who received Incident Report

Date received

Action taken

Attach all documentation

Signature and name of person who has dealt with report

Annex 4: Risk Management

This is an example of a tool which Srijanalaya can use to assess risks to children. Use the following questions to complete the matrix:

- **IDENTIFY RISK** - What are the practical activities of the program which present a risk to children?
What could go wrong?
- **PROBABILITY** - What is the likelihood of something going wrong?
- **ACTION** – Identify ways to reduce these risks, and resources required to reduce the risks

Identify Risk to Child	Probability			Action to be Taken	By Whom	By When
	High	Med	Low			

Manage risks using the following suggestions:

- Identify ACTION
- Identify resources required to reduce the risk
- Have a procedure in place for when things go wrong

Monitor a Program Risk Assessment by asking the following questions:

- Do the risks still exist?
- Have they been reduced, controlled and managed by the existing plan?
- Are there new risks?
- What actions and resources are needed to reduce, remove and control these emerging risks?