



More in Common Safeguarding Policy

More in Common's mission is to understand the forces driving societies apart, find common ground, and bring people together to tackle shared challenges. As a people-centered organization working to advance a sense of solidarity and inclusion, it is vitally important that we take precautions not to cause harm to the people we engage in our research and interventions. Given the nature of our work, More in Common does not typically work with people under the age of 18. However, if we were to do so, this policy sets out More in Common's commitment to preventing and responding appropriately to harm to children and vulnerable adults.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, vulnerable adults, and other research participants from harm that may be caused due to their contact with More in Common. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of More in Common employees or representatives; and
- The design, implementation, or publication of More in Common's research, initiatives, or reports.

More in Common is committed to ensuring that everyone within the organization understands and accepts their responsibility for safeguarding. This means following procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults and reporting any concerns about their welfare to the appropriate authorities. Specifically, More in Common works to:

- Prevent, report, and respond to child and/or vulnerable adult abuse; and
- Provide training to More in Common employees to promote awareness of safeguarding obligations.

This policy lays out More in Common's commitments and informs More in Common employees and representatives of their safeguarding responsibilities. In addition to this global policy, we expect those who engage with young people as part of research programs to conform to the individual country requirements on safeguarding, disclosure, and vetting.

Definitions:

- Abuse: Intentional injury or harm, including regular or repeated physical, emotional, or sexual harm, injury, or neglect. All sexual activity between an adult and a child is considered sexual abuse.
- Child: A child is anyone under the age of 18 years, irrespective of the age of majority in the country in which the child lives.
- Exploitation: Abuse where compensation is involved or perpetrators benefit monetarily, socially, or politically. Exploitation is a form of coercion and violence.
- Inappropriate behavior: Inappropriate behavior can be described as, but is not limited to, unwanted comments or advances of sexual or socially unacceptable nature, use of photographs, videos, or direct



attribution of quotes or ideas without the consent of those depicted, harassment, touching, discrimination, sexual assault, stalking, contacting outside of professional capacity, etc.

- More in Common representatives: Non-employees and other entities who are acting or could reasonably be understood by others to be acting as agents of More in Common. More in Common representatives can include More in Common’s independent contractors or consultants, vendors, sub-awardees, interns, volunteers, and Board members.
- Research participants: People who participate in qualitative or quantitative research conducted or commissioned by More in Common.
- Sexual assault: Sexual activity with another person who does not, or is not able to, explicitly consent to the activity. This includes rape and any sexual activity committed by force or violence. An individual may not be able to consent due to their age, incapacitation, the power dynamics present in the relationship, coercion, or the threat of force or violence.
- Vulnerable adult: Any person 18 or older who is systematically under-advantaged or stigmatized in a given community or context. This includes, but is not limited to, those who identify with a particular race, ethnicity, political affiliation, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, nationality, migration status, or marital status, and people experiencing economic or housing insecurity.

Responsibilities

All More in Common employees and representatives are obliged to comply with this Safeguarding Policy and to contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents and addresses safeguarding violations.

Policy Statement and Code of Conduct

More in Common recognizes that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. Therefore, it maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward abuse, exploitation, or inappropriate behavior with children or vulnerable adults. More in Common commits to protecting the children and vulnerable adults with whom we work, including More in Common vendors, partners, research participants, and those with whom we work indirectly.

A. Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

More in Common staff and representatives must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, including in contexts where citizens reach legal adulthood before 18;
- Be alone with a child (within the context of More in Common’s research or program work) where possible;
- Sexually abuse, assault, or exploit children or vulnerable adults;
- Subject a child or vulnerable adult to physical, emotional, or psychological abuse, or neglect.

B. Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

More in Common staff and representatives must not:



- Exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sexual activity. This includes withholding of payments owed to research participants or partners;
- Engage in sexual relationships with any research participants, since such relationships may be based on unequal power dynamics. This includes soliciting or sharing sexual content with participants.

C. Research Participant Safeguarding

In addition to the above, More in Common staff and representatives should design and conduct research in accordance with broadly accepted ethical research guidelines. These include, but are not limited to:

- Beneficence, equity, and respect for persons;
- Voluntary participation based on valid informed consent;
- Assessing risks and benefits;
- Enabling participation and representation, and honoring identity;
- Avoidance of personal and social harm to participants and researchers;
- Participant confidentiality¹ and data safety.

D. Safeguarding and Personnel

More in Common's Directors' Group will ensure that:

- Proper employment screening measures are in place to ensure that no one is recruited to the More in Common team to work with children or vulnerable adults if doing so would pose an unacceptable risk.
- New employees and More in Common representatives are informed and trained on this Safeguarding Policy.
- Safeguarding violations will result in immediate dismissal from a working relationship with More in Common.
- This policy and associated safeguarding measures are regularly reviewed and updated as needed.
- A designated team member will serve as More in Common's Safeguarding Officer (the Director of Learning, People, and Culture). This person is responsible for receiving and investigating safeguarding concerns and complaints.
- A key board member is designated to advise, review, and enforce the Safeguarding Policy, if necessary.

E. Reporting

- More in Common staff and representatives are obliged to report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a More in Common employee or representative, as well as any other safeguarding concerns learned about in the course of employment, to their Country Director or to the Safeguarding Officer.
- No form of coercion, intimidation, reprisal, or retaliation will be tolerated against any More in Common employee or representative who in good faith reports any suspected form of abuse or exploitation.

¹ Research participants will remain anonymous, *unless* otherwise stated and agreed upon in the research plan and as documented with informed consent.



- Research participants are made aware of the process for reporting complaints or concerns as part of their informed consent paperwork.
- Members of the public and partners may report safeguarding concerns or complaints by emailing More in Common's Safeguarding Officer at safeguardingpolicy@moreincommon.com.
- All safeguarding concerns or complaints will be taken seriously and investigated by the Safeguarding Officer and appropriate Country Director. Violations of law will be reported to the authorities.