

Code of Conduct for our business partners

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Code of Conduct for our business partners

The Unite Code of Conduct supports ethical and responsible ways of working. It outlines the minimum requirements for responsible business conduct towards people, society and the environment and forms the basis for collaboration with our business partners. We are committed to these principles and can only develop long-standing partnerships with companies that equally uphold them.

Our shared principles

People

Our employees are front and centre in our company. We observe the legal requirements and safeguard the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization and the principles laid out in the International Human Rights Charter. In addition, we have our own requirements to ensure that we uphold the principles set out below to high standards. And we require you, our business partner, to do the same.

1 Labour rights

We actively stand up for the personal dignity of our employees, their right to live as they choose, and their privacy.

As our business partner, you must not employ anyone against their will or force them to work under physical or mental duress. We also demand that you reimburse them fairly. In particular, you must comply with the labour and social standards of the International Labour Organization and observe the legal principles in force. For example, you must not pay employees less than the minimum wage or exceed the statutory maximum working hours. You must also respect employees' right to set up a representative body and not disadvantage those who join.

2 Employment opportunity and equal treatment

We offer our employees a fair working environment. Furthermore, we extensively support and promote our employees by considering their long-term goals and finding ways to help them achieve them.

Similarly, you must guarantee your employees equal opportunities and protect them against discrimination regardless of skin colour, race, nationality, social origin, physical or mental disability, sexual identity and orientation, political or religious conviction, age or gender.

3 Protection from harassment and abuse

We respect the dignity of our employees. Therefore, we do not tolerate any inappropriate behaviour, such as coercion, whether sexual, threatening or exploitative discrimination or other behaviours that would make a staff member feel uncomfortable.

Anyone we work with should have the same no tolerance policy towards such issues and ensure a workplace free from any form of harassment and abuse.

4 Health and safety

We offer our employees a safe working environment and champion their wellbeing.

You are obliged to safeguard the physical and mental integrity of your employees and ensure their health and safety. Therefore, you must contain risks and establish the best possible occupational health and safety precautions to prevent accidents and occupational diseases. To ensure this, you must organise health and safety training regularly.

5 Children and adolescents

We reject any form of child labour.

As our business partner, you must prevent any exploitation of children and adolescents. To stop child labour, employees may not be younger than the age at which compulsory education ends. In addition, you must ban the employment of children under the age of 15 and hazardous work for adolescents who have not yet reached the age of 18. Even if the International Labour Organization allows for exceptions in individual cases, under no circumstances may any work be performed which could damage an employee's physical or mental development. The school education of children and adolescents must always take precedence over employment.

Environmental protection

At Unite, we are aware of our impact on the environment and take responsibility for it. We strive to make a valuable contribution to environmental protection by establishing an environmental management system. Our platform provides the infrastructure for smart, local networking, enabling us to make procurement and purchasing more efficient and reduce carbon emissions.

We must all collaborate throughout the value chain and mutually demand compliance with specific minimum standards to protect the environment.

As our business partner, you must have a suitable environmental management system that helps reduce your environmental impact and thus protect water, air, land, flora and fauna. In your commercial activities, you must pay special attention to protecting and preserving the natural basis of life. In particular, you must take utmost care when handling chemical and other toxic materials and substances, dealing with sewage and waste, emitting waste gases and other air pollutants, and consuming water and energy.

Professional integrity

We expect to be treated fairly as an equal partner. And we don't believe that this merits additional reward. Therefore, we ban any direct or indirect form of bribery, extortion, corruption or fraud.

You must always behave in such a way that personal dependencies, obligations or influences are precluded and ensure that your employees comply with these rules. In addition, please read [our Gift Policy](#) to learn more.

Additional rules of conduct for suppliers

Our business model is based on collaboration with suppliers who have joined the Unite Network and/or the Mercateo trading platform to sell goods and/or services. As a supplier you must make reasonable efforts to ensure the effectiveness of all the principles outlined in this Code of Conduct. You must also ensure that these principles are upheld by all your business partners along the supply chain and introduce suitable control mechanisms to monitor compliance.

Compliance with this Code of Conduct

The principles outlined in this Code of Conduct may not be circumvented or waived by contractual or comparable measures.

Selection of business partners

We carefully select our business partners to ensure that we abide by the rules, principles and ideas outlined above. You, therefore, must also make sure that your contractual partners uphold them.

Legal compliance

You must always comply with all relevant legal provisions, not just those mentioned in this Code of Conduct. In addition, the laws and guidelines that impose the strictest standards on conduct must always be observed.

Our right to audit

You must agree to work with us to ensure that we uphold this Code of Conduct. We will hold annual audits, in the form of questionnaires or one-on-one interviews to verify your compliance, and request that you provide further evidence where required. You must agree to support us during this auditing process.

Violations

The culpable violation of this Code of Conduct constitutes good cause for us to terminate our contractual relationship without notice. We reserve the right to allow you to remedy the situation and to set a deadline to end the violation and eliminate the consequences. In which case, you'd have to bear the corresponding burden of proof.

Whistleblowing

You must undertake to report any breaches of this Code of Conduct without delay. This applies in particular to the risk of loss or damage to our company due to this violation. Your responsibility extends to all your business relationships along the supply chain.

You can report violations by emailing us at compliance@unite.eu.

To ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct, you must provide your employees with a code of conduct with matching content and introduce a suitable complaints system to report violations.