

## **VIKALP – Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Policy**

VIKALP is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and dignified work environment for all individuals. This Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Policy establishes a framework to prevent, prohibit, and address sexual harassment at the workplace.

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment, provide a clear mechanism for redressal of complaints, and promote a workplace culture based on dignity, equality, and mutual respect.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, consultants, interns, volunteers, Governing Board members, partners, visitors, and any person associated with VIKALP, irrespective of gender, role, or location. It applies to conduct occurring at the workplace, during work-related travel, events, meetings, training programmes, and any official or unofficial interaction connected with work.

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome act or behavior, whether directly or by implication, such as:

- Physical contact and advances
- Demand or request for sexual favors
- Sexually colored remarks
- Showing pornography
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature



### 3.2 Workplace

Workplace includes all offices, project sites, field locations, training venues, travel locations, and any place visited by an individual arising out of or during the course of employment.

### 4. Guiding Principles

VIKALP follows a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and is guided by the principles of:

- Respect and dignity for all
- Confidentiality and sensitivity
- Fairness and natural justice
- Non-retaliation against complainants or witnesses

### 5. Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

VIKALP shall constitute an Internal Complaints Committee responsible for receiving and addressing complaints of sexual harassment. The Committee shall be composed in accordance with applicable legal requirements and include representatives from management, employees, and external members. ICC is formed as per Annex 1.

### 6. Complaint Mechanism

A complaint of sexual harassment may be submitted in writing or verbally (with written assistance) to any member of the ICC within a reasonable period of the incident. Complaints may also be submitted via email or other designated communication channels.

### 7. Inquiry Process

Upon receipt of a complaint, the ICC shall conduct a fair, impartial, and time-bound inquiry. Both parties shall be given an opportunity to be heard. The inquiry shall be completed within a reasonable timeframe, and recommendations shall be submitted to the management for action.



## 8. Confidentiality

All information relating to complaints, inquiries, and outcomes shall be treated as strictly confidential. Disclosure shall be limited to individuals who are required to know for the purpose of inquiry or compliance.

## 9. Protection Against Retaliation

VIKALP strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who files a complaint, participates in an inquiry, or supports the complaint process. Any act of retaliation shall be treated as misconduct.

## 10. Disciplinary Action

Based on the findings of the inquiry, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against the respondent, which may include warning, suspension, termination, or other corrective measures.

## 11. False or Malicious Complaints

While the organization encourages genuine complaints, knowingly false or malicious complaints may result in disciplinary action. Inability to substantiate a complaint does not automatically imply malicious intent.

## 12. Awareness and Training

VIKALP shall conduct periodic awareness and sensitization programmes to ensure understanding of this policy and promote a safe workplace culture.



### 13. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

### 14. Policy Adoption

This POSH Policy is approved by the Governing Board of VIKALP and is effective from the date of adoption.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Updated Policy adopted by  
Board on 30/09/2025