

Complaints Procedure (*Klachtenprocedure*)

Approved by the Board: 2026-06-30.

1. Purpose

This procedure applies to all volunteers, Board members, management, and individuals engaging with HLE Network activities. HLE Network aims to provide a respectful and positive environment for volunteers, partners, and community members. We take complaints seriously and aim to handle them fairly, confidentially, and in a timely manner. This procedure explains how complaints can be raised and how they will be managed.

2. What is a complaint?

A complaint may relate to:

- Behavior of a volunteer, Board member, or member of Management.
- Breach of organizational policies (e.g. Code of Conduct)
- Discrimination or inappropriate behaviour
- Organizational decisions or actions
- Communication concerns

(This procedure does not apply to criminal matters. In such cases, individuals should contact the appropriate authorities.)

3. Informal resolution (Step 1)

Where possible, we encourage concerns to be resolved informally.

The complainant may:

- Speak directly to the person involved (if appropriate), or
- Raise concerns about volunteers or members of Management with the Managing Director (via the shared management email). Concerns about the Managing Director should be raised with the Chair of the Board. Concerns about a Board member should be raised with the Chair or, if the Chair is the subject, with the remaining Board members.
- Many issues can be resolved quickly through open conversation.

4. Formal complaint (Step 2)

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be submitted.

How to submit a complaint:

- Complaints should be submitted in writing (email is acceptable).
- Complaints about volunteers or Management should be raised with the Managing Director .
- Complaints about the Managing Director should be raised with the Chair of the Board.
- Complaints about a Board member should be raised with the Chair, or if the Chair is the subject, the remaining Board members.

The designated recipient will investigate the complaint, document the process, and resolve the complaint according to principles of fairness, confidentiality, GDPR, and ANBI compliance. Possible outcomes include: formal warning, mediation, or initiation of board removal procedures (if necessary). See also Section 5.

Conflict of interest:

If the person responsible for handling a complaint has a conflict of interest, another Board member will be designated to manage the process.

The complaint should include:

- A description of the issue
- Relevant dates
- Names of individuals involved
- Any supporting information

5. Handling of the complaint

Upon receiving a formal complaint:

- A written acknowledgement will be sent within 14 days.
- The Managing Director or Board will review the complaint.
- If necessary, relevant individuals may be contacted for clarification.
- A decision or proposed resolution will normally be provided within 30 days, where possible.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially and sensitively.

6. Possible outcomes

Outcomes may include:

- Informal mediation
- Written clarification
- Apology
- Policy reminder
- Removal from activities
- Ending a volunteer or board relationship (in serious cases)

7. Appeal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by the full Board (if the initial decision was made by the Managing Director). The Board's decision will be final within the organization.

8. Record keeping

A confidential record of formal complaints will be kept by the Board in accordance with [GDPR requirements](#).

9. Review

This document is reviewed periodically by the Board and updated when necessary.