

## Child Protection Policy

### Purpose

At beVisioneers: The Mercedes-Benz Fellowship (“beVisioneers”), we are dedicated to supporting the growth of the visionaries of today and tomorrow by equipping them with training, expert support, and resources to bring their planet-positive projects to life. Central to our mission is the understanding that some of our fellows are under the age of 18. Recognizing their unique status and their particular vulnerability, we are committed to creating an environment where they can thrive while feeling safe and protected. It is our fundamental priority to prevent and address any form of risk that may affect our minor fellows.

### Application

This policy protects any beVisioneers fellows who have not yet reached 18 years of age (“minor fellows”).

Each person working on the implementation of beVisioneers or any beVisioneers program is expected to read, understand, accept in writing and comply with this policy. This includes in particular, and without limitation, any director, employee, intern or freelancer of The DO School Fellowships gGmbH (“staff”) as well as mentors and invited experts. Each beVisioneer fellow is also expected to read, understand and comply with this policy.

This policy applies globally. It is not intended to pre-empt local laws and regulations protecting minors. Where local laws and regulations provide for a higher level of protection than this policy, local laws and regulations shall prevail over this policy.

## Safeguarding Measures

In order to protect our minor fellows, we have implemented the following measures and rules.

### 1. Participation in the Fellowship Program

- 1.1. **Academic Continuity:** To prevent any disruption to a minor fellow's education, our fellowship program requires a part-time commitment of only 20-25 hours per month, ensuring that academic studies remain uninterrupted.
- 1.2. **Financial Security:** Since minor fellows may lack financial resources to participate in our fellowship program, beVisioneers offers financial support to those minor fellows who qualify as economically disadvantaged. This assistance aims to help them overcome logistical and/or financial barriers that may otherwise impede their full participation.
- 1.3. **Contract Countersignature by Legal Guardian:** To ensure that the legal guardians of a minor fellow are aware of and supportive of their child's participation in the fellowship program, they are required to countersign both the Fellowship Agreement and, if the fellow is eligible for financial support, the Scholarship Agreement.

### 2. Mentorship

- 2.1. **Confirmation:** Mentors may work with minor fellows only if they have confirmed their willingness to work with minor fellows prior to their admission to the mentorship program.
- 2.2. **Criminal Background Check:** Mentors who have confirmed their willingness to work with minor fellows and who are resident in Germany are required to obtain and submit to The DO School Fellowships gGmbH an [enhanced certificate of conduct](#) (*erweitertes Führungszeugnis*) as part of their admission process. The certificate includes information crucial for evaluating an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. Mentors who have confirmed their willingness to work with minor fellows and who are resident in countries other than Germany are required to obtain and submit equivalent certificates issued by the applicable country of residence. Mentors without a satisfactory certificate may still be admitted to the mentorship program; however, they must not work with minor fellows.
- 2.3. **Code of Conduct:** All mentors must read, understand, and sign the Code of Conduct for mentors prior to the start of their participation in the mentorship program.
- 2.4. **Virtual Meeting Requirement:** All calls between a mentor and a mentee who is a minor fellow must be conducted virtually. In-person meetings are not permitted.
- 2.5. **Disclosure of Contact Information:** Upon request of a minor fellow's legal guardians, the name and email address of such minor fellow's mentor may be shared with them. By accepting this policy, the mentor agrees to this contact detail sharing.

### 3. In-person Events

- 3.1. **Consent by Legal Guardian:** In-person event attendance by a minor fellow requires consent by the minor fellow's legal guardians.
- 3.2. **Participation of Legal Guardians:** Legal guardians of minor fellows are welcome to accompany their children to in-person events, however, they are not allowed to participate in the program.
- 3.3. **Compliance with Local Laws:** Staff shall take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with local laws and regulations for the protection of minors applicable to the location of any in-person event. In any case, beVioneers does not tolerate the sale or distribution of alcohol, tobacco products, and controlled substances (*Drogen*) to minor fellows attending any in-person event or the consumption of these items by such minor fellows. beVioneers does not accept responsibility for compliance with laws and regulations for the protection of minors of an attending minor fellow's home country or country of residence to the extent that they differ from local laws and regulations applicable to the location of the event.
- 3.4. **Curfew:** In-person events will conclude before midnight (12:00 am).
- 3.5. **Interactions with External Parties:** During the Regional and Global Summits, staff shall take reasonable steps to ensure that minor fellows are never left unsupervised with any individual who hasn't accepted in writing this policy and the applicable Code of Conduct or who hasn't submitted a satisfactory enhanced certificate of conduct or a satisfactory equivalent certificate. This includes scenarios such as interviews with media representatives or interactions with invited experts or partners. At least one staff member must always be present.
- 3.6. **Local Hubs**
  - 3.6.1. **Public Space:** Local Hubs must be held in publicly accessible spaces like parks or community centres. This ensures visibility and prompt intervention in case of any issues.
  - 3.6.2. **Activities:** Proposals for activities are overseen and approved by staff in advance.

### 4. Appropriate Behaviour of Staff

- 4.1. **Criminal Background Checks:** All staff resident in Germany is required to obtain and submit to The DO School Fellowships gGmbH an [enhanced certificate of conduct](#) (*erweitertes Führungszeugnis*) prior to working on the implementation of beVioneers or any beVioneers program, and biennially thereafter. The certificate includes information crucial for evaluating an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. Staff resident in countries other than Germany is required to obtain and submit equivalent certificates issued by the applicable country of residence. While not all staff members are directly working with minor fellows, all will

have the opportunity for contact. Staff without satisfactory a certificate will not be permitted to work on the implementation of beVisioneers or any beVisioneers program.

- 4.2. **Code of Conduct:** All staff must read, understand, and sign the Code of Conduct for staff prior to working on the implementation of beVisioneers or any beVisioneers program.

## 5. **Mandatory Reporting**

- 5.1. Any person expected to comply with this policy is required to immediately report any suspicion or allegation of behaviour violating this policy or the applicable Code of Conduct to the safeguarding team (safeguarding@bevisioneers.world) or through the channel with which they feel most comfortable. If the individual does not feel safe addressing the matter with the beVisioneers safeguarding team, they can contact any member of the beVisioneers team and/or the Executive Director of beVisioneers (mariah@thedoschool.org) or the CEO of The DO School Fellowships gGmbH (katherin@thedoschool.org).
- 5.2. Any other person may voluntarily report any such suspicion or allegation to the safeguarding team or other appropriate contact as set out above.

## 6. **Online Interactions**

- 6.1. **Invited Experts:** When an expert is giving a presentation, at least one staff member must be present. Furthermore, experts must not communicate directly with minor fellows. All communication should be directed through staff members.

## 7. **General Safeguarding Measures:**

- 7.1. **Continuous Enhancement:** We continually update and improve our Child Protection Policy to adapt to evolving challenges and best practices.
- 7.2. **Access to Records:** Legal guardians have the right to access our files and records concerning their own children.
- 7.3. **Communication with Fellows:** We communicate this policy to fellows at the beginning of the program, ensuring they know where to seek help if they have any concerns about safety or misconduct.
- 7.4. **Policy Publication:** This policy is publicly available on the beVisioneers' website. It is open for viewing by legal guardians, and any other interested parties.

## Safeguarding Team

When reaching out to [safeguarding@bevisioneers.world](mailto:safeguarding@bevisioneers.world), the following safeguarding leads will be notified:

### **Mariah Levin**

Executive Director of beVisioneers

### **Katherin Kirschenmann**

CEO of The DO School Fellowships gGmbH

### **Anja Thiem**

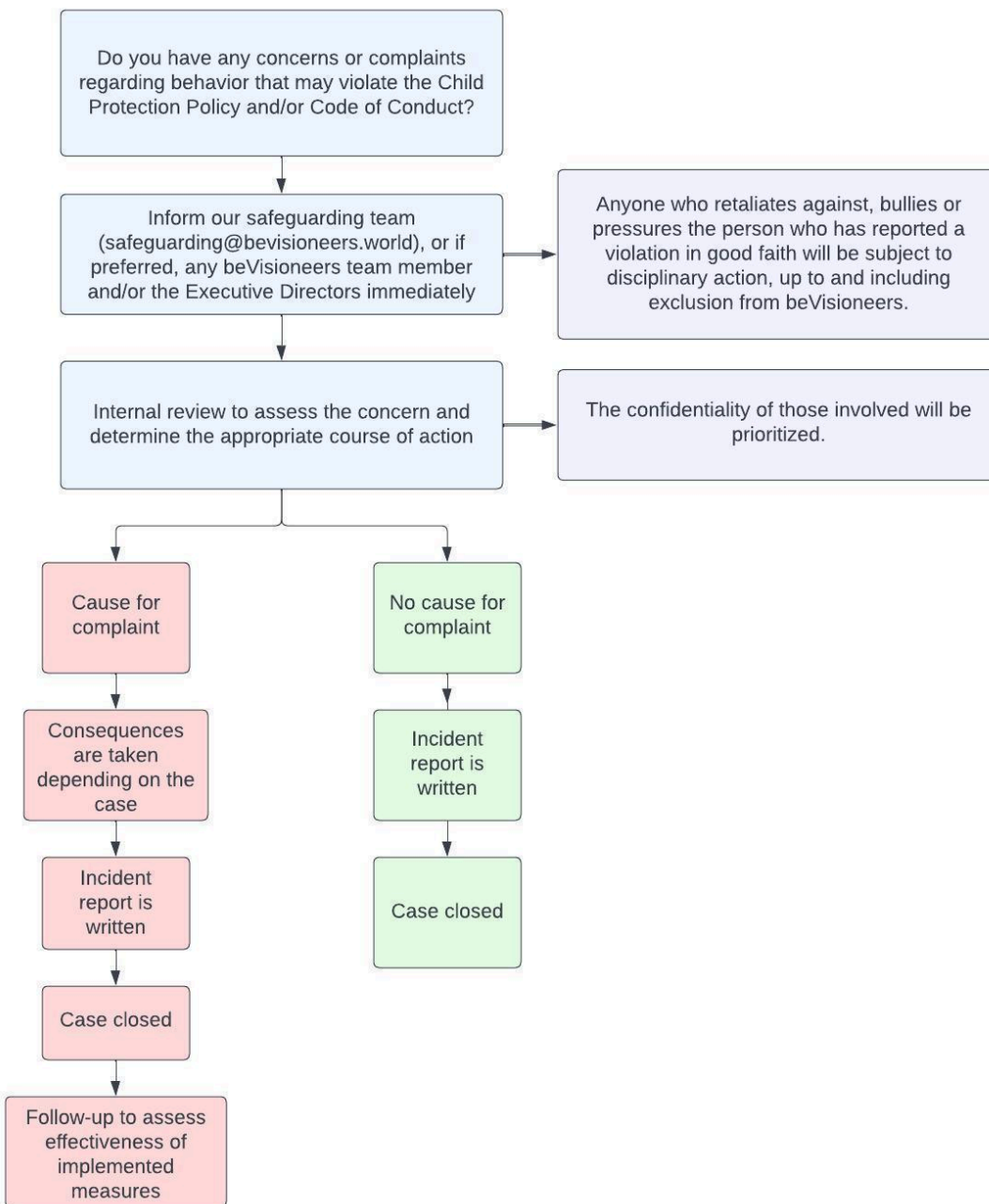
People and Culture Director

## Code of Conduct

Find [here](#) our Code of Conduct for staff which must be signed by all staff working on the implementation of beVisioneers or any beVisioneers program,

Find [here](#) our Code of Conduct for mentors which must be signed by all mentors.

## Process: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns



## Policy Publication

This policy undergoes annual updates and is distributed to anyone interacting with minor fellows. The next revision of the policy is scheduled for May 1, 2025.