



**RANGA SHANKARA**  
(A Unit of The Sanket Trust)

## **POLICY FOR PREVENTION AND REDRESSAL OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE**

### **I Purpose**

Ranga Shankara is committed to providing a safe, dignified, and harassment-free work environment for all persons associated with it, in accordance with Article 19(1)(g) and Article 21 of the Indian Constitution and the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ('Act'). This Policy extends protection to all genders, prohibits sexual harassment in any form, and establishes an Internal Committee (IC) for the prevention and redressal of complaints received. Sexual harassment is against the law and the core values of Ranga Shankara; interferes with an individual's right to dignity and freedom to work, is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated.

### **II Scope**

#### *i. What constitutes Sexual Harassment at the Workplace*

Sexual harassment is harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. It is unwelcome sexually determined behavior whether direct or implied, as in:

- a) Physical contact and advances;
- b) Demand or request for sexual favors;
- c) Sexually colored remarks;
- d) Showing pornography;
- e) Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:

- f) Promise of preferential treatment;
- g) Threat of detrimental treatment
- h) Threats about present or future employment status
- i) Interference with work (micro management with sexual commentary)
- j) Humiliating treatment

It may be a single or multiple sexually harassing incident/s. It may affect terms and conditions at work on account of acceptance or rejection of sexual advances. If such actions create an intimidating, hostile work environment for a person. However,

conduct involving the proper exercise of responsibilities or authority related to the provision of advice, assignment of work, counseling, performance evaluation, discipline, and other supervisory/leadership functions does not constitute sexual harassment.

*ii To whom and where does this policy apply*

This policy is applicable to all persons who come in association with Ranga Shankara for its work.

- a) when any employee is harassed or is the cause of sexual harassment of another person with whom there is a work-based relationship, whether co-employee, client, vendor, consultant, intern, volunteer, contractual, part-time or full-time staff, paid or unpaid worker, workshop participant, visiting or invited artist, member of renting performance troupe or audience.
- b) when the conduct of one party of any gender causes sexual harassment of another party of any gender.
- c) when alleged sexual harassment may be between people of the same sex.
- d) when sexual harassment occurs in Ranga Shankara's premises. As a public arts venue where audiences, renting troupes, technicians, performers share the same premises, Ranga Shankara recognises that sexual harassment could also occur between non-employees. All persons on Ranga Shankara premises are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with this Policy. The IC is authorised to receive complaints from any such person and to take appropriate remedial action, including directing a non-employee to leave the premises, terminating a rental or performance agreement, or referring the matter to the appropriate authorities.
- e) when sexual harassment occurs at any place where an employee is present by virtue of their work. It could be in Ranga Shankara, or in an extended workspace like a client location, event site, off-site training, in transportation or accommodation provided by Ranga Shankara.
- f) irrespective of whether the harassment occurs during or after working hours.
- g) when the medium used to cause sexual harassment is provided by the organisation like a laptop, mobile, email id, office stationery, intranet, internal messenger service.

**III Procedure**

*i Internal Committee (formerly known as Internal Complaints Committee or ICC)*

- a) Ranga Shankara has formed an Internal Committee (IC) in accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and the Rules of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 collectively called The Act.
- b) The IC is chaired by a woman at a senior level in Ranga Shankara, with not less than 2 members (male or female), an external expert on the subject and comprises more than 50% female members.
- c) IC Presiding Officer and members to be appointed by the Management for a one

term of 3 years.

- d) IC members are trained periodically to conduct fair and balanced investigations.
- e) Any IC member with a conflict of interest shall recuse from relevant proceedings.
- f) An IC member found guilty of violating this Policy shall be removed immediately.
- g) The IC has powers similar to a Civil Court under Code of Civil Procedure (1908) which means IC can summon individuals to give evidence, discover documents relevant to the inquiry, or take action for non-cooperation.

*ii. Complaint*

- a) Complaint must be filed by the aggrieved person in writing or by sending an email to **ic@rangashankara.in**  
When that is not possible, the IC must support the aggrieved person to write and submit the complaint. Anonymous complaints are not entertained.
- b) Complaint must be filed within 3 months of the last harassing incident. This limitation period can be extended by another 3 months based on the IC's prima facie inquiry.
- c) Complainant/s must share all name/s and contact details of the respondent/s (against whose discomfoting behaviour the complaint is filed) and witness/es, date, time, location and details of the harassing incident/s, all evidence and other details with the IC.
- d) Complainant may seek leave over and above entitled leave or a transfer or any other temporary relief to overcome trauma experienced for the period of the inquiry. IC may take other interim measures to ensure protection of complainant, respondent, witness.
- e) Any employee/ person who engages in sexual harassment or files a complaint with malafide intent will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment/ contract.
- f) Where a complaint is made against a Trustee, the inquiry shall be conducted by a person external to the Ranga Shankara, appointed by the IC.
- g) Notwithstanding, Ranga Shankara's procedure for sexual harassment at the workplace, every aggrieved employee or person retains the right to simultaneously approach relevant authorities as per the law of the land.
- h) Every complainant has the option to request for conciliation instead of inquiry. The IC is trained to bring conciliation between parties. Any breach of the settlement by either party will lead to the IC conducting a regular inquiry into the matter and making recommendations accordingly.
- i) An aggrieved person has the choice to request for a full-fledged inquiry.

*iii Process Timeline*

- a) IC shares a copy of the complaint with the respondent within 7 days of receiving the complaint, asking them to reply within 10 days.
- b) IC conducts an inquiry into the complaint of sexual harassment within 90 days, keeping in mind principles of natural justice.
- c) If any party fails to appear before the IC for 3 consecutive hearings, the IC can take

- an ex-parte decision.
- d) Within 10 days of the last investigation meeting, a report is sent by the IC Presiding Officer to the Managing Trustee with findings of the inquiry and recommendation/s to take appropriate action for parties involved that could range from caution, counselling to separation from services.
  - e) Within 60 days, the Managing Trustee takes appropriate action basis the IC's recommendations.
  - f) Managing Trustee shares the Report of Actions Taken to the aggrieved person and respondent.
  - g) Within 90 days of receiving this communication, complainant or respondent may file an appeal with the appropriate Appellate authority.
  - h) Basis the offence, Ranga Shankara retains the right and responsibility to hand over persons found guilty to the relevant authorities in accordance with the laws of the land.
  - i) Upon implementation of recommendations, the Managing Trustee sends an Action Taken Report to IC.

#### **IV Employee and Stakeholder Responsibilities**

- i. To read and acquaint themselves with the policy.
- ii. Attend trainings on this subject matter and clear any doubts with management.
- iii. To ensure that their behavior is dignified at all times and their actions are not the cause of sexual harassment to anybody else.
- iv. To report sexual harassment at the workplace immediately. If any employee or stakeholder experiences sexual harassment at the workplace, whatever the severity of the alleged offence may be, the employee:
  - a) is encouraged to inform the alleged harasser about their discomfort and ask them to stop the actions causing harassment; or
  - b) is obligated to report the matter immediately, in writing to any of the following:
    - **ic@rangashankara.in**
    - IC Presiding Officer or members
    - Trustees
    - their supervisor
    - Local Complaints Committee
    - She-Box of Gol
  - c) is advised to retain all evidence carefully like sms/ whatsapp/ chat scripts, photos, gifts, etc
- v. Any employee or stakeholder who becomes aware of possible sexual harassment of another person must encourage the harassed party to report to the IC or must inform the IC immediately.
- vi. All people involved – as complainant, respondent, witnesses, bystanders are requested to cooperate with the IC.
- vii. If two employees in a reporting relationship are also in a romantic consensual

relationship, it is advised that they inform the management, to avoid possible conflict of interest or abuse of power.

**V Management Responsibilities**

- i. To display the policy in a prominent position so that all stakeholders become aware of it.
- ii. To conduct trainings for employees, contract staff, management periodically.
- iii. To support the IC by providing required resources to conduct fair inquiries.
- iv. To ensure confidentiality of all proceedings, documents, matters related to inquiries conducted.
- v. To act sincerely against any breach of confidentiality, fairness.
- vi. To submit an Annual Report consisting of number of complaints received, disposed of, pending, those that crossed the 90 day limit for inquiries, action taken, trainings conducted, etc to the District officer or relevant authority.

**VI Assurances**

*i. No Retaliation*

Employees and stakeholders are assured that there will be no retaliation for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation. However, if they experience retaliation, they must escalate through the channels mentioned above and strict action will be taken against the perpetrators. It is unlawful to retaliate and Ranga Shankara protects every employee or stakeholder from retaliation.

*ii. Confidentiality*

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially. Information is revealed only on a strict need-to-know basis. All IC members and complainant, respondent, witnesses in an inquiry are advised to keep matters confidential.

*iii. Fairness*

All cases are investigated ensuring that principles of natural justice are followed, all parties are heard, all evidence is considered and adequate action is taken to make the work environment a safe space.

**VII Additional Provisions**

- i. Ranga Shankara is a public venue that welcomes minors in various capacities, such as performing artists, workshop participants, members of the audience, etc. Any sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation involving a person under 18 years of age must be reported immediately to law enforcement authorities as mandated by the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO).
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**Annexure 1:**

Presiding Officer	Maureen Gonsalves, Arts Consultant
Member (Internal)	K M Chaitanya, Film director
Member (Internal)	Venkatesh Prasad, Theatre Actor and Director
Member (External)	Supriti, DEI & POSH Consultant