

## **Sticks and Stones: Bullying in Museums**

### **Commitment**

The research highlights there is a real and significant issue of bullying in the sector. This is an ethical, moral, and legal issue that needs to be addressed.

Creating a culture where those that work in and with museums feel and know they are in a safe environment and meet their maximum potential, is a priority, addressing needs across the whole of the museums sector:

- attracting and retaining the best diverse talent – by supporting and nurturing all staff
- creating a culture of creativity and supporting idea generation – by valuing the views and opinions of all
- enabling agile and flexible working – by trusting and empowering staff.

### **Our recommendations**

As a result of the research, we have developed a set of recommendations.

The recommendations have been grouped as follows:

- for the sector and organisations, including funders
- for line managers or leaders, including trustees

- for targets
- for peers or colleagues
- for perpetrators.

The sector is made up of different components - museums, funders, sector support organisations, suppliers and consultancies. By working together, we can begin to address bullying in the sector. Everyone should reflect on these recommendations and put them into practice.

<b>Recommendations</b>	Organisations	Line Managers	Colleagues	Targets	Perpetrators
Develop and adhere to a policy for bullying, and other supporting policies.	✓				
Demonstrate this commitment by including a policy statement in relevant processes.	✓				
Ensure all leaders, managers, staff, volunteers and freelancers understand the role they play in creating a bullying-free sector with zero tolerance of bullying.	✓	✓			
Where this is not the case, and following an investigation, ensure sanctions are applied in line with policy and where applicable.	✓				
Be transparent, for example, report on grievance-related subject matter to trustees or others.	✓	✓			
Develop and implement a programme for anti-bullying including, training, coaching, resources, 360-degree feedback and conduct regular surveys.	✓				

<b>Recommendations</b>	Organisations	Line Managers	Colleagues	Targets	Perpetrators
Ensure all leaders, managers, staff, volunteers <sup>1</sup> and freelancers actively participate in relevant training, including induction, difficult conversations, and health and safety and managing investigations.	✓	✓			
Engage with recognised trade unions and other groups.	✓	✓			
Look for support from employee assistance programmes or occupational health providers and external mediation or investigation organisations.	✓	✓			
Establish support groups and networks, including mental health first aiders, and champions.	✓				
Lead and be a role model for professional behaviours and management practice.	✓	✓	✓		
Be open, visible and available to all individuals within your team.		✓			
Read all relevant policies and understand how they relate to your role and the organisation you work in or with.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Implement relevant policies transparently, consistently and professionally.	✓	✓			
Participate in relevant training and development, including good management practice, health and safety and managing investigations.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Create a team culture of collaboration, cooperation and transparency, articulating appropriate team behaviours.		✓			

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<sup>1</sup> Trustees are included as volunteers.

<b>Recommendations</b>	Organisations	Line Managers	Colleagues	Targets	Perpetrators
Challenge bullying behaviours, however innocuous or infrequent, when observed. Make it clear that these are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.		✓	✓		
Take all concerns seriously and follow the lead from the individual and the policy.		✓			
Regularly reflect and seek feedback on your performance and behaviours.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Listen, reflect and respond professionally to any direct feedback about the impact of your own behaviours.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Offer support, including being a witness if required, to individuals where you see bullying behaviours <sup>2</sup> directed toward them.			✓		
If you believe <b>you</b> are the subject of bullying, do not suffer in silence and seek support from wherever you feel it is most useful.				✓	
Collate your experiences and bullying behaviours to identify if there is a pattern. Keep a log of dates, times and details of bullying behaviours or incidents, including the names of witnesses.				✓	
Send copies of these documents and any other evidence to your home address or home email.				✓	
If you believe <b>you</b> may be demonstrating bullying behaviours, reflect on your behaviours and identify whether they could be received as bullying.					✓

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<sup>2</sup> Note this use of terminology of bullying behaviours until the individual identifies or discloses, they are being bullied

<b>Recommendations</b>	Organisations	Line Managers	Colleagues	Targets	Perpetrators
Seek feedback on your behaviour and identify whether it could be described as bullying.					✓
Reflect on how you can address these behaviours and seek support from your line manager, colleagues, peers, external organisations, or online support groups.					✓
If you feel you have demonstrated any bullying behaviours, acknowledge this behaviour, apologise and talk to the individual concerned, where appropriate.					✓