

CODE OF ETHICS

Building a positive workplace culture

The purpose of Zodiak's Code of Ethics is to promote a positive workplace culture at Zodiak. It is not tied to a person's status in the work community but instead focuses on the way people interact in the working environment. Finnish law doesn't require an ethical code of conduct, but we have wanted to write down requirements for a positive working culture. A healthy and safe working environment applies to all of us, and each of us can contribute to maintaining a positive workplace culture.

Zodiak's activities

Zodiak – Center for New Dance is an experimental and innovative centre and production house of contemporary dance focusing on artists, community, and audience work. Our core mission is to co-produce and perform new Finnish contemporary dance performances. Zodiak's programme is artistically curated and primarily based on an open call for applications. In addition to performances, we organise dance and movement workshops for professionals and non-professionals and work with various audience work projects.

Zodiak values:

Freedom of artistic expression

Zodiak's activities are based on a focus on art, artists, and freedom of artistic expression. We support the production of courageous and ambitious art projects by providing a production setting where performances can achieve their unique and independent expression.

Appreciating the audience

Zodiak's programme and artist choices promote the image of our society as a pluralistic and inclusive, forward-looking community that acknowledges the value of art and supports its citizens' curiosity to encounter the distinctive nature of art.

Zodiak focuses on enriching and deepening the performance experience of diverse audiences by reflecting on how the selected performances are connected to the world around us, acting as a mentor during the performance processes, and promoting innovative audience work.

Our communications are based on an honest and accessible approach to art, and we promote interest in dance art with our activities.

ZODIAK

Fostering sustainable activities

Zodiak is committed to fostering a sustainable production culture and uses its resources in a wise and responsible manner. We cultivate a transparent production and tour culture of dance art in cooperation with the artist community and develop the national and international impact of our activities in cooperation with key operators of the dance field.

This Code of Ethics applies to all Zodiak's activities regardless of the venue. It has been created in accordance with the recommendations of the Occupational Health and Safety Authorities.

PROFESSIONAL WORK CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

At Zodiak, artistic and production processes are seen as social processes. Different personalities, working methods, habits and experiences are a resource for us and create opportunities for new forms of interaction. However, each person working at Zodiak should be aware of their own personal characteristics, be open about them to their co-workers, and adapt them to the professional environment. To ensure successful cooperation, it is important to acknowledge that harmonious, respectful and equal artistic and production processes are primarily social processes.

The aim of artistic processes is to produce artistically interesting and independent performances or outcomes. This is enabled by a positive, creative, and safe workplace culture. Our main priority is not to adhere to ethical work culture – instead, it enables the creation of successfully executed artistic performances and outcomes.

We encourage everyone, especially those who are responsible for leading a working group, to reflect on and articulate their personal working methods and code of ethics.

Requirements for a positive workplace culture

At Zodiak, we don't make assumptions about anyone's background, gender, or experiences. It is important to pay special attention to the language we use: the way we speak and the vocabulary we use should be as inclusive as possible. Gendered language, such as using an expression 'we women tend to...' or any other expressions that assume something about others, should be avoided. When working in English, we encourage everyone to start with a so-called 'pronoun circle' in which everyone is allowed to express how they would like to be referred to (he/she/they). This is how we avoid unintentional misgendering. Everyone is also offered an opportunity to share necessary and meaningful things about themselves. The key is that no one should be forced to reveal their identity. By paying attention to how we speak and interact, we ensure that no one feels excluded.

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Everyone working at Zodiak – artists, artistic working groups, production and technical staff, ticket sellers, course participants and other content providers and partners - is treated with equality and respect. Zodiak has zero tolerance for all harassment, discrimination, and racism.

Please remember that making a mistake or mistakes is not the same as working unethically. Mistakes are human and can happen to anyone, in any working environment. It is important to go through the situation in which a mistake(s) has been made so that the same mistake is not repeated in the future.

To achieve a positive workplace culture, it is required to ensure the following:

- An open, supportive, and communicative working environment
- Consideration and respect for others
- Reliable and consistent behaviour
- Not making assumptions about co-workers
- Being aware of your own privileges
- Understanding that co-workers may have different life situations or experiences
- Supporting the co-existence of different cultures and backgrounds
- Listening to and respecting different opinions
- Recognising imperfections in language and clarifying misunderstandings
- Recognising and acknowledging your blind spots
- Working professionally despite of disagreements
- Giving feedback to someone in private

Examples of inappropriate behaviour:

- Ignoring, changes to work assignments (addition, reduction, transfer) without justification, assignment of tasks outside job description, unreasonable changes to agreed working hours
- Implying that refusal to accept an unreasonable work assignment could adversely affect the person's future or their future employment
- Aggression of different forms: intimidation, contempt, underestimating the talents of others, shouting, unwarranted criticism, unjustified protests, demeaning or belittling of others either in private or in public, isolation
- Excessive controlling that, for example, extends to free time
- Sexual harassment, unnecessary physical contact, threats
- Making inappropriate verbal or sexual suggestions or comments, racist attitudes and comments
- Using certain expressions to justify inappropriate behaviour, for example, describing someone as oversensitive, lacking humour, having an attitude problem, or using phrases such as 'comes with the job' or 'welcome to the industry'
- Not all inappropriate behaviour meets the characteristics of harassment. The definition for harassment of Occupational Safety and Health Administration can be found on the next page.

ZODIAK

Harassment usually refers to systematic and persistent offensive conduct or behaviour. It is always contrary to the law or accepted principles of morality and therefore irresponsible and unacceptable behaviour at work. Harassment is often directed at an individual because of their personality, private life, characteristics, appearance, hobbies, family relationships etc.

It can manifest in forms such as verbal belittling, demeaning, humiliation or blaming, scornful remarks, spreading rumours, inappropriate orders, introducing unlawful amendments to agreed terms of employment, threats, and social or physical ostracism or exclusion. What all harassment has in common is the failure to accept others as they are.

The following do not constitute harassment:

- Employers' fair and reasonable decisions and instructions concerning work and the management of work
- General discussions concerning problems relating to work and the work community
- Justified intervention in employees' practices
- Deserved warnings
- Ordering an employee to undergo a work ability assessment if there is a justified reason to do so.

– Occupational Safety and Health Administration

If you experience harassment, you can find instructions [here](#) (in Finnish).

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS AT WORK

Zodiak has different roles in the Zodiak community. For some, Zodiak is an employer, and for others, a partner in co-productions, collaborator, or service provider. The following constitutes a general overview of Zodiak's responsibilities. The specific responsibilities concerning different forms of collaboration will be discussed case-by-case when necessary.

Zodiak's responsibilities as an employer

As an employer, Zodiak's responsibilities are defined by the Finnish Employment Contracts Act and Collective Labour Agreement for Theatre. As far as possible, Zodiak is responsible for preventing harassment, for example, by means of ethical guidelines. If harassment or other inappropriate treatment of an employee occurs at work and causes risk or hazard to the employee's health, Zodiak as the employer must take the necessary means to remedy the situation.

ZODIAK

Employee's responsibilities

All employees are responsible for committing to agreed work assignments and schedules. The obligations of an employee consist of diligence, loyalty, and confidentiality. Employees must familiarise themselves with and commit to Zodiak's guidelines (e.g. Code of Ethics).

All employees are responsible for treating others working in the professional community with equality, empathy and respect and reporting any incidents of inappropriate treatment immediately to the designated Zodiak staff contact person. Employees must take care of themselves and others around them as well as motivate and encourage their co-workers. It is important that the employee is aware of their professional relationship with their co-workers in addition to being friends or despite of it.

Zodiak's responsibilities as a co-production partner

In a co-production environment, Zodiak acts as a co-producer (not as an employer) of the performances selected for the programme and enters into a production contract with the co-production partners. As Zodiak does not have an employer-employee relationship with the co-production partners, Zodiak has no legal obligation to address inappropriate behaviour conducted by artists in the co-production environment. However, if necessary, it is in Zodiak's interest to provide guidance and support to the working groups in dealing with situations concerning inappropriate behaviour and to help maintain an ethical working environment.

As a co-producer, Zodiak is responsible for providing support to co-productions and creating an open and interactive working process. Zodiak expects that the co-productions are committed to building a positive working culture and strongly supports the working groups in achieving this.

Zodiak follows Safer Space Guidelines (see Annex) and has zero tolerance for all forms of harassment, discrimination, and racism.

Co-production partner's responsibilities

The co-production partner signs a co-production contract with Zodiak. The co-production partner must ensure that each member of the working group has read and accepted the main terms of the contract before signing it. The co-production partner is responsible for passing on information between Zodiak and the working group members to ensure an open working culture.

The responsible person (e.g. choreographer) assigned by the co-production partner is responsible for acknowledging their responsibilities. Zodiak recommends that the appointed responsible person of the working process takes responsibility for establishing, together with the working group, guidelines for working (e.g. working hours and methods, financial ground rules) and clarifying the roles of each working group member (both within the artistic working group and between the working group and Zodiak and/or other collaborators). It is also important that the responsible person has a discussion with each member of the working group of their

ZODIAK

expectations and wishes concerning working methods and the artistic process and its goals and outcome; what kind of performance are we creating and by which means. Zodiac recommends that the working group discusses beforehand who will make the final decisions regarding artistic and production decisions. See below an example of the Good Workplace Culture Roadmap.

UNIQUENESS OF PERFORMING ARTS

Performing arts, like arts in general, might address difficult and painful issues, and performance themes might not always be familiar, pleasant, or safe. However, the working methods used in the artistic process should always be professional, promote health and well-being at work and be based on an ethical and safe workplace culture. If you feel uncomfortable with certain topics, please inform about this to the choreographer or working group leader.

In relation to artistic work

Each working group and performance must find their own way of dealing with artistic issues, and how the working group members interact with each other plays an important role in the working process. It is recommended that the working group seeks, methodologises and articulates together the best working methods for this particular working group. In this way, it is easier to understand and negotiate the roles and responsibilities of each member in different steps of the working process. The positions of power, working group roles and working methods should always be agreed on at the beginning of each working process. The agreed working methods should also be evaluated along the way and modified if necessary.

[Jo Butterworth's Didactic-Democratic framework model](#) (Butterworth 2009, 187–188) provides a good basis for understanding the uniqueness of artistic processes and goals. The model helps working group members to understand the nature of each performance process, their own professional working roles and expectations, as well as the responsibilities of their own working roles, and thus to find together the best and safest ways to achieve the artistic goals of the performance.

Themes or scenes of an artistic work might address demanding, sensitive, intimate, rough, or otherwise challenging topics. In such cases, it is extremely important that the working group leader and the working group discuss this part of the process in detail and in advance and agree together on safe boundaries and rules. In addition, it is always a good idea to discuss and agree together on mutually acceptable working and training methods in different work and rehearsal situations. It should be considered that a topic or working method may be familiar and safe for one person and challenging or distressing for another.

ZODIAK

In relation to working with non-professionals

When working with non-professionals, whether it's a course, performance production or other activity, the choreographer/instructor must remember that non-professionals often participate in rehearsals/courses on top of their work or studies. They cannot be expected to participate as if they were working even if commitment is required. Other life issues, such as fatigue, may be more apparent in people's behaviour than in a working situation.

The choreographer/instructor needs to be sensitive to the situation, listen and engage in dialogue with the participants. In addition to this, non-professionals might not share the same understanding of what it is to make art and what kind of topics they might have to deal with. Therefore, it is essential to explain the working methods in detail and agree on common ground rules, such as what commitment means in a performance production. However, it is important to remember that participating is a hobby for non-professionals, and it should also be fun for all participants.

In relation to the audience

In an artistic process, it is important to consider the accessibility of the performance. At least two spots for wheelchairs should be provided in the audience and, if necessary, special arrangements should be made, such as arrangements for interpretation. Zodiak should inform potential audiences through its communication channels about possible loud noises, bright lights, smells and theatrical smoke and fog, as these may pose as obstacles for attending. In addition, the working group may wish to state other content warnings or information concerning their performance, such as an age limit, by consulting Zodiak's publicist.

The experience of art evokes emotions, and sometimes Zodiak receives audience feedback on performances and their themes. The role of art is not to please everyone but to evoke thoughts and discussion. You are allowed to stand proudly behind your work, and you should be able to take feedback as feedback.

The working groups and Zodiak must listen to and handle feedback appropriately. You are not alone in dealing with feedback – the Zodiak staff is there to support you. Zodiak encourages the public to discuss the performances and their themes, and actively creates new discussion channels.

In conclusion

We encourage everyone at Zodiak to work together to achieve a positive workplace culture and environment. Each member of our work community is responsible for everyday caring and building a positive atmosphere. We are human in our actions, and sometimes we make mistakes and fail. Taking responsibility in these situations is extremely important. Everyone involved in

ZODIAK

Zodiak's activities must remember to treat other people as valued individuals, whether it's your artist colleagues, audience members, Zodiak's staff or other members of the work community, such as cleaners, ticket sellers, and support staff.

Zodiak's goal is to update this Code of Ethics as our understanding grows. If you notice that something important is missing, we encourage you to give feedback and contact the staff. We are extremely happy that you are working with us. Please feel free to contact us if you have any concerns.

This Code of Ethics was inspired by Kirsi Törmi's lecture notes on Epäterveen työskentelykulttuurin ennaltaehkäisy (How to Prevent Creating an Unhealthy Work Culture) (STST 02/12/2019), the Safe Space Guidelines of the FunNet project by Oranssi ry and the #StopHatredNow ethical guidelines. Thank you for your help and for sharing.

Best regards,

Zodiak staff

ANNEXES (scroll down):

- Good Workplace Culture Roadmap
- Safer Space Guidelines at Zodiak

GOOD WORKPLACE CULTURE ROADMAP

Zodiak wants to ensure the adherence to good workplace culture in its co-productions and other activities. Zodiak suggests that working groups create their own roadmap that helps to build a good and creative work atmosphere, from the rehearsal period to the performance season and beyond it. This roadmap is based on Krisi Törmi's Good Workplace Culture Roadmap.

- 1)** On the first day of work, discuss the principles of workplace culture and working, such as how does the working group share and discuss their experiences. These principles are written down for each member of the working group.
- 2)** Prepare a contract on working conditions (also for the members without salaried employment). The contract should include main work assignments, working hours, responsibilities, obligations, and rights.
- 3)** The document must identify the a) choreographer or convener of the working group, b) background organisation (with which the potential employment relationship has been established), and c) co-production partner(s).
- 4)** It is recommended to create a timetable for the production process and define a schedule for different stages of working. Each working group member should be aware of these.
- 5)** It is recommended to include a weekly reflection session individually or between the working group members in the schedule. Define how you will carry out the reflection session and the responsibilities for the session.
- 6)** As a general rule, inappropriate behaviour should be acknowledged and identified within the work community. Each working group member is responsible for identifying potential inappropriate behaviour. If inappropriate behaviour occurs in the work community, the perspectives of each party should be heard and respected. The goal is to evaluate the situation and create a common understanding.
- 7)** The convener of the working group is responsible for organising the discussion and resolving the situation. Zodiak's contact person should be informed of the situation even if their assistance to resolve the situation is not required. If necessary, an external supervisor/mediator can be used. If the inappropriate behaviour is directed at the convener of the working group, the Zodiak contact person and, if necessary, an external mediator should be contacted.
- 8)** If the convener of the working group is not able, for one reason or another, to take responsibility of the situation, the responsibility for resolving the situation will fall to the the co-production partner/employer of the working group. If necessary, Zodiak will support the process of resolving the situation.
- 9)** If the background organisation is unable to resolve the situation, a notification procedure will follow.
- 10)** The notification procedure means that a working group member or working group members together prepare a written description based on examples of the inappropriate behaviour taken place in the work community. The written description is sent to the convenor of the working group, Zodiak, the Regional State Administrative Agency, the Trade Union for Theatre and Media Finland (Teme) lawyer and the main funding bodies.

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SAFER SPACE GUIDELINES AT ZODIAK

- Everyone must be treated with respect.
- No assumption should be made on anyone's gender, sexuality, background, or ability to function.
- Everyone has the right to physical safety.
- Everyone has the same right to speak and act but also the duty to consider others.
- Delicate themes should be treated with respect. For some of us, they may be very personal matters.
- Each of us is responsible for building an atmosphere of safety together.
- Performances and artistic processes may sometimes involve subject matters that may feel unpleasant or hurtful. One of the tasks of art is to make us face and deal with even the unkind matters.
 - > If as an audience member you wish to avoid, for instance, certain subjects or means of staging, you can contact Zodiak to inquire more detailed information about the content of the works.
 - > If an issue that is difficult to you is dealt with in a rehearsal situation or work topic, it is a good idea to open this in your working group so that the matter can be processed and safe working methods can be agreed upon together.

In case you encounter problematic situations, please let your director/instructor or the Zodiak personnel know; in relation to courses and workshops producer Elina Hauta-aho, in relation to performance productions producer Varpu Nieminen. Emails firstname.lastname@zodiak.fi