



Complaints Procedure

(c) Institute for Social Value 2025. Not to be reproduced without permission. All rights reserved.

Created: December 2023

Revised: June 2025

Next Review: June 2026

Who Can Make a Complaint?

This procedure applies to anyone engaging with The Institute for Social Value (ISV). Any individual, including members of the public, may submit a complaint regarding the services we provide.

What Is the Difference Between a Concern and a Complaint?

A concern is an expression of worry or doubt about something that feels important and for which reassurance is being sought.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction; however it is made, about an action taken or a failure to act.

We aim to resolve concerns as early as possible and encourage informal resolution where appropriate. However, we recognise that some issues may need to be dealt with formally.

If it is difficult to raise a concern with a particular member of staff, please contact their line manager. If the complaint involves a member of the Senior Leadership Team, it should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). If it involves the CEO, it should be referred to the Co-Chairs of the Board.

Raising a Concern or Making a Complaint

You can raise a concern or complaint in person, in writing or by telephone. A third party may also do so on your behalf with your permission.

- Concerns should first be directed to the first level of seniority – the relevant line manager, the CEO or the Co-Chairs of the Board
- Complaints about staff (other than line managers) should go to the line manager.
- Complaints about the Senior Leadership Team should be sent to the CEO.
- Complaints about the CEO should be directed to the Board.
- Complaints about the Board, an individual director, or a volunteer or contractor should be addressed to the CEO.

Please mark written complaints as “Private and Confidential”.

If adjustments are required to support you in making a complaint, such as alternative formats or accessible meeting arrangements, please let us know.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will not usually be investigated unless the Board, the CEO or relevant manager decides that the issue raised warrants further examination.

Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

ISV treats all complaints seriously and aims to respond fairly and respectfully. However, we will take appropriate action to protect our staff, volunteers and contractors from behaviour that is abusive, threatening or unreasonable.

We may consider a complaint to be unreasonable if the complainant:

- Refuses to clearly state the complaint or desired outcome.
- Refuses to engage with the investigation process.
- Repeatedly changes the complaint or introduces irrelevant details.
- Seeks to have staff, volunteers or contractors removed without justification.
- Rejects evidence and findings from previous investigations.

- Makes excessive demands on staff time.
- Acts in a malicious, aggressive or discriminatory way.
- Uses social media or other platforms to share unsubstantiated or damaging claims.

If needed, the CEO or Co-Chairs of the Board or their proxy will contact the complainant to explain that their behaviour is considered unreasonable and request that it stops.

Timeframe for Complaints

Complaints should be made within three months of the event in question or the last in a series of related incidents. Exceptions may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

If legal proceedings begin in relation to the matter, the complaints process may be paused until those proceedings conclude.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage, ISV will seek to resolve complaints fairly. Where appropriate, we may offer:

- An explanation or apology.
- An acknowledgement that things could have been handled differently.
- A commitment to review or revise our procedures.
- An outline of steps we will take to prevent recurrence.

If you withdraw a complaint, we ask that you confirm this in writing.

Stage One: Initial Complaint

Formal complaints should be submitted to the relevant line manager, the CEO or the Co-Chairs of the Board.

This can be done in writing, by phone or in person.

- Acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days.
- We will clarify the nature of the complaint and ask what outcome is desired.
- We may interview those involved, with the option for them to bring someone for support.

- A written response will be provided within 30 working days. If this is not possible, we will provide an update with a revised timeline.

The response will include findings and actions taken. If the complainant is not satisfied, they may escalate to Stage Two.

Stage Two: Review by the Board's Complaints Committee

If the matter is not resolved at Stage One, the complainant can request a review by a Complaints Committee made up of three impartial directors.

- Requests must be submitted within 20 working days of receiving the Stage One response.
- The committee will aim to meet within 30 working days. If this is not possible, we will advise of a revised date.
- If a complainant declines three proposed meeting dates without a good reason, the meeting will proceed in their absence, using written submissions.

The committee may choose to review the complaint through written representations or at a meeting. The complainant may bring a supporter, such as a friend or relative. Legal representation is not usually necessary but may be permitted in specific circumstances.

Media representatives are not permitted to attend.

At least 10 working days before the meeting, we will:

- Confirm the date, time and venue (ensuring it is accessible).
- Request any further written materials.
- Share relevant documents at least 5 working days before the meeting.

Electronic recordings of meetings are not permitted unless required for accessibility.

Consent must be gained in advance.

The committee will review the evidence and may:

- Uphold the complaint in full or in part.
- Dismiss the complaint in full or in part.

If upheld, the committee will:

- Recommend steps to resolve the issue.
- Suggest changes to prevent similar concerns in future.

A full written decision, with rationale and any actions to be taken, will be issued. This decision is final within the ISV complaints process.

Relevant contacts are:

Member Success Director, Eimear Davis: eimear.davis@socialvalueuk.org

Operations Director, Ana-Maria Iliescu: ana-maria@socialvalueuk.org

CEO, Isabelle Parasram OBE: isabelle.parasram@socialvalueuk.org

Co-Chairs of the Board, Fran Boorman and Penny Anderson: fran@goal17.global and penny.anderson@akerlof.co.uk