

Grievance Policy

Introduction

The Gold Standard is committed to the open, transparent and fair resolution of all allegations and complaints received against the projects we certify, or against the organisation itself. A stakeholder who has evidence of wrongdoing by a project is strongly encouraged to file a grievance against the project. Stakeholders who believe The Gold Standard has not acted in accordance with its core principles of transparency, conservativeness, and local community engagement are also strongly encouraged to file a grievance.

Filing a Grievance

Any stakeholder may submit a grievance in the form of a written letter to The Gold Standard at anytime. Such letters must include the following information:

- Name, organisation and contact details (email and telephone/skype) of the stakeholder
- Details of the grievance including:
 - Timing of grievance/complaint
 - Nature of grievance and perceived impact
 - Supporting evidence and documentation
- Declaration of any potential or perceived conflict of interest
- Any request for confidentiality/anonymity of complainant with reasons
- Declaration that information being provided is true, accurate and made in good faith

Examples of supporting evidence may include correspondence, such emails or letters, research studies, or letters of support from other stakeholders. Grievance letters can be addressed to Marion Verles, CEO of The Gold Standard Foundation, and sent to grievance@goldstandard.org with the subject line "Grievance Submission to The Gold Standard." The Gold Standard will respond in writing within thirty (30) days.

Investigation

Following the receipt of a valid grievance, The Gold Standard will conduct a desk review to determine the extent of the alleged breach of The Gold Standard Requirements. If The Gold Standard determines, in its sole discretion, that an investigation is required, then The Gold Standard will produce a written investigation plan. The investigation plan will include, but not be limited to, the scope of the investigation, a list of potential other stakeholders to be queried, and the timeline for resolution. A project developer has the right to appeal the outcome of an investigation by notifying the Gold Standard that it would like to do so within 30 days of receiving the investigation findings.

Publication

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Within thirty (30) days of the receipt of a grievance, The Gold Standard will publish the grievance and any associated supporting evidence or documentation on its website, unless the stakeholder has requested confidentiality. The Gold Standard will subsequently publish any additional records that become associated with the grievance, including, but not limited to, The Gold Standard's written response to the grievance, the investigation plan, and the resolution.