

EFB Ethical Codex for the cooperation with companies

Adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the European Federation of Green Roof and Living Wall Associations (EFB)

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Approved by: EFB Board

Version: 1.2

Introduction:

The European Federation of Green Roof and Living Wall Associations (hereafter also “Federation” or “EFB”) is a non-profit association whose purpose, under §2 of its statutes, is to promote the greening of buildings in Europe. EFB pursues an aim of general public interest in the fields of the environment and climate action, and its activities are not for profit (§3 of the statutes).

EFB cooperates with companies and accepts sponsorship for defined activities. This Codex sets out the rules that govern such cooperation. Its purpose is to ensure that external support strengthens EFB's ability to pursue its statutory purpose and never influences the substance of its work. It applies to all financial and in-kind relationships between EFB and commercial entities, including sponsorship, partnership, paid services and joint activities.

EFB has no company members. Under §4 of its statutes only associations, federations and comparable organisations may be members. Companies supporting EFB are supporters, not members, and hold no position in the Federation's governance.

1. Independence and impartiality

1.1. EFB will maintain independence and impartiality in its decision-making processes, regardless of any financial or sponsorship relationships with companies.

1.2. The selection of partners, service providers, or sponsors will be based on their alignment with our Federation's mission, values, and goals, as well as their commitment to sustainable practices.

1.3. EFB will not accept funding or support that is conditional, expressly or by implication, on EFB adopting a particular position, reaching a particular finding, or making a particular recommendation.

2. Editorial and policy independence

2.1. EFB's publications, technical guidance, position papers and responses to public consultations are developed and approved solely by EFB's own bodies and staff. No supporting company has any right of approval, prior review or veto over their content.

2.2. EFB's policy positions are determined by its statutory purpose and by the evidence available to it. They are not determined by the commercial interests of supporting companies.

2.3. Where a company contributes technical information, data or a practical example to an EFB output, that contribution is subject to the same review as any other and is attributed transparently.

2.4. In EFB's public knowledge formats, including webinars, sponsorship does not entitle a sponsor to present commercial promotion. Where a sponsor proposes a speaker, that contribution is subject to the same editorial requirements as every other contribution: it must address the announced topic and present a practical implementation example. EFB selects and approves all speakers and all content.

3. No governance rights

3.1. Financial or in-kind support confers no membership, no voting right, no seat on any EFB body, and no role in the election of EFB's Board.

3.2. Supporting companies have no standing in decisions on EFB's work programme, budget, publications or policy positions.

3.3. EFB does not offer, and will not create, any category of paid access to its governance or to its policy decision-making for the companies.

4. Transparency and disclosure

4.1. EFB will provide clear and transparent information about the Federation's activities, objectives and the services it offers to companies.

4.2. All financial transactions, sponsorships and partnerships will be accurately documented and recorded, in accordance with applicable law and with EFB's financial procedures.

4.3. Where an EFB output was produced with the support of a named company, that support is disclosed in the output itself.

4.4. EFB's rates for sponsorship, partnership and paid services are published and applied uniformly.

5. Limits and monitoring

5.1. The Executive Board monitors EFB's income by source and reviews it at least annually.

5.2. If total company income exceeds 25% of EFB's total annual income, the Executive Board must review the relationship and report its assessment to the Annual General Meeting.

5.3. EFB will not enter into a relationship that would make the Federation financially dependent on a single commercial supporter.

6. Acceptance procedure and conflicts of interest

6.1. Proposed cooperation with a company is assessed against this Codex before acceptance. Cooperation up to €5,000 per year is decided by the Executive Board; above that threshold, by the Board.

6.2. Any potential conflict of interest between the Federation and a partnering company will be disclosed promptly and addressed impartially.

6.3. EFB's decisions and activities will not be influenced by the personal interests or affiliations of individual Board members, staff or volunteers.

6.4. A Board member, staff member or volunteer with a personal or professional interest in a proposed cooperation must declare it and takes no part in the decision, consistent with §12.5 of the statutes.

6.5. A record is kept of decisions taken under this section.

7. Integrity and professionalism

7.1. EFB and its representatives will conduct themselves with integrity, professionalism, and ethical behavior in all interactions with partnering companies.

7.2. We will provide high-quality services, reliable information, and expertise based on the best available scientific knowledge and industry standards.

8. Collaboration and communication

8.1. Collaboration with companies will be based on shared goals, mutual respect and open communication.

8.2. EFB welcomes feedback from partnering companies on the design and delivery of its services, events and communication formats. This does not extend to EFB's policy positions, technical guidance or consultation responses, which are governed by section 2.

9. Refusal and termination

9.1. EFB may decline any proposed cooperation without stating reasons.

9.2. EFB will not accept support from a company whose core activities are incompatible with the Federation's environmental purpose, or where acceptance would create a reputational or independence risk that cannot be managed.

9.3. Where a supporter acts in breach of this Codex, EFB may terminate the relationship, withdraw the associated visibility and, where appropriate, return the corresponding funds.

10. Environmental and social responsibility

10.1. EFB will prioritize environmental sustainability and social responsibility in its activities and collaborations with companies.

10.2. We will encourage partnering companies to adopt environmentally friendly practices, promote sustainability, and contribute positively to local communities.

11. Compliance with laws and regulations

11.1. EFB and partnering companies will comply with all applicable laws, regulations and standards relating to the provision of services and the conduct of activities.

11.2. EFB will take appropriate measures to ensure compliance with legal requirements and ethical principles.

12. Application and review

12.1. This Codex applies to all EFB bodies, staff, and to member associations acting on EFB's behalf.

12.2. It is reviewed by the Executive Board at least every four years, and whenever EFB's funding structure changes materially.

12.3. It is published on EFB's website and provided to every company entering into cooperation with the Federation.

By embracing and adhering to this Ethical Codex, EFB seeks to establish a solid foundation for partnerships with companies that share our commitment to sustainability, environmental responsibility, and professional integrity.