Center for Scientific Knowledge (CSK)

A not-for-profit research organisation

Policy Against Sexual Harassment

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Table of contents

Foreword 1
Abbreviations and acronyms 2
1.0 Preliminary provisions 3
2.0 Definition of sexual harassment 3
Consent and workplace relationships 5
3.0 Preamble 5
4.0 Rationale 5
5.0 Policy objectives 6
6.0 Roles and responsibilities 6
7.0 Prevention and awareness 7
8.0 Procedure for resolving complaints 7
8.1 The Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH) 7
8.2 Initial resolution 8
8.3 Reporting a concern 8
8.4 Interim measures 9
8.5 Formal complaints 9
8.6 Appeals 10
9.0 Disciplinary action 10
10.0 Confidentiality and records 10
11.0 False and malicious accusations 11
12.0 Retaliation 11
13.0 External avenues and conflicts of interest 11
14.0 Monitoring and review 11
15.0 Concluding remarks 12
Approval and version history 13

Foreword

The Center for Scientific Knowledge (CSK) will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form. As a not-for-profit research organisation, CSK exists to generate and share knowledge for the public good. That mission depends on a working environment where every person is safe, respected and free to do their best work.

Sexual harassment demeans the people it targets and undermines the integrity of research. It drives talented people out of science, silences junior colleagues and damages relationships with partners, funders and research participants. Research settings carry particular risks: steep hierarchies between principal investigators and junior staff, isolated laboratories and field sites, travel, and close work with communities and participants.

Adopting a policy is one step; living by it is another. This policy will succeed only if everyone at CSK knows it exists, understands it and takes responsibility for upholding it. Managers and research leads in particular must model respectful behaviour and act promptly when concerns are raised. I ask every member of the CSK community to commit to this policy so that all of us can realise our full potential.

Salum Mshamu

Executive Director

Dar es salaam, November, 2026

Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
CASH	Committee Against Sexual Harassment
CSK	Center for Scientific Knowledge
ED	Executive Director
HR	Human Resources
PASH	Policy Against Sexual Harassment
PI	Principal Investigator

1.0 Preliminary provisions

1.1 This policy may be cited as the 'Policy Against Sexual Harassment' (PASH) of the Center for Scientific Knowledge (CSK).

1.2 This policy comes into operation on the date it is approved by the CSK Board of Directors.

1.3 This policy applies to the Board, management, staff and associates of CSK. It covers conduct on CSK premises and anywhere CSK business takes place, including field sites, conferences, travel, CSK-organised social events and online or electronic communication.

1.4 In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

- **"Advisor"** means a person designated under section 8.3 to receive concerns, support the complainant and, where appropriate, facilitate informal resolution.
- **"Associate"** means any person engaged in CSK activities who is not staff, including visiting and collaborating researchers, fellows, interns, students on placement, volunteers, consultants, contractors, field enumerators and employees of partner organisations working on CSK projects.
- **"Board"** means the Board of Directors (or Trustees) of CSK.
- **"Complainant"** means a person who raises a concern or complaint of sexual harassment under this policy.
- **"CSK community"** means the Board, staff and associates of CSK together.
- **"Employer"** means CSK, acting through its Board and the Executive Director.
- **"Partner Organisation"** means a university, research institution, funder, government agency or community organisation with which CSK has a working relationship.
- **"Policy"** means this CSK Policy Against Sexual Harassment.
- **"Research Participant"** means any person who takes part in, or is approached to take part in, a CSK study, including members of communities where CSK conducts fieldwork.
- **"Respondent"** means a person alleged to have sexually harassed another person.
- **"Staff"** means any person employed by CSK, whether full-time, part-time, fixed-term, temporary or casual.
- **"Third Party"** means a person who is neither staff nor an associate of CSK, such as a visitor, supplier or member of the public, who harasses or is harassed by a member of the CSK community.

2.0 Definition of sexual harassment

2.1 For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours, or other verbal, non-verbal, written, electronic or physical conduct of a sexual nature that:

- is made, explicitly or implicitly, a condition of a person's employment, engagement, pay, promotion, contract renewal, authorship, access to data or equipment, references or any other opportunity at CSK; or
- has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

2.2 **Unwelcome** is the key word. What matters is the impact of the conduct on the recipient, judged by how a reasonable person in the recipient's position would perceive it, not the intention of the person responsible. A single serious incident can be sexual harassment, as can a pattern of less serious conduct.

2.3 Sexual harassment can occur between people of the same or different sexes or genders, between colleagues of equal standing, and where the usual power relationship is reversed. It can be carried out by or against staff, associates, research participants and third parties.

2.4 It is not possible to list every circumstance that may amount to sexual harassment. The following are examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on all the circumstances, including the severity and frequency of the conduct:

(i) Unwanted physical contact, such as touching, patting, pinching, brushing against, hugging, kissing or blocking a person's way.

(ii) Demanding or requesting sexual favours, directly or by implication, in exchange for employment, pay, promotion, contract renewal, authorship, grant or project roles, data access, references or any other benefit; or threatening a detriment if refused.

(iii) Persistent unwanted invitations or attention of a sexual or romantic nature, including after a consensual relationship has ended.

(iv) Sexual jokes, innuendo, sexually explicit compliments, suggestive noises, leering or wolf-whistling.

(v) Unwanted comments about a person's body, appearance, sex life, sexual orientation or gender identity.

(vi) Displaying, sending or sharing sexually explicit images, videos, messages or other material, whether physically or through email, messaging apps, social media or collaboration tools.

(vii) Taking or sharing intimate images of a person without consent, or threatening to do so.

(viii) Stalking, or following a person, including at field sites, conferences or accommodation during work travel.

(ix) Any other unwelcome verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature, such as offensive gestures or staring, that creates an unprofessional or hostile working environment.

2.5 Sexual assault, rape and other sexual offences are criminal matters. They are also gross misconduct under this policy, and CSK will support a complainant who wishes to report them to the police (see section 13.0).

Consent and workplace relationships

2.6 This policy does not prohibit relationships of mutual, freely given consent between adults. However, consent cannot be freely given where one person has direct or indirect authority over the other's work, pay, evaluation, authorship or career.

2.7 Accordingly:

- A person with supervisory, managerial or evaluative authority over another (for example, a PI and a member of their research team, or a supervisor and an intern) must not start a sexual or romantic relationship with that person.
- Where such a relationship already exists or develops, the more senior person must promptly disclose it in confidence to HR so that reporting lines or evaluation responsibilities can be changed. Failure to disclose is a breach of this policy.
- Sexual or romantic relationships between CSK staff or associates and research participants in a study they are working on are prohibited, without exception.

3.0 Preamble

CSK is a not-for-profit research organisation committed to advancing scientific knowledge, building research capacity and sharing evidence for the benefit of society. It seeks to maintain a working environment free from sexual harassment.

The CSK community includes its Board, staff, visiting researchers, fellows, interns, consultants, partner organisations, research participants and the communities where CSK works. Every one of them is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. CSK is therefore committed to an environment in which staff and associates can realise their full potential, and in which research participants and communities can trust CSK and its people.

All members of the CSK community must understand that sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and they are required to abide by this policy.

4.0 Rationale

Sexual harassment is unacceptable. It harms the careers, well-being and safety of the people affected, and it undermines CSK's mission and reputation.

Research environments carry particular risks. Senior researchers often control funding, project roles, authorship, data access, references and contract renewals, all of which shape a junior colleague's career. Sexual harassment in such settings exploits the power that comes with a position. Fieldwork, travel, conferences and work in isolated laboratories or outside normal hours add further risks, as does close contact with research participants who may be vulnerable.

Although sexual harassment most often occurs where there is a power imbalance, CSK recognises that it can also occur between peers or where the usual power relationship is reversed, and between people of the same or different sexes.

CSK will not tolerate conduct that creates an intimidating or hostile environment for work, study, research or participation in any CSK activity. Funders and partner organisations also increasingly require research organisations to have robust safeguarding and anti-

harassment arrangements in place. This policy is adopted under “The Employment and Labour Relations Act, Cap. 366, Section 7” and in line with “The Penal Code, Cap. 16, Section 138D” of the laws of Tanzania where CSK operates.

5.0 Policy objectives

The overall objective of this policy is to define sexual harassment, set out how CSK will prevent it, and provide fair procedures for reporting and investigating complaints so that breaches are fully remedied. Specifically, the policy seeks to:

(i) Ensure that all staff and associates know and understand what constitutes sexual harassment.

(ii) Create and maintain a working and research environment free of sexual harassment.

(iii) Help CSK, its staff, associates and partners to prevent sexual harassment, including at field sites and during travel.

(iv) Protect research participants and communities from sexual harassment and exploitation by anyone acting on behalf of CSK.

(v) Make clear how CSK will manage any breach of this policy.

(vi) Provide effective, confidential and consistent procedures for handling complaints.

(vii) Promote monitoring, training and advocacy on the prevention of sexual harassment.

6.0 Roles and responsibilities

Who	Responsibilities
Board of Directors	Approves this policy; ensures CSK has the resources to implement it; receives annual anonymised reports; hears appeals against the CASH where the Executive Director is involved.
Executive Director	Owns the policy; appoints the CASH and Advisors; decides on disciplinary action on the CASH’s recommendation; reports to the Board.
Managers, PIs and team leads	Model respectful conduct; make sure their teams know the policy; act promptly on concerns; include harassment risks in fieldwork and travel planning; never discourage a report.
HR	Maintains the policy and records; organises training; supports the CASH; includes the policy in induction and in contracts with associates.
All staff and associates	Comply with this policy; treat others with dignity; report or support others to report harassment they witness; co-operate with investigations.

Who	Responsibilities
Partner organisations and contractors	Are informed of this policy and required, through agreements with CSK, to uphold equivalent standards when working on CSK activities.

7.0 Prevention and awareness

7.1 CSK will take active steps to prevent sexual harassment, not only respond to it. In particular, CSK will:

(i) Give every new member of staff and associate a copy of this policy at induction and ask them to confirm in writing that they have read it.

(ii) Provide sexual harassment awareness training to all staff at least every two years, and additional training for managers, PIs, Advisors and CASH members.

(iii) Include this policy, or an equivalent standard, in employment contracts, consultancy agreements, collaboration agreements and sub-awards.

(iv) Assess harassment and safeguarding risks when planning fieldwork, travel, conferences and lone or after-hours work, and put mitigations in place (for example, safe accommodation, buddy systems and check-in arrangements).

(v) Brief research teams on appropriate conduct with research participants and communities, and give participants a way to raise concerns that does not go through the research team.

(vi) Display information on how to report harassment in CSK offices, on the intranet and at field sites.

7.2 Within 12 months of this policy coming into force, CSK will carry out a confidential baseline survey of staff and associates on their experience of sexual harassment. The results will inform training and be used to measure progress at each policy review.

8.0 Procedure for resolving complaints

8.1 The Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH)

8.1.1 CSK shall establish a standing Committee Against Sexual Harassment, composed of:

(i) A senior manager appointed by the Executive Director, who shall be the Chairperson;

(ii) The Head of HR, who shall be the Secretary;

(iii) CSK's Legal Officer or external legal adviser;

(iv) A member of the research staff;

(v) A member of the operations or administrative staff;

(vi) A staff representative (or trade union representative, where applicable);

(vii) A representative of a partner organisation, where a case involves its personnel.

8.1.2 At least 40 percent of members other than the Chairperson shall be women, and CSK shall strive for gender balance whenever the Committee sits. Where CSK is too small to staff the Committee from within, the Executive Director may appoint a suitably qualified external member.

8.1.3 Any member who is a complainant, respondent or witness in a case, or who has a close personal or reporting relationship with either party, shall withdraw from that case.

8.2 Initial resolution

A person who believes they have experienced sexual harassment may, if they feel safe and comfortable doing so, tell the respondent directly that the behaviour is unwelcome and must stop. This step is optional. No one is required to confront the respondent, and a complainant may go straight to the procedures below at any time.

8.3 Reporting a concern

8.3.1 Concerns should be raised as soon as possible so that evidence is preserved and the complainant can be supported. However, CSK recognises the emotional impact of harassment, and there is no deadline: a delay in reporting will not prevent CSK from acting.

8.3.2 A concern may be raised with any of the following:

- A designated Advisor (CSK shall appoint at least two trained Advisors of different genders and publish their names and contacts);
- The complainant's line manager or PI, or any other manager;
- HR;
- The Executive Director, or the Board Chair if the concern involves the Executive Director;
- A confidential external reporting line or email address, provided by CSK.

8.3.3 Any manager who receives a concern must refer it to an Advisor or HR within two working days, with the complainant's knowledge. Witnesses and third parties may also raise concerns.

8.3.4 The person who receives the concern, or the Advisor to whom it is referred, becomes the Advisor on the matter. Discussions are confidential, and the Advisor keeps a brief written record. The Advisor will:

(i) Listen to the complainant and help them clarify whether the behaviour may amount to sexual harassment;

(ii) Explain the options available, including informal resolution, a formal complaint and external avenues, and the support CSK can offer;

(iii) Respect the complainant's choice of option, except where there is a serious risk to the complainant or others (see 8.3.5);

(iv) With the complainant's consent, inform the respondent of the concern and how the behaviour was experienced, and facilitate a resolution between the parties;

(v) Advise the respondent of the consequences if the matter is not resolved and becomes a formal complaint;

(vi) Take steps to prevent the behaviour recurring and to protect the complainant from retaliation;

(vii) Offer the complainant support, including counselling through CSK's employee assistance programme, whatever course of action they choose;

(viii) Keep a confidential record of the concern and its outcome for monitoring purposes.

8.3.5 Informal resolution or mediation will not be used where the allegation involves physical or sexual assault, a demand for sexual favours, a research participant or a minor, or where the complainant does not want it. In those cases, or where there is a serious risk to anyone's safety, CSK may proceed to a formal investigation even if the complainant does not wish to make a formal complaint, and will keep the complainant informed.

8.3.6 If the matter is not resolved and the complainant wishes to take further action, they may lodge a formal complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the CASH. The Advisor will help them do so if asked.

8.4 Interim measures

While a concern is being dealt with, the Executive Director may, on the advice of the CASH, take reasonable interim measures to protect the complainant and the integrity of the process. These may include changes to reporting lines, work location, schedules or field assignments, or placing the respondent on paid administrative leave. Interim measures are not a finding against anyone, and changes should not disadvantage the complainant.

8.5 Formal complaints

8.5.1 On receiving a formal complaint, the CASH shall within five working days acknowledge it in writing and appoint one or more investigators, who may be CASH members or a suitably qualified external investigator.

8.5.2 The investigation shall:

(i) Give the respondent a copy or written summary of the complaint and invite a written response within ten working days;

(ii) Interview the complainant, the respondent and any relevant witnesses, each of whom may be accompanied by a colleague or representative of their choice;

(iii) Obtain any other relevant evidence, such as messages, emails or records;

(iv) Make findings on the balance of probabilities (whether it is more likely than not that the conduct occurred).

8.5.3 The CASH shall share a summary of the findings with the complainant and the respondent and allow each to comment before reaching its conclusion.

8.5.4 The CASH shall reach a decision and communicate it in writing to both parties. The CASH should aim to conclude within 60 days of receiving the complaint, and will tell both parties if more time is needed and why.

8.5.5 Where the CASH finds that sexual harassment occurred, it shall recommend disciplinary or other action to the Executive Director under section 9.0.

8.6 Appeals

Either party may appeal the CASH's decision in writing to the Executive Director within ten working days of receiving it, on the grounds of procedural unfairness, new evidence or a disproportionate outcome. Where the Executive Director was involved in the case, the appeal is heard by the Board Chair or a panel of the Board. The appeal decision is final within CSK.

9.0 Disciplinary action

9.1 Sexual harassment is misconduct and, in serious cases, gross misconduct. Where a complaint against a member of staff is upheld, the Executive Director will take disciplinary action in accordance with the CSK Disciplinary Procedure and applicable employment law. Action will be proportionate to the seriousness of the conduct and may include:

- A written warning and a requirement to attend training;
- Removal from supervisory, PI or evaluative responsibilities;
- Demotion or transfer;
- Summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

9.2 Where the respondent is an associate, CSK may end their engagement, contract, fellowship or placement, bar them from CSK premises and activities, and inform their home institution or employer.

9.3 Where the respondent is a third party, CSK will take whatever steps are within its control to protect the complainant, which may include ending a business or collaboration relationship.

9.4 Where the respondent is a member of the Board, the matter will be handled by the Board in accordance with CSK's memorandum / articles of association.

9.5 CSK may also take remedial steps for the complainant, such as restoring lost opportunities, correcting authorship or providing additional support.

9.6 Where required by a grant agreement or the law, CSK will notify the relevant funder or regulator of substantiated findings.

10.0 Confidentiality and records

10.1 CSK will handle all concerns and complaints as confidentially as possible. Information will be shared only with those who need it to deal with the matter, support the people involved or meet legal obligations. Everyone involved, including witnesses, must keep the matter confidential.

10.2 CSK will keep a written record of each concern and complaint, how it was handled and its outcome. Records will be stored securely, separately from general personnel

files, in line with the applicable data protection law, and kept for six years after the matter closes.

10.3 Anonymised data, with names and identifying details removed, may be used to monitor sexual harassment at CSK and to report to the Board.

11.0 False and malicious accusations

11.1 A complaint that is made in good faith but not upheld is not a false accusation, and no action will be taken against the complainant.

11.2 Where an investigation finds clear evidence that a person knowingly made a false or malicious accusation of sexual harassment, that person will be subject to disciplinary action under section 9.0, and a record will be kept on their file.

12.0 Retaliation

12.1 Retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith, supports a complainant, acts as a witness or takes part in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Retaliation includes threats, exclusion, denial of opportunities, unfavourable assignments, negative references or any other detriment.

12.2 Retaliation is a serious breach of this policy and will be dealt with under section 9.0 in the same way as sexual harassment.

13.0 External avenues and conflicts of interest

13.1 Nothing in this policy prevents a complainant from seeking help or redress outside CSK at any stage, including from the police, a labour or employment tribunal, the courts or the national human rights or equality body. CSK will support a complainant who chooses to do so, and may pause its own process at the request of the police.

13.2 Where CSK becomes aware of conduct that may be a criminal offence, or of a risk to a child or vulnerable adult, it will act in accordance with the law and its Safeguarding Policy, including reporting to the authorities where required.

13.3 In any ongoing case, a complainant or respondent shall not act as Advisor, receive the formal complaint, investigate it or take part in deciding it.

14.0 Monitoring and review

14.1 HR will report to the Board each year on the number and type of concerns and complaints received, how long they took to resolve and their outcomes, in anonymised form, together with training completion rates.

14.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if the law changes, a funder requires it, or experience shows the policy is not working as intended. Staff and associates will be consulted on each review.

15.0 Concluding remarks

This policy protects everyone in the CSK community, on and off CSK premises, whenever they are engaged in CSK work or activities. CSK will ensure that Advisors, CASH members and managers are properly trained, including on diversity and on how power imbalances in research shape behaviour.

Every member of the CSK community is expected to know this policy, including what sexual harassment is, how to prevent it and how to report it. Its success depends on the commitment and accountability of everyone at CSK. Together, we can build a research environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and can do their best work.

Approval and version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Summary of changes
1.0	12 Nov 2026	CSK Board of Directors	First issue

Policy owner: Head of HR · Next review due: 11 Nov 2029