

## **Environmental & Sustainability Policy**

This policy applies to Real Ideas Organisation CIC (RIO) and its associated subsidiaries. We are committed to doing business ethically. We report against a triple bottom line – people, planet and profit – and as a social enterprise ourselves we try and deliver social value through our supply chain too, from catering services to web hosting, utilities for our buildings and even HR support.

### **RIO's Triple Bottom Line**

We are a creative social enterprise, applying imagination within a moral framework that equally values social, environmental and economic benefits. This is our triple bottom line. We invest all our profits back into our work with young people; providing them with the opportunity and support to make change happen using their own ideas, energy and ability.

The organisation is committed to the broad principles of sustainable development and social justice. This policy is designed to ensure that where ever possible our activities in support of our aims do not conflict with these broader principles.

### **Energy**

RIO is committed to maximising the efficient use of energy within the organisation by:

- Monitoring the use of appliances.
- Monitoring the temperature levels and ensuring the regular tuning of heating controls.
- To train and motivate staff in good fuel use behaviour, in keeping with acceptable standards and expectations.
- To have responsibility for bringing the attention of staff to poor fuel use behaviour.

The encouragement of good energy efficient behaviour by staff:

Using TRVs to control radiators.

- Switching off lights when not required.
- Switching off computers, VDU's printers and photocopiers when not in use, and making use of any automatic power-down facilities built into these.
- Reporting problems to the responsible person.
- Ensuring all staff switch off all lights, appliances, water boilers, computers and VDU's at night or when leaving their workstation for long periods.

RIO will seek to ensure that in any building used solely or partly by it:

- Electricity is bought on a green tariff
- Loft insulation is to standard levels.
- Windows and doors are draught proofed where possible.

- The central heating boiler is serviced each year and any replacement boiler will be SEDBUK “A” rated.
- The staff fridge is “A” rated, and any future appliances will be likewise
- We will monitor the use of renewable energy technologies and seek to install them when they become financially viable.

### **Transport and Communications**

All staff are reminded to consider if the proposed journey is necessary. Use of the co-operative on line intranet and phone conferencing is encouraged and RIO will monitor the development of communications technology such as video conferencing.

We will encourage the wise use of transport by the following measures:

#### **Use of Public Transport by Staff**

We encourage the use of public transport, particularly travel by train for long journeys. RIO will pay the full cost of travelling by public transport when on co-operative business in accordance with the RIO Expenses policy.

#### **Use of Private Vehicles by Staff**

Staff are encouraged to share car journeys where possible and are obliged to participate in local car share schemes where available (eg Co-Cars).

The use of private vehicles for long distance RIO journeys is discouraged unless:

- There is no reasonable public transport alternative.
- There is more than one member of staff travelling.
- There is heavy luggage to be transported.

#### **RIO Vehicles**

RIO vehicles require an environmental cost benefit analysis before purchase is approved and should be fuelled by the most techno-ecologically advanced fuels including LPG or petrol electric hybrid, fuel cell technology or if not appropriate be petrol fitted with a three-way catalytic converter and be of the smallest engine capacity and highest fuel efficiency available.

#### **Office Equipment**

RIO will adopt the following criteria in the purchase and disposal of office equipment

- Look for Energy Saving features when purchasing new PC's.
- Only purchase new Flat Screen VDU's which are Energy Star Compliant or better.
- Only purchase new laser printers which have built in shut down facilities when not in use.



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- Use refilled toner and ink cartridges.
- Use 'draft-mode' facilities on printers for draft copies of documents.
- Dispose of old PC's by selling them or giving them to "Computers for Charities" or other organisations for re-use.
- If no home can be found for old PC's investigating the recycling of the components and materials, and safe disposal of those which cannot be re-cycled or re-used.

## **Recycling and Conservation**

### **Use of Recycled Paper**

Recycled paper is specified for all the following uses:

Letterheads, folders, compliment slips, business cards, photocopy paper, printer paper, envelopes, toilet rolls, and as far as possible for all RIO reports.

Where this is not cost effective then paper sourced from sustainable forestry must be used.

### **Waste Management**

Where needed RIO pays for the collection of recyclable materials by Sita and encourages re-use and recycling by the following measures:

- All waste is appropriately sorted to aid recycling.
- Discarded paper with one clean side is used again.
- Paper used on both sides is binned separately for recycling.
- Plastic wrapping is separated and stored for separate recycling
- Printer cartridges are sent for recycling.
- Organic material (inc. tea bags) is separated for composting on site.

### **Water Conservation**

- Dripping taps are repaired as a matter of urgency
- Reduced flush toilets are in use on all co-operative premises

### **Materials**

RIO will apply an environmental audit to the choice of materials in use or on its premises. In general the policy is to choose materials in order of priority that are:

- Least damaging to people.
- Least damaging to the environment.
- Manufactured or produced locally.
- Re-used.
- Made from a recycled material.
- Made from sustainable resources.
- Supplied by companies with a published and rigorous environmental policy.



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### **Interior Furnishings**

- Cotton, Hessian, wool to be preferred over man-made fibres.
- Linoleum is preferred over vinyl based floor coverings.
- Preference should be given to carpets manufactured from recycled wool or coir.
- Underlay should be manufactured from recycled rubber.

### **Building Materials**

- No tropical hardwoods to be used in RIO buildings unless FSC accredited
- The maximum use to be made of UK sourced timber in future buildings.
- Recycled wood to be used in preference to chipboard and MDFB which contain formaldehyde glue.
- No materials using CFC's to be used in future buildings.
- Insulation materials to be made from recycled materials preferred over virgin raw material e.g. recycled paper loft insulation.
- Building blocks and plasterboard made from recycled wastes to be preferred over virgin excavated material.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Radiation Hazards**

RIO will use the following measures to reduce any potential radiation hazards to its staff or visitors:

- By ensuring any new VDU's are low radiation.
- By fitting filter screens to visual display terminals.
- By using screened ring main cable where possible.
- By checking buildings for radon.

#### **Indoor Pollution**

- All RIO buildings are designated as no smoking zones.
- Where possible photocopiers and laser printers will be sited away from working areas.
- RIO encourages the use of indoor plants to improve indoor air quality provided a staff member acts responsibility for their care.

### **Financial Management**

RIO will choose bankers, insurers etc who as far as possible act in harmony/accordance with best environmental and social practice. This will be checked by reference to publications such as 'Ethical Consumer'.

### **Organic food and food miles**

Staff are encouraged to purchase organic and/or locally produced food.



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### **Other Countries**

RIO explores ways of demonstrating solidarity with the less developed world such as purchasing appropriate products where possible: e.g. Fairtrade tea and coffee.

### **Monitoring, Audit & Review**

Monitoring of all activities arising from the implementation of the Environmental action plan will be done by the Head of Resourcing in collaboration with RIO staff.