

Responsible Business & Impact Policy

Version: 1.0

Date: August 2026

Review date: August 2027

Policy owner: Director, Empirica Research & Consulting Ltd

1. Our commitment

At Empirica, we believe that **doing good should be something we can demonstrate, not simply something we say.**

We are a small business, so we do not have the infrastructure of a large organisation. Even so, we want to be thoughtful about how we work, how we treat people, the impact we have and the responsibilities we take seriously.

This policy explains the principles that guide responsible practice at Empirica. It reflects where the business is now, while setting out commitments that will continue to matter as we grow.

We will review this policy annually and use what we learn to identify opportunities for improvement.

2. Fair pay and working conditions

Empirica is committed to fair and responsible employment practices.

The business currently has no employees. If Empirica employs staff or regularly contracts individuals in the future, we will ensure that they are paid at least the Real Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, where applicable.

When the Real Living Wage is updated, we will review our pay arrangements and make sure our approach remains fair and appropriate to the role and responsibilities involved.

We will not use zero-hours or other insecure contractual arrangements in a way that unfairly disadvantages workers.

3. Employee wellbeing

Empirica is committed to supporting physical and mental wellbeing through a flexible and respectful approach to work.

As a one-person organisation, the Director manages workload and working arrangements in a way that supports sustainable working and allows flexibility when health or personal circumstances require it.

If Empirica employs staff in the future, legitimate sickness will be treated fairly and respectfully. Employees will be encouraged to seek appropriate support and, where relevant, will be signposted to impartial sources of advice, including NHS services, charities and other specialist organisations.

Through our professional work with third-sector organisations, Empirica also has links with organisations and specialist services that may be useful for signposting where appropriate.

4. Employee voice and representation

Empirica believes people should have meaningful opportunities to raise concerns, make suggestions and contribute ideas about how the organisation works.

Empirica currently has one Director and no employees. As the organisation grows, employees will have direct access to senior management and will be able to raise concerns or suggestions respectfully and without fear of disadvantage.

Where appropriate, employees will also have access to a confidential route for raising concerns.

Feedback will be considered carefully and, where action is appropriate, Empirica will aim to explain what has been done in response.

5. Equality, diversity, inclusion and dignity at work

Empirica is committed to creating an inclusive working environment in which people are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

As Empirica grows and begins to recruit, we will seek to ensure that recruitment and selection processes are accessible, use clear and relevant criteria and are based on skills, experience and suitability rather than discriminatory factors.

We will seek to provide fair access to development opportunities and will consider reasonable adjustments where required.

Empirica has a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying and victimisation.

Concerns will be taken seriously, handled respectfully and, where possible, treated confidentially. Employees will be able to access, or be signposted to, appropriate independent advice and support, including organisations such as ACAS and relevant specialist organisations.

6. Environmental responsibility

Empirica is committed to understanding and reducing its environmental impact in a way that is realistic for the size and nature of the business.

As a small consultancy, our main environmental impacts are likely to relate to energy use, travel, digital working, procurement and the use of resources.

We will seek to:

- minimise unnecessary travel and use lower-impact travel options where practical;
- reduce unnecessary printing, waste and consumption of resources;
- use digital approaches where appropriate;

- consider environmental factors when selecting suppliers and purchasing goods and services; and
- identify opportunities to reduce our environmental impact as the business develops.

We will review our environmental practices annually and consider whether more formal measurement of our environmental footprint is appropriate.

We will avoid making unsupported environmental or net-zero claims and will be transparent about our progress and areas for improvement.

7. Responsible tax

Empirica is committed to responsible and transparent tax practice.

We will comply with applicable tax legislation, pay taxes when due and use tax allowances and reliefs only for their intended purpose.

We will maintain accurate financial records, provide relevant information to HMRC when required and cooperate constructively in resolving any tax queries or disputes.

Where appropriate, Empirica will seek professional advice to ensure that the business meets its tax obligations.

8. Commitment to clients

Empirica is committed to providing a professional, transparent and respectful service to clients.

We aim to:

- understand clients' needs and work within their circumstances and resources;
- communicate clearly and honestly;
- provide work that is proportionate, practical and useful;
- listen to and learn from client feedback; and
- take concerns seriously and seek to put things right where something has not gone as planned.

We welcome constructive feedback, including negative feedback, because it helps us learn and improve.

Empirica will take the confidentiality and security of information shared by clients and stakeholders seriously and will maintain appropriate data protection and cyber-security practices.

9. Data protection and cyber resilience

Empirica recognises its responsibility to protect personal, confidential and commercially sensitive information.

We will take proportionate measures to protect information, including:

- using strong and unique passwords;
- using multi-factor authentication where available;
- keeping devices and software appropriately updated;
- limiting access to information to those who need it;
- using appropriate secure storage and sharing arrangements;
- maintaining appropriate backups; and
- responding appropriately to data or cyber-security incidents.

Empirica will review its data protection and cyber-security arrangements as the business develops.

10. Ethical sourcing

Empirica seeks to work with suppliers and partners whose practices align with our values and responsible business principles.

When selecting suppliers, we will consider relevant social, environmental and ethical factors alongside quality, suitability and cost.

Where relevant and proportionate, we will seek alignment with the principles of the **Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code** and appropriate animal welfare standards.

Given the size and nature of Empirica, our supply chain is currently relatively limited and primarily consists of professional, digital and business services.

As the business grows, we will review our supply chain and strengthen our approach to ethical sourcing where appropriate.

11. Prompt payment to suppliers

Empirica recognises that prompt payment is particularly important to small businesses and independent professionals, where delayed payment can have a significant impact on cash flow.

We are committed to paying suppliers promptly and within agreed payment terms.

Our aim is to pay suppliers within **30 days** of receiving a valid invoice and we will not exceed **60 days**.

Where we work with small suppliers, including suppliers with 50 employees or fewer, we will prioritise payment within 30 days.

12. Responsible business and impact

Empirica's wider purpose is to help organisations understand, evidence and communicate the difference they make.

We apply the same principle to our own business.

We will seek to:

Understand → Evidence → Improve

We will regularly consider:

- what we are trying to achieve;
- the impact our activities have;
- what evidence we have;
- what we have learned; and
- what we could do differently or better.

We will avoid making claims about our social, environmental or business impact that cannot reasonably be supported by evidence.

As Empirica grows, we will use this approach to review and strengthen our responsible business practices.

13. Review and accountability

This policy is owned by the Director of Empirica Research & Consulting Ltd.

It will be reviewed at least annually and updated when there are significant changes to the organisation, its activities or relevant legislation and standards.

The review will consider:

What are we doing?

What evidence do we have?

What have we learned?

What should we improve?

The most recent version of this policy will be retained within Empirica's business records.

Our approach to continuous improvement

Rather than treating this policy as a statement that sits in a folder, Empirica will use it as a prompt to review its own practice.

At least annually, we will ask:

LISTEN

What are clients, collaborators and other stakeholders telling us?

UNDERSTAND

What does this tell us about how Empirica is operating?

EVIDENCE

What information can we use to understand whether our commitments are being met?

IMPROVE

What is one thing we could do better?