

## **Code of Conduct**

### **de'ge'pol – German Association of Political Consultants**

#### **Preamble**

Political consultants play a mediatory role between economics, politics and the public. Hence, they face a double challenge: Maintaining the interest of the client and respecting the common good when implementing the client's interests.

The constant transition between the fields of politics, economics and the public sphere thus demands a particular sensitivity and transparency from political consultants while carrying out their work.

Against this background, codes of conduct have already been adopted by the Society of European Affairs Professionals (SEAP), based in Brussels, the American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) and the British Association of Professional Political Consultants (APPC).

In light of the ongoing professionalization of political consulting and in order to send a clear signal of transparency to the public and to clients from the spheres of politics, economics and civil society, the German Association of Political Consultants e.V. (de'ge'pol) has produced a distinct code of conduct. Members of de'ge'pol are professionals from the fields of public affairs, policy consulting and campaign consulting.

#### **The code of conduct**

Political consulting is an integral part of the democratic process. In pursuance of their vocation political consultants respect and advance the principles of international and national law, in particular the fundamental principles of freedom of speech, the right to information, independence of the media and the protection of individual rights.

Integrity and respect for the democratic rules of the game as well as for the free and democratic constitutional order form the basis of a contest of ideas and concepts. By endorsing these values, members of de'ge'pol promote the professionalization of political consulting.

Members of de'ge'pol commit themselves to upholding the following basic principles in carrying out their professional activities:

## **Truthfulness**

A commitment to being truthful to clients, political institutions, the media and the public: de'ge'pol members work solely with information that, to the best of their knowledge, reflects the truth.

Close attention is paid to ensuring transparency and avoiding misinformation resulting from false information. In carrying out their professional activities, they disclose the name of their client as long as they are working on their behalf.

## **Discretion**

A commitment to discretion: Confidential information from current or previous clients is only to be passed on with their express consent.

Furthermore, de'ge'pol members are careful to avoid potential professional conflicts of interest that result from simultaneously representing directly irreconcilable interests. Clients should be informed about possible conflicts of interest.

## **No financial incentives**

In communicating and realising both their or their client's interests, de'ge'pol members do not exert any dishonest or illegal influences, especially not via direct or indirect financial incentives.

## **No discrimination**

In their professional activities de'ge'pol members strictly rebuff any form of racist, sexist, religious or other forms of discrimination and refrain from taking part in them.

## **Respect**

de'ge'pol members treat clients and colleagues respectfully and are committed to respecting their professional and personal reputations.

## **Clear separation**

While consulting and representing their clients, de'ge'pol members observe a strict separation between their professional activities and their political office, mandate or function.

## **No disrepute to the profession**

Each member ensures that their actions will not bring into disrepute the community of political consultants, political consultancy as a whole or the public image of the de'ge'pol.

By joining the de'ge'pol, its members have accepted and endorsed this Code of Conduct and seek to promote its abidance, circulation and further development.