

# COMIC RELIEF'S STATEMENT ON MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## INTRODUCTION

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires certain large UK organisations to publish an annual statement on the steps they are taking to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in their operations and supply chains.

Comic Relief's annual turnover is below the Act's reporting threshold. Although we are not legally obliged to make a statement, we do so voluntarily to demonstrate our commitment to ethical trading principles and to ensure our operations and supply chains are free from modern slavery and human trafficking.

## ABOUT US

Comic Relief is a UK charity which uses the power of humour and popular culture to engage people to help others, and raises money to support organisations working towards a just world, free from poverty. We raise funds in a number of ways, including through our annual Red Nose Day, Sport Relief and winter campaigns; fundraising; events; corporate partnerships; and sales of merchandise.

With the money raised, we fund and invest in organisations across the UK and around the world. Our funding strategy is set out here:

<https://www.comicrelief.com/funding/funding-strategy>.

## STRUCTURE

The Comic Relief group comprises three entities – Charity Projects, Comic Relief Limited and Brand Relief Limited. Charity Projects is the parent entity, a registered company limited by guarantee in England & Wales, and a registered charity with the Charity Commission in England & Wales as well as the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Comic Relief Limited and Brand Relief Limited are private companies limited by shares and Comic Relief Limited is a wholly owned trading subsidiary.

We are headquartered in London and employed an average of 147 staff members in 2023/24. We also work with contractors, consultants and others to deliver our work. To find out more about the team leading Comic Relief, please visit:

<https://www.comicrelief.com/about-comic-relief/meet-the-team/>.

## OUR OPERATIONS

In our own operations:

- We are registered and operate as a Real Living Wage employer and encourage others to sign up to this initiative. This is a UK wage rate that is voluntarily paid by certain organisations such as Comic Relief, which is higher than the minimum wage, and endeavours to enable employees to meet actual living costs in the UK. When conducting procurement tenders, one of the criteria we score against is whether a bidder has the Real Living Wage accreditation.
- Over the past year, we have rolled out a number of policies and processes to further our continued commitment to high ethical standards, including an Ethical Framework, which sets out the guiding principles in order to help us:
  - influence and shape our current policies, procedures and relationships including our decision-making processes;
  - ensure consistency and alignment across all aspects of our organisation; and
  - establish a set of core principles which support our goal to drive positive change through the power of entertainment.
- We provide training to our staff, and where appropriate, our contractors, on our key policies.
- We have safeguarding policies and processes in place to prevent child labour and safeguard our employees, beneficiaries, suppliers and partners. This includes provisions in our agreements with third parties.
- We have clear reporting concerns and whistleblowing processes for our staff, contractors and any third parties. To help fight against corruption, we also have a detailed Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy in place.
- For our ongoing and upcoming projects and commitments, see 'further steps' below.

## WORKING WITH THIRD PARTIES

Our Ethical Sourcing Policy demonstrates our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in our business relationships, and our commitment to act through effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in our supply chain. We recognise that our highest point of risk in our merchandise sourcing is in the production of branded merchandise.

**Corporate partners** – the majority of our branded merchandise is manufactured by our corporate partners, who share our commitment to ending and eliminating slavery and human trafficking in their supply chains. These partners regularly audit their processes, practices, and standards, including those parts of the supply chain involved in the manufacture of our branded merchandise to ensure they comply with our Ethical Sourcing Policy, and we review such audits with our partners to agree corrective actions where necessary.

**Non-partners** – when we engage suppliers for branded merchandise directly, we undertake due diligence in advance following our Ethical Sourcing Guide. We also strive to ensure they have a contractual commitment to comply with our Ethical Sourcing Policy and to work in accordance with the Act.

**Other suppliers** – in our agreements for other goods and services, where possible, we contractually require our suppliers to comply with our Ethical Sourcing Policy and with the law, which includes the Act.

**Due diligence** – to identify and monitor the risk of slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain, new suppliers are reviewed internally and then by our Ethical Sourcing Consultants, highlighting any recommendations. Our key corporate partners and suppliers carry out audits in the supply chain throughout the year.

## **FURTHER STEPS**

We are currently:

- updating our Ethical Sourcing Policy and Guide, both of which are due to be rolled out in early 2024/25, to ensure they are up to date and meet best practice when it comes to ethical sourcing and merchandise;
- testing a draft Partnerships Screening Policy and risk assessment tool to help us create and roll out a final version in mid-2024/25. This policy will help us ensure we continue to work with partners, trusts, foundations, institutions, donors and fundraisers who are aligned with our objectives (and there will be some crossover with our Ethical Sourcing Policy); and
- in the midst of an equitable story telling project to ensure our storytelling practices are equitable, safeguard our contributors and are representative of the communities we serve.

We will continue to review and improve our policies and processes to ensure they continue to meet the commitments set out in this statement.

Our financial year end is 31 July 2024.

[Download a PDF of the statement here.](#)

This statement is made voluntarily and was approved by the Board of Trustees of Comic Relief and signed by Matt Hyde.

SIGNED: *Matt Hyde*  
Matt Hyde (Oct 24, 2024 15:14 GMT+1)

DATE: **24/10/2024**