

Document Management & Data Retention Policy

Preamble

SFCT has up to twelve Directors plus a Chief Executive Officer; Administrator; Project Co-ordinator; Finance Officer; Bookkeeper; Fundraising and Development Officer; Marketing and Media Officer; Facilities Officer; and two cleaners. As well as internal liaison between Directors and contractor(s) we also liaise both with a wide range of third parties and with the general public. As a result, a great deal of documentation is produced and, in order to provide both clarity and security of communication, we have therefore created a Document Management System that will act as 'best practice' and as guidance for any new Directors voted on to the SFCT in the future. Good communication is at the heart of what we do and rather than leaving individual Directors to hold on to specific documents, we have created a centralised system that clarifies responsibilities, minimises the chances for any doubling up of documents and removes dubiety on what is official and what is not. This policy, in conjunction with its Data Protection Policy, sets out SFCT's commitment to ensuring that any documentation, personal data, including special category personal data, which SFCT processes, is carried out in compliance with data protection law.

General documents

Documents are introduced into SFCT from directors, suppliers, funders, contractors, members, the general public and possibly employees too. The SFCT main document repository is managed by the Administrator, and the most current documents are held at the Wildside Centre, and many are also posted on to the SFCT website. Other documents may be held by the Chairperson, Vice-Chair and/or Finance Director. All documents, be they paper, digital or emails, are the property of SFCT and may not be shared with any third party. The only exceptions are the forms expressly intended for wider use (i.e. grant application forms etc.) and any newsletters or email bulletins etc., which are more obviously produced for public consumption. Anything currently available on the public pages of the website are also exceptions. Documents will be stored in paper and/or digital form, including emails. Documents, paper and digital, will be kept for six years. Some documents such as the Financial Management document are essential to the running of SFCT and will never be deleted. Emails held under the Document repository may be deleted after a few months or as agreed with the Chairperson, Administrator and Finance Person.

Financial documents

The 'Finance person' may be the Finance Director, Finance Officer, Bookkeeper or any other Director or appropriately qualified accountant as approved by the Board. Financial management is ultimately the responsibility of the Chair. However, daily responsibility may be devolved to the Finance person. Full details of SFCT's Financial Management scheme are available within the Financial Management Policy document. Financial documents related to the Management Accounts, bank reconciliation and cashflow will be held by the Finance person. In their absence the documents will be held by the Administrator and/or the Chair. The Finance person is responsible for ensuring these documents are managed in good order such that they can be delivered to the Accountant for preparation of quarterly and/or annual accounts as appropriate.

Employment records

Employment records must be kept secure and protected against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage. As a result, SFCT has adopted practices and, with this Policy, a "Retention of Documents Guide" as attached. Employment records will often contain particularly sensitive information and will be maintained in accordance with SFCT's Data Protection Policy, this Policy and the Retention of Documents Guide.

Back up

All documents will be backed up either using a 'live drive' type of system or a disc/memory stick system as the Administrator/Finance person prefers. Any Director, but especially the Finance person, may share documents with the Administrator but all updated documents are to be returned to the Administrator's or Finance person's repository, as applicable, once the other parties have completed their use of them.

Emails and attachments

All SFCT Directors must use a SFCT-specific email address for all SFCT email communication. Any attachments to emails are the property of SFCT. SFCT Directors will not hold SFCT information unnecessarily on their home computers and they will return any documents, for which they have responsibility for updating or using for specific tasks to the Administrator, Chairperson and/or Finance person as applicable on completion of said tasks.

This policy was last reviewed on 1 December 2025 and will be reviewed every two years.