**BRIDGES GENERAL POLICIES MANUAL**

*Purpose of this Document*

This is the GENERAL POLICIES Manual for The Network of Community Entrepreneurs, DBA Bridges. It can and will be changed and amended as needed according to any changes in the laws of the State of California or the operations of Bridges.

The purpose of the General Policies Manual is to bring all team members with Bridges into a unity and trust as they serve through a common organization with a common reputation.

*Definitions*

**Bridge Leader**: A person who receives one or more services from Bridges. This person may be discerning to whom God has called him/her to love and serve, may be actively participating with people in a culture outside the existing church, or may be facilitating a community of people who seek to follow Jesus.

**Missionary Deputized Fundraiser**: A Bridge Leader (typically a contractor) or other professional (typically Bridges employee) who has been authorized by Bridges to raise funds on behalf of Bridges for a designated purpose such as a project with Bridges.

**Community**: An emerging or established Christ-following group as recognized by Bridges and as facilitated by a Bridge Leader.

**Assigned person(nel)**: Volunteers, contractors and/or staff members assigned to directly lead a Community and make disciples or to provide professional or administrative support services to the Bridges organization or group.

The name Network of Community Entrepreneurs, NCE, and Bridges all refer to the same corporation. Bridges is a DBA of NCE.

**ACTS Services**: These are the core services of Bridges: Assessment, Coaching, Training and/or Support.

***GENERAL POLICIES***

*Preparation*

Prior to becoming a missionary fundraiser for Bridges:

* A candidate for service with Bridges must complete a Placement Agreement and have it approved by either the Executive Director (aka Chief Catalyst), or his/her designee.
* They often submit a resume or short statement of their work history or educational history. Several contacts for recommendations may also be requested.
* They must also complete a background check such as Live Scan which includes fingerprinting.
* They must read and agree with the General Policies Manual including the separate non-discriminatory policy.
* They must read and agree with the Statement of Faith
* When the above process has been completed, they will receive an assignment and a start date to begin.
* If there are initial and fixed costs to begin an assignment or project, they must raise an agreed upon amount of money to open and begin their project or assignment account.
* They must complete a few training assignments including but not limited to an orientation meeting.

This process will be documented with signatures by the candidate and the appropriate supervisor.

A similar process is used for Communities desiring to affiliate with Bridges. The process for Communities will include identifying one or more persons in the group that will approve expenditures according to the procedures of Bridges and the approved budget for the Community.

*Statement of Faith*

 We who serve together in Bridges believe that:

1. Jesus Christ the Messiah is Savior and Lord.

2. Jesus was born, lived, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

3. Scripture is a trustworthy guide for faith and practice.

4. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God.

5. God is creator of all that exists.

6. God loves all peoples.

7. Every Christ following community is called into God’s mission to all peoples.

8. Every Christ following community is a part of the larger Church of Jesus Christ in the world.

9. Jesus will come again and fully reveal and establish the Kingdom of God in the world.

*Conflict of Interest:*

A “conflict of interest” occurs where a person is responsible for promoting the interest of Bridges and/or an affiliated organization at the same time he or she is involved in a competing personal interest (financial, business or personal).

All directors, trustees, officers, agents, and employees of Bridges and/or an affiliated organization shall disclose in writing all real or apparent conflict of interest that they discover or that have been brought to their attention in connection with Bridges and/or an affiliated organization’s activities.

Please review the Conflict of Interest Policy to find out more about what a real or apparent conflict of interest is and disclose any and all such relationships in writing.

*Harassment Policy:*

Please read and follow the Harassment Policy of Bridges. Failure to adhere to that Policy will be a cause for remedial action, disciplinary action, or dismissal from Bridges. If you have any questions about the meanings or stipulations in that Policy, please discuss them with the Executive Director (aka Chief Catalyst) or a member of the Board of Directors, or another authorized representative of Bridges. The Harassment Policy is available to you electronically with all of Bridges’ Policies in our cloud storage system. Ask your manager if you need access.

*Reporting and Leadership Structure*

As part of their assignment or project, assigned persons are directed first to their “supervisor.” The Bridge Leader’s supervisor will be specific in his/her Placement Agreement. Bridges employee supervisors will typically be another Bridges employee or contractor. The supervisor helps the assigned person adapt to their assignment, relationally integrate with the team, and strategically engage in the team’s ministry efforts. The supervisor tracks with the ongoing ministry efforts of each assigned person on the team. The assigned person openly shares what he/she is involved in and processes the effectiveness of those efforts. Typically on a monthly basis, the assigned person reports to their supervisor regarding praises, accomplishments, concerns, and goals. In matters of leadership, the assigned person first seeks input or approval from the team leader or other supervisor as appropriate. That supervisor will refer matters to the Executive Director when necessary. When the lesser channels have been tried or for any reason seem unopen, an assigned person may also contact the Chair of the Board of Directors for assistance in understanding policy implementation, for assistance with personal concerns, and/or conflict resolution. Because of our commitment to lifelong learning, Bridges strives to provide each assigned person with an annual developmental review initiated by the assigned person or their supervisor. The review evaluates the assigned person’s ministry profile, personal growth and health, and team dynamics. Input for the review comes from the assigned person, local Community leaders, and the assigned coach. The review process results in encouragements, suggestions, changes to the ministry assignment, growth opportunities, and/or further training elements that will help a Bridge Leader thrive on the field. During the first year of service, additional reviews may be conducted at the discretion of the supervisor.

*Training*

Maintaining a learning posture is a core value of Bridges. Participation in the Bridges ACTS services is strongly encouraged for all new personnel. A schedule will be developed for each assigned person with their supervisor during the first 3 months on an assignment. Reviews of training assignments will be required on an ongoing basis.

*Dress/Appearance*

Bridges has no strict policy dictating a team member’s appearance. Clothing and appearance should be appropriate for the cultural context of the assigned person with the goal that those we seek to serve would not be hindered in their faith journey by how we present ourselves.

*Smoking/Alcohol/Drugs*

Because of the cultural context in which many of our assigned personnel will work, Bridges allows the use of alcohol or tobacco. However, Biblical moderation must be maintained and addictive patterns of behavior should be avoided. Also, sensitivity to the social context must be considered. The assigned person should remain aware of how these freedoms could cause others to stumble deeper into vices. Whether or not to allow drinking and smoking at Community events on an assignment should be discussed as a team and with the Advisory Body. The team leader should make the final determination. Bridges strictly prohibits the use of nonprescription drugs of any kind, other than over-the-counter medication.

*Health Insurance*

Bridges requires that all assigned personnel carry medical health insurance. Bridges does not contribute toward medical benefits. Each assigned person raises the cost of their insurance plan in the course of the support raising efforts for their assignment.

Because Bridges recognizes that it may be a hardship for team members to meet out-of­-pocket deductible costs, all health care expenses incurred before meeting deductibles are eligible for reimbursement out of the assigned person’s project or a community support account. Please note that these reimbursements are considered taxable income.

***GENERAL FINANCIAL POLICIES***

Bridges is supported by individuals, churches, and foundations who partner with us to fulfill our mission. Bridges general operating budget is funded in this manner, as is the support of all assigned personnel. Bridges takes the stewardship of the resources God provides very seriously. Bridges abides by the standards of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), which ensures the highest standards of financial integrity for Christian organizations.

*Faith Mission Funding*

Bridges is a “faith mission”; that is, many assigned personnel are responsible for raising some or all of the financial support for their project and assignment. Persons with private sources of income may provide for their own expenses. The amount of financial support needed varies with the term, location, and personal needs of the missionary. Assigned personnel who are missionary fundraisers, whether Bridge leaders or other professional staff, must read and follow the Bridges Missionary Fundraising Policy.

*Personnel Placement Plan*

Bridge Leaders who are missionary fundraisers must execute a Placement Agreement with their supervisor. This Placement agreement plan is developed for the Bridge Leader in collaboration with their Supervisor (or the Executive Director of Bridges or his/her designee). The Placement agreement identifies the monthly support requirements and estimates the transition and up-front funding needs. The plan also establishes a financial package based on the assigned person’s assignment, location, housing needs, family status, and ministry experience.

Support plans may be reviewed upon request and adjustments made when necessary.

*Financial Disbursements*

A check is disbursed monthly to each assigned personnel based on the budget prepared and approved prior to assignment. The assigned person who is also a missionary fundraiser may receive less than allowed by the support plan because payments are made subject to funds being available in the support account.

The legal relationship of the Bridge Leader to Bridges is that of a contractor; Bridge Leaders who are U.S. citizens receive a 1099 after the end of each year for income tax reporting purposes. Employed staff receive W-2s for income tax reporting purposes.

*Support Account*

Each missionary fundraiser is assigned a support account in which donations and expenditures are recorded. Please review the Missionary Fundraising Policy; these funds are under the control of Bridges at all times and donors must be so advised.

It is suggested that support accounts maintain a minimum funding reserve of three months’ support needs. In order to maintain adequate funding, the assigned person may be required to take a leave from their assignment and focus on raising additional funds for support. Other steps may also be necessary if funding is insufficient.

As soon as all donations are processed for each month, a report showing the income and disbursements for the month and year to date is made available electronically to the assigned person. This report should be looked at carefully to determine if donors have increased, decreased, or missed a month.

Monthly “paystubs” will contain a breakdown of compensation (taxable) and expense reimbursements (non-taxable if the appropriate expense reimbursements were completed). These should also be read carefully and filed for future reference.

*Control and Ownership of Donated Funds*

In order to issue tax-deductible receipts, a nonprofit organization must record and maintain control of all donated funds, including those given for assigned personnel support. All funds, therefore, including those designated for a specific project or assignment, are under the control of the Board of Directors of Bridges and considered the organization’s funds.

For a contribution to be tax-deductible to the donor, it must be made payable to Bridges by the donor. Any check made payable to anyone other than Bridges will be returned to the donor to be rewritten. Even if a check is endorsed by the assigned personnel (signed-over to Bridges) it cannot be accepted for tax deductible receipting purposes. Therefore, if an assigned person who is a missionary fundraiser receives a check from a donor made out incorrectly, they must ask the donor to make out a new check. Contributions can be designated in the Memo section of a check or comment section for online gifts for a Community or specific assigned position by noting the missionary’s name or (support account number) or Community name with the gift.

**The missionary fundraiser understands that a 10% administrative fee is assessed on all contributions received each month.** This percentage assessment is determined by the Bridges leadership team and Board of Directors and subject to periodic review. This money goes into the Bridges General Fund and is “returned” to assigned personnel in the form of essential services provided by Bridges to help the missionary thrive in their Community or staff member thrive in their endeavors. Assigned persons should communicate with their supporters about the transfer of this amount to the Bridges General Fund. There may also be a set-up fee, the size of which is set by the board of directors from time to time, for each missionary fund raiser and each Community.

Assigned persons are required to submit to Bridges all gifts, donations, and honorariums received while engaged in the support raising process. These are credited to the support account.

*Donations*

Donations to Bridges can be made by check, electronic transfer, credit card, or online (as each option may become available through Bridges). Contributions can be dedicated or “preferenced” for the support of a specific project by including a note indicating the assigned person’s name or support account number with the gift. Gift specifying a community will NOT be credited to an assigned person. Gifts specifying an assigned person who is NOT a missionary fundraiser will be allocated to the assigned person’s Community fund, or to the Bridges general account.

For other giving options, including online donations go to [www.bridgesus.org](http://www.bridgesus.org) or for gifts of stock contact the Executive Director for instructions.

*Credit card donations and fees*

Donations made using credit cards or online services such as PayPal incur additional processing fees. Those incremental fees will be allocated to missionary accounts and projects using a representative 3% rate applied to credit card donations made to those missionary accounts and projects. The 3 % rate allocated may change from time to time to represent current processing costs.

*Expense Reports*

The Placement Plan includes an allowance for ministry expenses. Out-of­ pocket ministry expenses are reimbursable from an assigned person’s support account, if such exists. To receive reimbursement, receipts and supporting documents must be scanned and emailed with the completed expense report to the Supervisor or his/her designee.

Missionwell or a designated trainer will provide an orientation to Expense Reports and current policy. IRS guidelines require that expense reports be substantiated by submitting receipts (electronic PDF is required) for each expenditure within a reasonable time (monthly due dates are established).

Expense reports are processed weekly. For US reimbursements, expense reports that are approved by the end of the day on Friday are generally paid on Tuesday.

Instructions for reimbursements are included in the Bridges Expense Report Form Excel spreadsheet. It is the responsibility of personnel to read and comply with this process in order to receive reimbursement. Questions about this process are directed to the Bridges line manager or in his/her absence, the Chief Catalyst or his/her designee.

*Tax Issues*

Everyone’s tax situation is different and tax laws vary widely depending on the situation. Assigned personnel participating in missionary fundraising should consult a local tax expert in order to understand and comply with specific tax requirements. The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) has several good publications available to help missionaries comply with U.S. tax law (visit the “ECFA Store” at *www.ecfa.org*).

***DISCONTINUED SERVICE***

*Dismissal*

Assigned personnel (volunteers, missionary fundraisers) may be dismissed with or without cause by their Supervisor, the Executive Director or the Board of Directors. Reasons include, but are not limited to: insubordination, cultural incompetence, poor work performance, misuse of power, and moral failure. If a person is employed, California is an “at will” State, so the employment relationship may be severed at any time without need for an explanation by either party without notice.

A final check will be provided in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

*Resignation*

Within Bridges, we strongly desire to foster a culture wherein our team members practice communal discernment and decision making particularly around ministry related issues (placement, role definition, relocation and resignation). We would specifically request that assigned personnel include Bridges’ leaders in the decision process if they are considering resignation from a Community assignment or the organization. Upon making the decision to resign, an assigned person is required to submit a written letter of resignation to his/her supervisor. This letter should include the date of the last day of work and the reason for the resignation.

*Disposition of Bridges or Community Property*

Anyone leaving Bridges must turn over all Bridges property and money in his/her charge to the person appointed to receive them. This includes digital passwords for Bridges’ online accounts, digital documents, and any other Bridges property.

***NEWSLETTERS AND MISCELLANEOUS***

*Database Information*

The Bridges support team keeps a database of all supporters of each assigned person and Community. This list is compiled through the records obtained through donations, inquiries, and digital communication. All Bridges’ supporters receive general Bridges’ publications.

These three basic principles guide our donor interactions:

1. Bridges has a responsibility to engage all donors about our mission. If the donor also supports a Bridges assigned person, then Bridges shares this responsibility for communication with those assigned persons. In other words, the donor should understand the effect of their investment from both the assigned person and from Bridges perspective.
2. Various representatives of Bridges (e.g. the Executive Director, Donor Development team members) will communicate with segments of our donor population regarding a variety of ways they can be involved, such as giving, going, praying, learning, or contributing the expertise of the donor to benefit the movement.
3. Both Bridges and our assigned personnel will generally honor requests from any donor to be excluded from these types of communications.

*Bridge Leader and Staff Newsletters*

1. It is strongly suggested that Bridge Leaders and other missionary fundraisers send out a personal email or personal correspondence to their supporters at least every month.
2. Use of the Bridges logo is permitted in a missionary’s correspondence for as long as he or she is actively on a Bridges assignment.
3. Bridges does not provide newsletter publication or distribution services, but we encourage our assigned personnel to engage a volunteer to facilitate hard­copy production or digital online communications.

*Use of Bridges Logo*

Other than missionary support letters, the use of the Bridges logo requires approval from the Executive

AGREEMENT DATED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bridge Leader(s) On behalf of Bridges

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Signature Signature

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Printed Name Printed Name

Bridge Leader(s) Executive Director