



# Risk Tolerance Statement

## Rationale

This document describes our attitude towards tolerating risk as an organisation and it assists us to understand if our risk exposure is acceptable. It will help us make informed choices by considering risk more effectively in our decision making.

## Overall Risk Tolerance

Brook RED is a lived experience organisation supporting people with their mental health and/or suicidality. We consider our work to be socio-political in nature and that our very existence is born of a desire to see things done differently and to challenge existing norms and systems. By necessity, we see that taking certain types of risk are core to our being and we find different types of risk acceptable to differing degrees.

In our front line service delivery we are relatively risk tolerant because we believe that taking risks is a part of human growth and that the realities of eliminating risk also serve to eliminate genuine and authentic human experiences. This means that we give our staff and community the space to take risks as we believe that this facilitates individual learning.

With regards to legal and financial matters we are generally risk averse. We work to be compliant with regulations and regularly consult with external entities for advice around legal and financial issues and we tend to err on the side of conservatism.

In terms of our reputation, we are in between averse and tolerant. As a lived experience organisation, we feel a strong sense of obligation to remain faithful to our values and to be a leading employer of peer and lived experience workers. We walk a line of considerable tension between being attractive to government and other institutional funders while pressing for change and recognising that current systems and services are unacceptable and insufficient.

Please see the table below which expands on this:

Risk Category	Relative Level of Risk Tolerance	Risk Tolerance Statements
	Averse <span style="float: right;">Tolerant</span>	
People		We have a high appetite for the risk that enables people to self-determine and we believe strongly in the dignity of risk. We are invested in relationships and building trust with people and we therefore take risks where needed.
Reputation		We have a moderate to high tolerance for risks associated with our reputation. We understand that when it comes to our reputation we are working to two main and

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		<p>very distinct audiences: The purchasers of our services and those who access and use our services. As a lived experienced organisation, we value our unique ability to work from a non-traditional perspective and understand that this is facilitated through our funding arrangements. However, it is often the case that what our purchasers want and need is not the same as what those who use our services want and need. We have a low level of willingness to compromise on delivering services that are responsive to end users and understand that at times this negatively impacts how we may be seen by purchasers. We are unwilling to modify our lived experience approach beyond the point where we consider our fidelity to be at risk. It is not a priority for us to be a going concern if we are unable to maintain fidelity to our work.</p>
Systems		<p>We have a moderate to high risk tolerance associated with systems including IT, structures, documentation, etc. We consider that systematising our business is frequently in conflict with our ability to be agile and responsive to our community. While formal systems and structures can facilitate consistency, they can sometimes be disempowering and inflexible if over systematised. As such, we would always prioritise agility over rigidity.</p>
Financial		<p>We have a low financial risk tolerance. This is driven by a strong desire to be resilient and self-reliant as an organisation. We understand that a strong financial position supports our ability to take risk in other areas such as reputation where it is important to us that we do not</p>

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		compromise on our ethics and values.
Legal		We have a low tolerance to legal and regulatory risk. As a rights based organisation we believe in adhering to legislation and regulation which supports oversight, safety, employee rights, etc.

This document is to be reviewed annually to determine changes in risk appetite in response to changes in priorities. The Brook RED Organisational Risk Register is used to record individual risks, analysis and treatments.

## Definitions of Terms Used

### Risk Tolerance

The level of risk that an organisation believes is acceptable to achieve a specific objective or manage a category of risk.

### References

Brook RED Organisational Risk Management Policy - Governance Manual  
Brook RED Organisational Risk Register

## Document Control and Record of Changes

Version	Effective Date	Approved by	Summary of Change	Date of Next Review
Version 01	June 2020	Eschleigh Balzamo	Introduction of new statement	June 2021
Version 02	June 2021	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	June 2023
Version 03	May 2022	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	June 2023

The General Manager has overall responsibility for this statement. If there are any questions regarding these guidelines, please direct these to the Business Services Manager or General Manager.