

# WFSJ Code of ethics and code of conduct for members, directors, staff and participants at WCSJ 2025

## I. Code of ethics

*This code of ethics applies to all participants in WFSJ meetings.*

The principal aim of the World Federation of Science Journalists, according to its mission, is to be a forum where science journalists from all over the world share and learn from each other, participate in training activities, and mobilize resources, with the objective of strengthening and professionalizing science journalism.

Governance of WFSJ is clearly delineated in its [bylaws](#). This code of ethics and member conduct is intended to guide WFSJ members and directors in pursuing WFSJ’s mission and good governance.

**WFSJ members** are expected to refrain from discrimination based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, immigration status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, age, disability, military service or veteran status, socioeconomic background or status, education, or belief. Discrimination is not acceptable under any circumstances.

**WFSJ members** are expected to support the healthy exchange of views, ideas and opinions.

**WFSJ members** are expected to avoid any potential conflict of interest with WFSJ business, financial or otherwise. Conflicts that are unavoidable should be disclosed.

## II. Values statement

The World Federation of Science Journalists (WFSJ) is committed to equality, both in opportunity and in treatment, for its general membership. WFSJ will not discriminate in its activities or services on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, immigration status, religion, age, marital status, parental status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, body size, socioeconomic background, educational background, disability, or military service or veteran status, socioeconomic background or status, education, belief, or any other individual characteristic.

WFSJ is committed to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. This commitment applies to every aspect of WFSJ. Specifically, we work to ensure that WFSJ is welcoming and supportive of all individuals regardless of any individual characteristics listed above. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or incivility.

WFSJ will strive to ensure that all WFSJ-sponsored meetings and events are conducted in a professional manner in which all participants are treated with dignity and respect. WFSJ will advocate for respectful and non-discriminatory practices in all of its organizational interactions.

## Member and Board Directors Conduct

### III.a. Expected behaviours

**Members and participants in all meetings, in-person and virtual, covered by the WFSJ Code of Ethics and Member Conduct, SHALL:**

- Treat all members, participants, attendees, staff, and vendors with respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.
- Treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of their own or another’s individual characteristics.
- Communicate openly with respect for others, discussing and debating ideas rather than individuals. Members shall avoid personal attacks directed toward other members, directors, participants, attendees, and vendors/sponsors.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and avoid dominating the discussion. Make space for members of historically marginalized groups when possible.
- Communicate openly and thoughtfully with others, listen well to others, and be considerate of the multitude of views and opinions that are different from your own. Make room for a diversity of voices in group discussions, on panels, and the like.
- Be collaborative. Be mindful not to exert dominance over others. Consider the effect of power differentials in relationships, positions, experiences; ease of communicating by video vs. audio or other means; and other factors to avoid dominance.
- Follow the rules and policies of the venue and/or platform.
- If any leader or facilitator of an activity/session, any official of the platform, or any event official directs you to stop a behavior or delete a comment, comply immediately. Such directions are made to implement this policy or the platform’s policies.
- Participants found to be in violation may be asked to leave the meeting or event.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants during an in-person event. Call 911/emergency services if someone is in immediate danger.

### III.b. Additional expectations of virtual meeting attendees

- Welcome all forms of participation, regardless of whether attendees participate by video, audio, or other means. Facilitators should invite discussion but be sensitive not to pressure those who may be unable to or choose not to actively respond.
- Help protect the personal privacy of individuals. If a participant’s camera view is exposing information, personal activity, household members, or other private matters and does not realize the situation, please notify the event contact(s) right away to help the person.
- Display your name when logging on Zoom or other virtual platforms.

### III.c. Additional expectations of online discussion/forum participants and electronic communications

- Gracefully accept well-communicated constructive criticism
- Refrain from doing something online that you wouldn't do in another professional situation
- Sign written messages with your name.

## III.d. Prohibited behaviours

**Prohibited behaviours, which may result in consequences when a violation of the Code of Ethics and Member Conduct is found, INCLUDE:**

- Behavior inconsistent with Section I, Code of Ethics for WFSJ;
- Harassment in any form, including sexual harassment, denigrating jokes, stereotyping, or a recurring pattern of disrespectful behavior; Do not engage in biased, demeaning, intimidating, coercive, or harassing/hostile conduct or commentary, whether seriously or in jest (e.g., individual characteristics as described in our Values Statement).
- Requesting or accepting inappropriate favors.
- Attempting to injure the personal or profession reputation of others by false, biased, or undocumented claims.
- Verbal or written abuse or intimidation (in-person or remotely), including but not limited to: harmful or negative comments related to any individual characteristics as described in our Values Statement;
- Photographing, recording, or video-taping of others and/or the dissemination or distribution of photographs, recordings and video-tapings of others without their consent;

- Displaying or distributing images or recordings involving bigotry, nudity, sexual images, or gore and violence in public spaces and presentations. If such images are relevant to the topic in question, an audience warning must be declared;
- Intentional, unwelcome physical behaviors (in-person or remotely), including but not limited to stalking, physical contact, and aggressive or intimidating displays and/or body language; physical abuse or intimidation, including disregard for another’s safety;
- Threats (implied or real) of physical, emotional, professional, or financial harm, including threatening or stalking any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, WFSJ staff member, service provider, or other meeting, discussion group, or forum participant;
- Violating the previously communicated (verbally or nonverbally) physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries of others through the continuation of otherwise prohibited behaviors or through verbal or written comments founded on any personal aspect of another individual;
- Retaliatory behavior during or after the reporting process by any individuals involved in a potential violation of the Code of Ethics and Member Conduct, including the reporting party/target/victim, witnesses, and those reported to have engaged in prohibited behavior(s), to include using the reporting process to further baseless allegations or weaponizing the process; and
- Any other behaviors that may reasonably be assumed to have the effect of creating, contributing to, or maintaining an environment that is hostile or unwelcoming toward or damaging to a person or group, Including inciting, encouraging, or condoning prohibited behaviors, and creating/contributing to an unsafe or exclusionary situation.

### **III.d.1. Prohibited behaviours specific to virtual meeting attendees**

#### **Additional prohibited behaviours pertaining to virtual gatherings INCLUDE:**

- Engaging in prohibited behaviours on social media and other public and private platforms in any way associated with a WFSJ event or program.
- Commenting on personal appearance or reasons why another person chooses to participate via video, audio, or other means—seriously or in jest.
- Disrupting the event (e.g., “zoom-bombing” or sustained or disrespectful disruption of presentations).
- Making audio or visual recordings of the virtual event in any medium and distributing audio or visual recordings of the virtual event (via social media or any other means). Screenshots of presentation slides or presenters are acceptable unless the presenter notes otherwise. Screenshots of attendees or audience members are not allowed without stated consent from each individual pictured. Only the World Federation of Science Journalists or its designees may do so.

### **III.d.2. Prohibited behaviors specific to online discussion/online forum participants**

Out of respect for all participants’ time and attention, refrain from posting during the meeting about topics unrelated to WFSJ, posting redundant information, posting excessively, or writing excessively long comments.

**Do you need help or want to report an incident  
that needs addressing?**

**Please contact Francois Davel at**

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