



International Society for Diatom Research

Code of Conduct for Meetings and other Events

The International Society for Diatom Research (ISDR) is a scientific society, which, through its members, has a duty in the public interest to provide a safe, productive and welcoming environment for all participants and attendees of our meetings and events. This is regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability, pregnancy or maternity status or marriage and civil partnership status in accordance with the UK Equality Act 2010, as well as other personal attributes and circumstances, for example, gender identity, career level, parental status and physical appearance.

This Code of Conduct applies to all participants (including members and non-members) in Society-related activities, including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, staff, service providers, representatives to outside bodies, and applies in all ISDR activities, including ancillary meetings, events and social gatherings.

Behaviour

The ISDR values participation by all attendees at events that it organises or endorses and wants to ensure that everyone's experience is as constructive and professionally stimulating as possible. We expect anyone attending an event organised or endorsed by ISDR to inform themselves about locally acceptable and expected behaviour in advance. Participants are expected to behave in a respectful and professional manner at all times: harassment and discriminatory or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate and will not be tolerated.

Harassment is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of a person. This can include:

- sustained disruption of talks or other events,
- inappropriate physical contact,
- sexual attention or innuendo,
- deliberate intimidation,
- stalking, and intrusive photography, or
- recording of an individual without consent.

However, this list is not exhaustive and any conduct that has the effect of making a person feel humiliated, threatened or that their privacy is being invaded can be considered to be harassment.

Discrimination or offensive comments related to any personal characteristic or circumstance, whether directed at an individual present or relating generally to a group or individual with that characteristic or circumstance are not acceptable.

The ISDR expects and requires all participants to abide by and uphold the principles of this Code of Conduct and transgressions or violations will not be tolerated.

Breach of the Code of Conduct

If an incident of harassment or discrimination occurs either within or outside premises during an event organised or endorsed by ISDR, then the aggrieved person or witness to the incident should report it promptly and in confidence to a member of the "Safe Meeting Team".

We are aware that it is not easy to report harassment, discrimination, or degrading treatment from another person, especially when there is a power relationship, you have a precarious work situation or are at the start of an academic career. However, this step is absolutely necessary if we are to eradicate unacceptable behaviours and attitudes in our meetings. ISDR is committed to assisting the person affected and ensuring confidentiality. Information will not be shared with anyone else without prior agreement with the affected person.

If you witness an inappropriate incident, you are also encouraged to report the matter.

Once the ISDR has been notified, a member of the Safe Meeting Team should discuss the details in confidence with the individual making the complaint. After determining key points of the issue, they will then decide what immediate action, if any, should be taken.

It may be necessary to temporarily suspend the alleged offender's involvement in Society activities pending investigation. This suspension does not carry any implication of guilt but will allow the investigation process to be carried out.

If the alleged behaviour constitutes a criminal offence, the police will be informed.

Following the meeting, an investigation will be carried out, if deemed necessary, by members of the Safe Meeting Team including statements from the alleged victim, any witnesses who have been identified and, finally, the alleged offender. If there is a case to be answered, the alleged offender will be invited to meet with a panel of Trustees, chaired by either the President or Vice-President of the ISDR and given details of the allegation, the evidence supporting the allegation and details of the maximum sanction should the allegation be upheld. This could include, but not be limited to, cancellation of meeting privileges, cancellation of Society membership and privileges, or referral to appropriate authorities.

At the meeting, the alleged offender will be given the opportunity to formally respond to the allegation. Any response will be taken into account before a final decision is made. The outcome of the meeting will be issued in writing within one week of the meeting.

The opportunity to appeal the decision will be given. Any appeal will be heard by a panel of Council members who were not involve in the original investigation along with an external moderator.

Article 9 Clause 4 of the ISDR Constitution sets out the process by which a member may be removed from membership.

Detailed procedure for handling breaches of the ISDR Code of Conduct

At International Diatom Symposia (or any other meeting organised or endorsed by ISDR):

1. Prior to the meeting, two people from the Local Organising Committee (one male, one female) and two people from ISDR Council (one male, one female; at least one of whom is also a Trustee) are invited to join a "Safe Meeting Team" (SMT) to whom breaches of the Code of Conduct can be reported. They will have a training webinar with an HR professional prior to the meeting to be briefed on their roles, and will wear distinctive badges throughout the meeting.
2. **The first priority of the SMT is to protect the alleged victim from harm and their second priority is to collect information to guide subsequent actions. They must not make judgements during the meeting, except to protect the alleged victim, and then only after consultation with the President or Vice-President (point 8) and with no assumption of guilt or blame.**
3. The Conference programme will include the Code of Conduct (including this procedure) along with names and contact details of the SMT. It also includes a statement indicating that attendance at the meeting will be taken as de facto agreement with the code of conduct and with the complaints and appeals procedures.
4. If an incident is reported, a member of the SMT should make a brief written note of the form that the harassment took (linking this to the definitions of harassment and discrimination listed in the Code of Conduct), the time and location when it happened, the name of the alleged harasser and the names of any witnesses.
5. The person who makes the initial report would usually be the person who has suffered potential harassment or a witness who has the consent of that person to report it to the IDS. There may be incidents that should be reported, in confidence, even without consent (e.g. rape or other physical assault – such instances could have an impact on the witness as well as the victim). In such cases, the report must be kept confidential until after the alleged victim has been told. We recognise that such events could have an impact on the witness as well as the alleged victim.
6. All breaches that involve sexual or physical harassment are referred by SMT to the relevant authorities in the country. Whether or not the incident is referred to national authorities, the SMT will continue with the internal process.
7. The alleged harasser needs to be approached discretely and asked for his or her version of the event. Any witnesses also need to be approached discretely for their accounts. Notes should be made of these discussions, either when held or immediately afterwards.
8. The results of these interviews are assessed by at least two of the SMT along with the President or Vice President of the ISDR. They need to decide on what immediate action, if any, needs to be taken. A written note of this decision needs to be made. The complainant should be informed that the matter has been dealt with, but data protection (GDPR) should be considered when deciding on an appropriate level of detail that can be disclosed. Many minor incidents can

probably be dealt with quietly during the meeting, and no further action will be required. More serious incidents will require a more detailed process, which is outlined in the remaining steps.

9. In order to ensure the integrity of decision and any subsequent appeal, ISDR Council may be told that an alleged incident is being investigated, but no specific information about the case.
10. For serious incidents, it may be necessary to temporarily suspend the alleged offender's involvement in Society activities pending investigation. This suspension does not carry any implication of guilt but will allow the investigation process to be carried out.
11. Following the meeting, a more thorough investigation will be carried out by the SMT, including written statements from the alleged victim, any witnesses who have been identified and, finally, the alleged offender. If there is a case to be answered, the alleged offender will be invited to a meeting with a panel of Trustees chaired by either the President or Vice President of the ISDR (no more than three people in total) at which members of the SMT (no more than two) will present the case. This person will be given advance notice of the meeting and be provided with details of the allegation, the evidence supporting the allegation and details of the maximum sanction should the allegation be upheld. This could include, but not be limited to, cancellation of meeting privileges, cancellation of Society membership and privileges, or referral to appropriate authorities. No members of the panel can have been involved in the initial investigation of the incident.
12. At the meeting, the alleged offender will be given the opportunity to formally respond to the allegation. Any response will be taken into account before a final decision is made. The outcome of the meeting will be issued in writing within one week of the meeting.

Appeals procedure

1. If anybody feels that they have been unfairly treated during the enactment of this procedure, they should appeal in writing to the Chair of the panel (i.e. President or Vice President of the IDS) within seven days of the panel's decision being issued, stating their grounds for appeal.
2. The Chair then collects all paperwork and forwards it to an Appeals Panel, made up of two Trustees who were not involved in the original investigation along with an external adjudicator (i.e. an HR professional) along with a copy of the code of conduct and an explanation of how this code was alleged to have been violated.
3. After reviewing the paperwork and the stated grounds for appeal, this panel will usually invite the alleged harasser to an appeal meeting to hear their grounds in full. The Appeals Panel has the discretion to collect additional information from the complainant, if appropriate. The adjudicator chairs this meeting and, along with the Trustees, decides either to uphold the original decision or to modify or overturn this. The President will be consulted on the outcome and the alleged harasser will then be informed in writing within seven days of the meeting.
4. The complainant will be informed that the matter has concluded and may be given a brief overall conclusion. However, data protection should be considered when assessing how much detail to disclose.

5. Key points of organisational learning will be communicated to the local organising committee and Council, along with organisers of future IDS meetings. Personal data of any party involved will not be disclosed unless necessary to implement corrective actions. Confidentiality of data should be communicated to anyone with access to this information.

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