



Code of Conduct of BEST Erlangen e.V.

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Preface

Definition: A code of conduct is a policy that lays out our organisation's principles, standards, and the moral and ethical expectations that volunteers and third parties are held to as they interact with the organisation.

Why do we need a Code of Conduct?

- Over the past several years, the topics of well-being and behaviour have been actively addressed within BEST. This Code of Conduct serves to consolidate those efforts into a single, official document. It is designed to be easily accessible to all our volunteers and representatives, ensuring clarity and consistency across the organisation.
- The vision of the Code of Conduct is to become the guideline for how members organise and act at internal events.

Every section of this document is prompted by the Identity of BEST Erlangen. Before reading the Code of Conduct, we suggest you read and understand the vision, mission, values, and position of BEST.

The values and possible consequences presented in this document apply to all BESTies and externals who participate in our local, external, and internal events.

Practices

The following points should be interpreted and adapted according to the aim of the organised event. For example, in some events, participants are expected to be more active in sharing their opinions, while others focus more on learning.

Recommended Practices:

- Respecting our differences, such as but not limited to nationality, disability, and religion
- Respecting the physical and mental boundaries of other attendees
- Asking for consent before all interactions, such as when picking up roommates, during parties, or hugging
- Respecting others' privacy
- Being responsible for self-awareness in terms of mental health
- Pay attention to people around you, and reach out in case they need any help. This can be done by monitoring participants' well-being
- Be mindful of the way you communicate with others in terms of verbal, para, or non-verbal communication and vocabulary
- Be impartial. For example, by avoiding acting upon biases;
- Voicing your concerns
- Setting and communicating healthy boundaries in work and personal life
- Educate yourself on healthy feedback methods.
- Use English at all times
- Raise awareness on inclusivity, for example, while preparing presentations/name tags, make sure you use the correct pronouns and communicate with respect
- Respecting the identity of BEST in both planned and unplanned activities;
- Show responsiveness. If you take up a responsibility, make sure that you are committed and in communication with the right people
- Being punctual, by being on time for activities, and respecting task deadlines
- Don't overwhelm yourself with tasks
- Being in a fit mental and physical state when attending sessions
- Respect work-rest-party balance
- Drink responsibly
- Preserve the logistics provided for you during the event

Unacceptable Practices:

- Drinking uncontrollably to the point that it may affect your behaviour and also affect your productivity
- Imposing sexual, national, disability, or religious stereotypes
- Not following the law of the country/region where the event is taking place
- Pressuring someone when they have already denied consent - for example, drinking during social activities, attending to them, and intimacy
- Active discrimination against any group of people - such as based on sexuality, religion, disability, or nationality - for example, by excluding them from activities or denying them the right to express themselves
- Endangering someone's safety or health
- Causing fear or physical harm to others (threats or beatings)
- Harassment (physical, psychological, sexual, verbal)
- Using the personal belongings of others without their consent
- Using slurs
- Coercing others into sharing your opinions: about a vote, ideas, goals, etc.
- Taking politically motivated decisions or defending a political view. For instance, judging a group of people based on their nationality
- Aiding in any of the above-mentioned acts

Responsible Bodies

Every volunteer of BEST is responsible for reading and being familiar with the Code of Conduct.

The overview of the implementation of the Code of Conduct should be done by the Responsible Bodies; the VP of HR together with the local Board, the HR Team, and the Local Responsible Bodies of the volunteer who is facing a sanction.

In case a misconduct or severe offence has been committed by a member of the Board, the HR Team, or the Local Responsible Bodies, the other bodies automatically become the main responsible bodies for the implementation.

The VP of HR in either case will be considered as a member of the Board and not part of the HR Team. If a member of the Responsible Bodies is involved in the case, then they will be automatically removed from the decision-making procedure.

Violations and Possible Consequences

Unless law infringements are involved, consequences will be decided on a **case-by-case basis**. The consequences below are just examples of what might happen. Each incident will be examined separately by its context. For every case, people involved or present in the incident should be contacted before any consequences occur.

Red Violations

- Breaking the law will be solved externally with the right authorities. Such as:
 - Sexual and physical harassment;
 - Stealing;
 - Endangering another person.
- Hate speech;
- Cyberbullying;
- The violent invasion of personal space. For example, kicking someone out of their room for a party.
- Actively discriminating against someone (religiously, culturally, racially, from a disability point of view, and so on);
- Aiding in any of the actions mentioned above;
 - Using BEST Identity for personal gain may damage the organization's image. For example, fundraising while using BEST's brand name for personal purposes.

Possible consequences:

- The judicial process when breaking the law
- Exclusion from BEST
- Dismissal from the International body
- Demotion, downgrading people from their position
- Banned from future internal events
- Warning sent to departments/international bodies and the LBG

Orange Violations

- Peer pressure, for example, drinking or quid pro quo
- Being politically motivated in an apolitical environment
- Aggressive behaviour, for instance, being verbally abusive or threatening someone
- Drinking to the point of personal endangerment. For example, vomiting uncontrollably, alcohol poisoning, ending up being hospitalized etc
- If your irresponsible behaviour affects the experience of other people - for example, missing your session as a facilitator
- Other similarly severe actions

Possible consequences:

Strike system: 2 orange violations may lead to the same consequences as a red violation

- Exclusion from the ongoing event
- Monitoring of the participant
- Meeting with the iHR Representative or overseeing body according to the Structure of BEST

Yellow Violations

- Nepotism
- Breaking materials
- Frequently late for sessions
- Disrespecting the deliverer, other attendees, the session, and not respecting the finger rules and the facilitator's flow
- Pressuring someone into changing their opinion
- Personally directed criticism (you attack someone's character/personality instead of focusing on their work actions)
- Not fulfilling your agreed-upon duties
- Offensive humour
- Actions that have similar harm to a person can count as yellow violations

Possible Consequences

- Discussion with the event responsible for the chain elaborated at the beginning of this section
- If iHR sees fit, the person can be contacted and monitored, and reported to their LBG's board

Final Words

Most of the things discussed here have been taken from an iBEST document on code of conduct and previous projects. This has been discussed with all the full members. There has been research, polls, and discussions done to see what our BEST represents and what they are concerned about.

Glossary

Participant: Attendant of a BEST event (internal, external, and local), regardless of membership, nation, or any other characteristics.

Safety: The condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury.

Physiological needs: These are biological requirements for participants' survival, e.g., air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, warmth, and sleep. The food needs to satisfy the participants' dietary preferences.

Psychological needs: These are the feelings of inclusiveness, friendship, belongingness to a group, and general respect. Discrimination and exclusion are, for example, direct threats to these needs.

Harassment: A wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature, commonly understood as behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses a person, and its unlikelihood typically identifies it in terms of social and moral reasonableness. The term harassment includes *physical, personal, discriminatory, psychological, and sexual harassment*. In the broader sense, it also includes retaliation and quid pro quo situations.

Physical harassment: A type of harassment that involves physical attacks or threats. In extreme cases, physical harassment may be classified as assault. Physical gestures such as playful shoving can blur the line between appropriate and not since it's the *person on the receiving end* who decides whether the behaviour makes them uncomfortable. Examples of Physical harassment include direct threats of intent to inflict harm, physical attacks (hitting, shoving, kicking), threatening behaviour and destroying property.

Personal harassment: The form of harassment that's not based on one of the protected classes, such as race, gender, or religion. Simply, it's bullying in its most basic form, and it's not illegal, but can be damaging nevertheless. Examples of Personal harassment include inappropriate comments, offensive jokes, personal humiliation, ostracising behaviours, and intimidation tactics.

Discrimination: the practice of treating one person or group of people less fairly or less well than other people or groups. This is unacceptable behaviour not only by most of the modern law but also against BEST Vision of **Empowered Diversity**. Discrimination can manifest through racial, sexual orientation, gender, age, and disability harassment.

Psychological harassment: harassment that negatively impacts a member's psychological well-being. Victims of psychological harassment often feel put down and belittled on a personal level, a professional level or both. Examples of Psychological Harassment can include isolating or denying the victim's presence, belittling or trivialising the victim's thoughts, and discrediting or spreading rumours about the victim (**gossip**).

Sexual harassment: harassment that is sexual and generally includes unwanted sexual advances, conduct or behaviour. This can happen not only during events or parties but also in the workplace or other social situations. It does not only include unwanted physical contact but extends also to sharing private pictures without consent, aggressive sexual advances and peer-pressure others into drinking to take advantage of them.

Retaliation: the act of a specific group of people in the position of power, such as a Board of an LBG, of taking adverse action towards someone who filed a complaint about harassment or discrimination. Measures could be isolation from the group, exclusion from activities or loss of decision-making power in the LBG.

Quid pro quo: ("something for something" in Latin) is the situation where someone asks for a favour in exchange for other services. It can become harassment if these services include sexual favours, **imbalance of power** in the group, **blackmailing** or discrimination.

Nepotism: The practice among those with power or influence of favouring relatives or friends, especially by giving them jobs or responsibilities.

Peer pressure: Peer pressure is **when you are influenced by other people (your peers) to act in a certain way**. If you're with friends who are doing something that you typically would not do and they convince you to do what they are doing, that is an example of peer pressure.

Consent: Permission for something to happen or agreement to do something.

Cyberbullying: The activity of using messages on social media, emails, text messages, etc. to frighten or upset somebody

References

- [40-G-ON-BRD-510](#) - Safe People Project Report
- [39-G-YL-BRD-508](#) - Participants Well Being Project Report
- [Safe People Concept Guideline Draft 1.0](#)
- PWB [Project Outcomes](#).
- [41-V-LE-BRD-513](#) - Minutes of Creating Code on Conduct
- [41-O-TA-BRD-998](#) - Pre-Materials of Creating Code on Conduct
- [41-O-TA-BRD-501](#) - Creating Code of Conduct Session
- [M36 - 46-G-BG-BRD-977](#) - Code of Conduct