

CoARA Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct document is the responsibility of the CoARA General Assembly. It can be amended, based on suggestions from CoARA member organisations or the Steering Board, to be reviewed by the Steering Board, and approved by the General Assembly.

1.1. Background and purpose

The Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment ([CoARA](#)) is a public, community-driven organisation constituted of volunteer members. The CoARA aims to enable systemic reform of research assessment on the basis of common principles and commitments within an agreed timeframe, as set in the [Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#). This is achieved through exchange of information and mutual learning between all those willing to improve research assessment practices.

In fostering such a mutual learning and collaborative space, the CoARA is committed to providing a welcoming, collegial, safe, and respectful experience for its members, based on openness, responsibility, collaboration and mutual support, inspiration, commitment and autonomy, voluntary and community-driven environment, dialogue, inclusiveness, and trust.

To support a safe and inclusive environment, the CoARA has defined this Code of Conduct to clearly signal community norms. The intent of this Code of Conduct is to be explicit about inappropriate behaviour and to outline associated consequences. Adherence to this Code of Conduct is a precondition for participation in any CoARA setting.

1.2. Who is covered by this Code of Conduct?

This Code of Conduct applies to CoARA member organisations and governing and supporting bodies, guests, vendors/suppliers, staff members, and participants in CoARA events, publishing and conference presentations, and activities. This Code of Conduct applies to “CoARA activities”, namely: interactions, both verbal and written, that take place in person, in meetings, at events, in discussions, in publications and presentations, and in online and virtual communities, social media, and platforms either in a CoARA context and/or other or when CoARA is represented.

2. Code of Conduct

We ask that, as part of the CoARA community, you ensure that all are equally valued and welcomed by treating others with the respect and professionalism with which you would like to be treated. All members of CoARA are expected to abide by the guiding principles set in the Governance document.

Participants of the CoARA activities are required to:

1. Respect others' integrity, dignity, rights and views. CoARA activities aim to collegially share information, successes, challenges, constructive feedback, questions, and goals relating to the reform of research assessment;
2. Avoid any and all possible conflicts of interest. When the appearance of a conflict of interest cannot be avoided, these should be timely declared;
3. Actively promote equality, justice, equity, professionalism, objectivity, accountability as well as academic freedom and autonomy of organisations;
4. Avoid discriminatory, harassing, bullying, defamatory, abusive, threatening, disrespectful, offensive, blasphemous and illegal communications and actions;
5. Respect intellectual property and authorship. Only share research and information that is yours or that you have permission to use, and properly attribute content to yourself and others;
6. Refrain from posting or otherwise circulating commercial messages, product or service promotions, advertising, or selling goods or services;
7. Refrain from unauthorised posting of personal information (e.g., name, e-mail, etc.) of other individuals.

3. Enforcement of the rules

- **Violations of this Code of Conduct** can be reported to the CoARA Secretariat [*or interim secretariat*].
- **Once a potential Code of Conduct violation is observed or reported**, depending on the actual incident, the Secretariat [*or interim secretariat*] will liaise with the Steering Board [*or Interim Chairs*] to consider the appropriate course of action.
- **Disciplinary actions** can range from a verbal warning, suspension from one or more CoARA activities, or permanent exclusion from one or more CoARA activities.
- **Disciplinary actions if a violation is observed or reported during a meeting:**
 - A verbal or written warning will be issued;
 - If a violation of the rules continues, the individual concerned will be removed from the meeting and their institution will be notified of the inappropriate conduct during the meeting;
 - If a participant is excluded from the meeting, they will be notified that no further participation in future meetings will be allowed. The concerned organisation will be informed and invited to nominate a new participant who will respect the Code of Conduct.
- **If suspected criminal activity has occurred**, the complainant or complaint will be directed to law enforcement officials.

4. Annual report of complaints

- The Secretariat will publish on the CoARA website an annual report summarising the complaints of misconduct received, and the follow up actions taken.
- In making public such information, the Secretariat will take into account data protection, privacy and confidentiality considerations.
- In case no complaints were filed, the Secretariat will indicate this in the report/CoARA website.