



Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001

NASA Astrophysics Statement of Principles

NASA Astrophysics is committed to fully implementing the core value of Inclusion as defined by the agency. NASA Astrophysics is committed to making its working environment an inclusive, safe, and harassment- and bullying-free space. Everyone working under the auspices of NASA Astrophysics should feel welcome and supported in their ability to do their job, regardless of any characteristic unrelated to the ability to do one's job including (but not limited to) age, body size, disability, economic or social status, family status, gender or gender presentation, nationality, neurodivergence, physical appearance, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Inclusion is a NASA core value.

"To support our Core Value of Inclusion, we will implement a robust and systematic strategy to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) for the benefit of all, internal and external to NASA. In addition to fulfilling presidential directives and executive orders, NASA will continuously promote the incorporation and transformation of DEIA into our culture and business practices at all levels of the Agency."

– 2022 NASA Strategic Plan

"SMD recognizes the importance of creating inclusive environments so that everyone can participate equitably. People must feel safe, valued, and included before they are comfortable contributing to the team."

– Quote from Thomas H. Zurbuchen, Ph.D., Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, Science Plan 2020-2024, FY21-22 Update

"The persistence of harassment and discrimination in astronomy and astrophysics is intolerable, and must not be tolerated if the astronomy and astrophysics profession is to retain and successfully draw from the full diversity of talent available, not to mention avoiding the toxic and corrosive effects that such behaviors have on individuals, organizations, and the entire profession."

– Astro2020 Decadal Survey

Purpose of this Statement of Principles:

The purpose of the Statement of Principles is to help NASA Astrophysics carry out community best practices to create an inclusive work environment. This document is neither intended to nor can it be a legal document, but rather a tool in the toolbox to shape crucial conversations around problematic actions.

Applicability:

- NASA Astrophysics personnel at NASA Headquarters (HQ) as well as NASA Astrophysics' Program Offices (POs) and associated support personnel, regardless of employer.
- Those who participate in meetings sponsored by NASA Astrophysics, such as conferences, workshops, panels, and Program Analysis Group (PAG) meetings.

Best practices:

Personnel should follow all existing laws, regulations, institutional policies, and guidelines regarding the reporting of harassment and discrimination. This includes Title IX and existing codes of conduct and codes of ethics. In the workplace, personnel should follow the ethics guidelines of their institutions including NASA and employing organizations throughout the astrophysics community. In meetings sponsored by NASA Astrophysics, personnel should follow ethics guidelines set forth by the American Astronomical Society, the main professional society that most NASA Astrophysics personnel belong to.

All activities organized or sponsored¹ by NASA Astrophysics, such as meetings and panels, should adopt a code of conduct. The code of conduct developed by NASA Astrophysics for peer review panels and the code of ethics developed by the American Astronomical Society are good examples (see References). Meeting organizers should identify a point of contact for reporting violations of the code of conduct and consequences for violations, such as warnings or limits on participation in the meeting.

Professional Conduct: Personnel should behave in an open, inclusive way that promotes scientific integrity. Harassment, bullying, and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate. Harassment includes but is not limited to sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, sexual attention or innuendo, deliberate intimidation, stalking, and photography or recording of an individual without consent. It also includes offensive comments related to gender or gender presentation; sexual orientation; disability, whether visible or not; physical appearance; body size or shape; race; religion; family, economic or social status; or any characteristic unrelated to conducting a discussion in a professional manner.

Communication: All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate. Be kind to others. Do not insult, put down, or bully others. Critique ideas, not people. During meetings, work to engage in a constructive fashion.

Scientific Integrity: Personnel should follow community norms for maintaining scientific integrity.² Provide adequate citation and acknowledgment of ideas and materials from others.

¹ NASA sponsorship is defined in [NPR 9770.1A](#).

² NASA has developed [Guidelines for Promoting Scientific and Research Integrity](#).

Training: Personnel should take available institutional training regarding harassment, for example Title IX violations, micro-aggressions, and bystander intervention.

Maintaining a Safe Space: In order to create a safe space for everyone, individuals who have been sanctioned by their institution for harassment should not be given a platform. Including these sanctioned harassers may silence, intimidate, and discourage participation from those affected by their behavior, and would detract from the collaborative environment that fosters science. For instance, organizers of meetings sponsored by NASA Astrophysics should not award talks to known sanctioned harassers, NASA-funded staff should not invite known harassers into NASA-funded collaborations, and collaboration agreements for projects funded by NASA Astrophysics should treat harassment and discrimination as a form of scientific misconduct.

Reporting: Individuals should utilize their institutional reporting channels as appropriate, for example, a Title IX office or ethics office. Students, faculty or staff in programs receiving NASA financial assistance, such as such as grant awards or contracts resulting from NASA solicitations, AOs, or RFPs, may raise allegations of discrimination, including harassment, by contacting the NASA Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO); information on filing a complaint through ODEO at <https://missionstem.nasa.gov/filing-a-complaint.html>. If a Code of Conduct violation takes place during a meeting or panel, the violation should be reported per the instructions given at the meeting or panel. Response to violations of this Statement of Principles or a meeting Code of Conduct should be in alignment with the relevant institutional policies.

Resources:

- [NASA: Our Mission and Values](#)
- [NASA: Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [NASA 2022 Strategic Plan](#)
- [Science Mission Directorate, Science Plan 2020-2024, FY 21-22 Update](#)
- [NASA peer review panel Code of Conduct](#)
- [AAS Code of Ethics](#)
- [London Code of Conduct](#)

Effective Dates:

This Statement of Principles is effective as of the date of the final signature. This Statement of Principles will expire five years from the effective start date, unless it is explicitly extended or it is explicitly superseded.

Approved:

Paul Hertz
Director, Astrophysics Division (2012-2022)

Mark Clampin
Director, Astrophysics Division (2022-)

Acknowledgements:

This Statement of Principles is based in part on the “London Code of Conduct”, as originally designed for the conference “Accurate Astrophysics. Correct Cosmology”, held in London in July 2015. The London Code of Conduct was adapted with permission by Andrew Pontzen and Hiranya Peiris from a document by Software Carpentry (<http://software-carpentry.org/conduct.html>), which itself derives from original Creative Commons documents by PyCon and Geek Feminism. It is released under a CC-Zero license for reuse. To help track people’s improvements and best practice, please retain this acknowledgement, and log your re-use or modification of this policy at https://github.com/apontzen/london_cc.

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