



EUROPEAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

ETHICS STATEMENT

DRAFTED BY THE EAS ETHICS WORKING GROUP

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The mission of the European Astronomical Society (EAS) is to promote and advance astronomy in Europe. To best pursue this endeavour, we provide ethical guidelines for EAS members, and more generally for individuals involved in the professional astronomical community.

The EAS welcomes and respects all of its members, regardless of (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, nationality, religious belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, family status or socio-economic status. It strives to create an inclusive environment where all members can grow as scientists, contribute to their fullest potential to the advancement of astronomy, and be afforded equal opportunities to move forward in their careers.

All scientists should act ethically in their capacity as researchers, teachers, educators and mentors, and should be aware of their responsibility of training students and young scientists in ethical conduct. The following points describe the minimal ethical standards expected by the EAS. A more-detailed list of recommended good practices is available in the companion document (EAS Guidelines for Good Practice). Where there is violation of the ethics promoted in these documents, the EAS reporting structure is intended only for incidents connected to EAS meetings/events (see the end Section 1). For other events, the EAS recommends a reporting procedure at the appropriate level so that the relevant body can take suitable action.

1 Conduct towards others

All professional interactions should be conducted with consideration and respect. This includes, but is not restricted to, interactions with other scientists, senior or junior colleagues, supervised post-docs and students, mentees, other group members, administrative, technical or other support staff, and members of the public, media, government, or funding agencies.

Abusive, intimidating, humiliating, disrespectful or demeaning behaviour is not acceptable under any circumstances. In fact, any kind of statement contrary to the idea of equal treatment (and the human dignity of any social group) is considered discrimination. Maximum effort should be put into creating an inclusive, supportive, and stimulating working environment, where people feel included, welcomed and valued. Free expression and a healthy discussion and exchange of scientific ideas should be encouraged at all levels.

Equal opportunity and treatment should be afforded to all colleagues, regardless of sex, gender, race, ethnic and national origin, socio-economic background, political affiliation, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, and any intersection thereof, and any other reason not related to scientific merit. The workplace should be a harassment-free environment¹, and so should include countering microaggressions. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, racial harassment, harassment based on real or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation, ableist harassment, physical harassment, verbal harassment, and bullying. Because of intersectionality, these different forms of harassment often occur simultaneously, with a multiplicative negative impact on the person's mental health and well-being. This may then in turn affect their ability/energy to do their job and maintain productivity.

Power dynamics are also a vital aspect of harassment and bullying, and must be acknowledged and taken into account when developing anti-harassment policies to ensure that those in positions of relatively little power, such as undergraduates, graduate students, postdocs, staff, and junior faculty can report harassment by their superiors safely and without fear of reprisal.

The EAS, in the case of repeated and/or serious instances of inappropriate behaviour taking place at EAS meetings or events, will take measures against offending parties, which may include expulsion from aforementioned events or from the Society. Details on the procedure are to be outlined in the code of conduct specific to the meeting/event.

¹For the purpose of this document we adopt the definition of harassment adopted by the International Astronomical Union (see <https://www.iau.org/news/announcements/detail/ann16007/>).

"In general, harassment is a conduct that exerts unwelcome pressure or intimidation. This conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.

Particularly serious is the sexual harassment that refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Because of the wide international nature of the IAU, it is important to realize that behaviour and language that are welcome/ acceptable in one particular cultural environment may be unwelcome/offensive to another. Consequently, individuals must use discretion to ensure that their words and actions communicate respect for others. This is especially important for those in positions of authority since individuals with lower rank or status may be reluctant to express their objections or discomfort regarding unwelcome behaviour.

2 Research

Research should be conducted with honesty and integrity. Data collected using large, publicly funded facilities should be analysed, made available and published in a timely manner, as should the results of publicly supported studies.

Access to data, public or private, should be clearly acknowledged. Appropriation of unpublished data and results without explicit permission and attribution, if still within the proprietary period, or the fabrication or selective reporting of data and/or results with the intent to deceive or mislead, are unethical behaviours that should not be tolerated. Honest errors should be promptly acknowledged and corrected as soon as they are detected.

3 Publication and authorship

Authorship of publications is the primary means of assigning credit for work done. Therefore, the author list should include all, and only, individuals who have contributed significantly to the research or work reported in such publications. All authors share responsibility for the content of the publication and should have the opportunity to review the document before its submission. Moreover, all authors are responsible for promptly providing corrections or retractions in case an error is found. Minor contributions to the work, as well as sources of financial support, should be acknowledged and disclosed. Proper attribution of work of others should be given, typically in the form of a full and correct citation of relevant research and publications. Use of data obtained from others or from public databases should be fully acknowledged. Plagiarism, that is claiming the words or ideas of another as one's own without referencing their source, is unethical and unacceptable. Personal attacks and use of disrespectful or derogatory language are unethical and unacceptable. These statements apply not only to scholarly journals but to all forms of scientific communication, including (but not limited to) press releases, proposals, peer review, websites, popular books, social media, and podcasts.

4 Peer review

Review of manuscripts prior to publication, research and funding proposals and evaluation of colleagues for career advancement is an essential component of the scientific process. Referees have a special responsibility to act in a professional, fair, considered, confidential and well-justified manner. Conflicts of interest should be disclosed and treated according to the rules provided by the organization or institution promoting the activity. The use of any advantage obtained by means of acting as a reviewer is unethical and unacceptable.

5 Conflict of interest

Conflicts of interest are situations where, to an impartial observer, decisions could appear to be influenced by factors outside of the merits of the case. Possible conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, situations where the outcome of a selection or deliberation will affect the current or future status of an individual directly involved in the process, or of someone professionally or personally close to them. This applies, for instance, to decisions influencing publication acceptance, allocation of financial support, telescope and/or super-computing time, awarding prizes, recruiting, hiring and selecting speakers for conferences or meetings.

Management of conflict of interest is generally regulated by the organization or institute operating the activity, and participants should naturally adhere to those rules. We recommend, however, that participants should withdraw from the activity whenever possible and practise full disclosure at all times of any perceived conflict of interest.

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²https://policies.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/policy/Diversity_in_the_Workplace_Procedures.pdf