

## Cohab Events Code of Conduct

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### 1. Purpose

The primary focus of the Cohab Initiative is to promote partnerships with and between other organisations, communities and individuals working at global, national and local scales. The Cohab Initiative Secretariat supports this work through multiple on-line and in-person events every year, to strengthen international and cross-sector co-operation, to facilitate knowledge exchange and experience sharing, and to support the engagement of vulnerable, under-represented and marginalised groups.

The Cohab Initiative Secretariat (Cohab) is committed to hosting, convening, and supporting events which reflect that spirit of partnership - where every attendee can participate in a comfortable, inclusive, respectful and safe environment. It is essential that everyone who attends feels able to engage fully in discussions, social activities and excursions, without fear of any form of harassment, abuse, or discrimination, and without being the target of social or personal misconduct.

Cohab events are guided by the highest ethical and professional standards, and all participants are expected to behave with integrity and respect towards all participants attending or involved with any Cohab event, including Cohab staff, venue staff, and support staff.

### 2. Applicability

Cohab commits to implementing the Code of Conduct at all times when interacting with others in a professional capacity.

This Code of Conduct forms part of the terms of participation in any Cohab event. Participants, including Cohab's own events team, support staff and event partners, agree to be bound by this Code as a condition of their attendance and / or involvement.

For the purpose of the Code of Conduct, events shall include conferences, symposia, seminars, meetings, workshops, training courses or classes, assemblies, receptions, scientific and technical events, community events, exhibitions, side events and any other forum organized, hosted, facilitated or sponsored in whole or part by Cohab wherever it takes place, and any event or gathering that takes place at Cohab premises whether or not Cohab is co-ordinating, organising, hosting or sponsoring the event.

This Code of Conduct shall not affect the application of other relevant policies, regulations, rules and laws, including laws regulating the premises in which the Cohab event takes place and any applicable host venue, city, or country agreements. Neither shall this Code of Conduct affect the application of similar codes which may be in place for any event, whether those codes are set out by partner organisations, local authorities, venues, or service providers.



### 3. Expected behaviour

Cohab kindly asks all event participants to:

1. Treat fellow participants, and associated support staff, venue management, and others who may be utilising the venue with respect, courtesy, and consideration.
2. Appreciate the diversity of participants, including their perspectives and opinions.
3. Engage at all times in a professional, collaborative, and fair manner.
4. Communicate openly and respectfully, focusing on ideas rather than individuals.
5. Show utmost respect, patience and deference when others are communicating, refraining from unsolicited and unfair interruption.
6. Be respectful in any critique directed at another person's opinions, research, perspectives or conclusions, refraining from personal attacks or *ad hominem* criticism.
7. Keep the diversity of your audience in mind when preparing and delivering presentations and when chairing sessions, side events or workshops.
8. Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants' experience.
9. Respect the rules and policies of the conference venue and all venues associated with a Cohab event, including conference-related excursions and social events at off-site locations (for example, on field trips, visits to other venues or facilities, on transport, at restaurants, bars and hotels, etc.), and in Cohab event-related online fora, communities and social media.
10. Remain mindful of potential risks to others' safety or security, and bring any concerns about such risks to the attention of the event organisers or hosts,
11. Respect the local environment, including the immediate environment of the event and the hosting entity, the wider locality where the event is held, and the sites of event-associated excursions, receptions, or meals etc.

### 4. Prohibited conduct

The following forms of behaviour shall not be tolerated at Cohab events:

1. Discrimination or harassment based on age, creed, colour, gender or gender identity or expression, transgender status, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, marital or parental status, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, ethnicity, occupation, political affiliation, genetic information, national origin, or culture.
2. Harassment and intimidation, including any verbal, written, or physical conduct designed to discomfort, threaten, intimidate, or coerce other participants, conference organisers, or volunteers.
3. Sexual harassment, including any unwelcome sexual or sexualised comment, advance, gesture, imagery, request for sexual favours, or other unwanted behaviour or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
4. The display or sharing in any form of sexually inappropriate imagery, anecdotes, or jokes.
5. Retaliation, which includes any adverse action, including threats or intimidation, against an individual or groups of individuals on the basis of filing a complaint, cooperating with an investigation, or otherwise participating in the procedures under this Code of Conduct.
6. Intimidation and bullying, whether direct or indirect, such as unwanted or aggressive behaviour between parties that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
7. Any form of physical or verbal abuse of any other participant, support staff, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, service provider or other meeting attendee, including: inappropriate use of any form of sexual or sexualised images in public spaces or in presentations; threatening, shaming, or stalking any Cohab event participant; disrespectful or purposeful disruption of presentations; inappropriate comments presented in a joking manner.

8. Any offensive, discriminatory or disrespectful commentary, including (but not limited to) words and images that are derogatory or demeaning to individuals or groups, or which specifically aim to belittle a person's capabilities, professionalism, expertise, or perspectives.
9. Refusal to heed another person's request that any particular form of behaviour or approach directed toward them should stop.
10. Any intentional disturbance, damage, destruction, contamination or other purposeful despoilment of the event venue, associated property or local environment.

## 5. Complaint process

Cohab commits to providing an effective, reliable and confidential process for dealing with complaints. Any event participant who experiences any form of behaviour outlined above, or witnesses such behaviour being directed at another participant, may bring the matter to the attention of a Cohab conference co-ordinator, staff member or volunteer. We ask that such incidents are reported in a timely manner, and confidentially as far as is possible, in order to ensure that the matter can be addressed quickly, fairly and without bias.

Cohab event staff will be happy to assist participants to contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing misconduct to feel safe for the duration of the conference.

The Cohab Initiative Secretariat encourages participants to report blatantly unlawful behaviour directly to local law enforcement. The Secretariat commits to providing contact details for local law enforcement within the information package for each event. A participant should never knowingly make a false or misleading claim about prohibited conduct.

## 6. Response procedures

Without prejudice to any other response, remedy or resolution available to Cohab, Cohab reserves the right to take any reasonable and appropriate action in order to prevent or respond to prohibited behaviour, in the interest of the safety, comfort and well-being of participants at its events. Such action may include, but not be limited to:

1. Dialogues with the parties involved, separately and / or together, subject to the rights of all involved to being fairly heard and protected from additional distress or discomfort
2. Undertaking a fact-finding exercise
3. Requesting the perpetrator to immediately cease the offending behaviour
4. Removal of offending parties from the event
5. Suspending or terminating the perpetrator's access to the Cohab event and / or refusing registration at future Cohab events
6. Reporting the complaint to any investigative or disciplinary authority with jurisdiction over the person accused of harassment
7. Reporting the complaint to the employer or entity with jurisdiction over the person accused of harassment or other prohibited conduct for appropriate follow-up action

The victim of alleged harassment may also seek assistance from other relevant authorities, such as the police, bearing in mind the applicable legal framework.

The Code of Conduct will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. Cohab welcomes observations and recommendations on the content of the Code – please send communications by email to [events@cohabinitiative.org](mailto:events@cohabinitiative.org).



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Cohab Initiative Secretariat  
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<https://cohabinitiative.org>