

CCI ITP Code of Conduct

Version 1.0, 15 December 2023.

Principles

The International Time Programme (ITP) of the Comité Científico Internacional welcomes and respects proposals for observing time from all members of the astronomical community, regardless of racial identity, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, political affiliation, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, family and socio-economic status or cultural background, or other factors unrelated to scientific merit. The CCI has embraced, and aims to continuing to host, a vibrant, productive and collegial atmosphere for the development of astronomy, strengthened by the diverse background of its members and user community.

The success of the ITP relies on vigorous scientific and technical discourse within a framework of consideration and respect for all participants, including scientists, engineers, support staff at the Roque de los Muchachos and Teide Observatories and at all participating institutions, contractors, and external users of the observing facilities. This includes, but is not restricted to, interactions with other scientists, colleagues at different career stages including supervised post-docs and students, mentees, other group members, administrative, technical and other support staff, and members of the public, media, government, and funding agencies as appropriate. Interactions among ITP proposers and observers may occur in many different contexts, including in-person meetings, telecons, video conferences, and email exchanges. This Code of Conduct states the CCI's expectation of consideration, respect and appropriate behaviour in all of these interactions.

The CCI has strong interests in nurturing the careers of junior engineers and scientists, and protecting their stature and scientific freedom.

Equal treatment should be afforded to all colleagues, regardless of sex, gender, gender identity, racial identity, ethnic and national origin, socio-economic background, political affiliation, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability and any intersection thereof, or any other reason not related to scientific merit.

The CCI ITP should be a harassment-free environment. The Appendix quotes the definition of harassment adopted by the International Astronomical Union, which also applies within the context of the CCI ITP. Abusive, intimidating, humiliating or demeaning behaviour is unacceptable under any circumstance. Maximum effort should be put into creating inclusive, supportive, and stimulating environments, where people feel included, welcomed and valued. Free expression and a healthy discussion and exchange of scientific ideas should be encouraged at all levels, with cultural sensitivities in mind.

The invitation to participate in the CCI ITP programme is a privilege extended by the CCI, not a right of membership of any national or other community, and any member engaging in unprofessional behaviour places their invitation at risk.

Applicability

This code covers social conduct. Scientific conduct is covered by the [European Astronomical Society Ethics Statement](#). The CCI considers breaches of either the social or scientific code of conduct as equally serious. All ITP and CCI-related communications should be conducted in an environment that encourages the free expression and exchange of

scientific ideas. It is the responsibility of members to ensure that such discourse is conducted in a professional atmosphere in which all participants are treated with courtesy and respect.

The CCI notes that measures to deal with social misconduct are regulated at institutional and national levels, and this Code of Conduct does not supersede those regulations. ITP applicants should acquaint themselves with such institutional and national regulations, including the course of action to be taken when encountering inappropriate behaviour. In this context, institutional includes the regulations adopted by the individual telescope installations on which ITP time can be applied for and awarded.

Reporting Concerns about Violations

An individual who wishes to raise a concern about inappropriate behaviour or violation of this Code of Conduct can do so by contacting the CCI Scientific Secretary or Scientific Advisor, or their national representative in the CCI. As all telescopes involved in the ITP are also represented at the CCI, individuals can also reach out any member of these or other telescope staff that they trust, requesting them to contact the CCI Scientific Secretary or Advisor.

Concerns will be treated confidentially unless and until the person raising them agrees to have them communicated further or unless the person contacted is required to report a misconduct allegation by institutional rules or by law. Issues arising under this Code of Conduct will be treated with discretion to the extent practical, but if the complainant wishes to pursue a consideration of formal remedial actions, this may involve sharing some information with relevant CCI national representatives. Any conflicts of interest will be carefully monitored by the CCI Scientific Secretary, or in case they themselves have a potential conflict of interest, the Scientific Advisor.

All requests for formal investigation will be acknowledged within seven days, and complainants will be informed of who is the contact point for their case (if different from the person they contacted) so that they can inquire about the status of their complaint.

Investigating Complaints

Complaints will be investigated by a committee composed of the Scientific Secretary, the Scientific Advisor, and two voting members of the CCI as appointed by the CCI President, aiming for gender balance and omitting any of these individuals who have a conflict of interest. Being a target or source of the complaint, or being at the same institution as either the source or target of the complaint, will be automatically considered as a conflict. The committee will investigate the alleged violations, communicating with both the person or persons raising concerns and the alleged violator and with other individuals as necessary. A two-thirds majority of the committee must find that the respondent has committed the charges by a preponderance of evidence, i.e., it must be more likely true than not true, in order to bring sanctions.

Sanctions

Violations of this Code of Conduct can result in sanctions. Sanctions will depend on the severity and persistence of the misconduct. The most serious behaviour may be beyond the scope and training of the committee to investigate, and in such instances the committee will

be available to support the complainant if they choose to report to their own institution or other bodies as appropriate.

When considering sanctions, the committee will endeavour to protect the interests of scientists working with the respondent, in particular students and postdocs working with the respondent if they are not themselves in violation of Code of Conduct.

In the most severe cases, an individual may be barred from participating in the ITP programme, including debarment from access to observing time already allocated and/or scheduled, and/or data already taken.

Once the committee reaches a decision about the appropriate response, this will be described in a written communication to the individual or individuals being sanctioned; this written communication will be copied to the complainant. The written report is intended to ensure clarity of communication. Verbatim posting of this report in a public forum would be considered a violation of the Code of the Conduct. The respondent and the complainant will both have an opportunity to file a written response to the committee's decision within fourteen days. The committee reserves the right to change its decision on the basis of new evidence at any time and will notify both parties of any changes.

Appendix: Definitions

Complainant: The person who believes a violation of the code of conduct has happened and has brought that matter to the attention of relevant person(s) in the CCI.

Respondent: The person who has been accused of a violation of the Code of Conduct, and is asked to respond to that.

Harassment: The definition of harassment is adopted from the [IAU statements on professional values](#).

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 sexual harassment, which refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Because of the international nature of the CCI, it is important to realise 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.

The CCI also follows the [EAS Ethics Statement](#):

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.

Ownership and Acknowledgements

This Code of Conduct is owned by the CCI. It has been authored by Johan Knapen (Scientific Secretary), based on the WEAVE Code of Conduct, which in turn was inspired by the [SDSS Code of Conduct](#) and the [European Astronomical Society Ethics Statement](#).

The Code of Conduct has been accepted and approved by the members of the CCI in December 2023.