



Australasian Cognitive Neuroscience Society Inc.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Effective from 30 November 2022

The Australasian Cognitive Neuroscience Society Inc. (**'ACNS'** or **'the Society'**) was incorporated as a non-profit association in New South Wales in April 2012. The following document is the ACNS' Code of Conduct which outlines the expectations of behaviour for Members, and of Non-Members who attend any ACNS Event.

1. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct and Ethics (**'the Code'**) aims to promote and strengthen our diversity by building an inclusive and respectful professional environment that Members and Non-Members find welcoming and open.
- 1.2 The ACNS is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive space at all organised ACNS Events, both in person and online. This Code will outline the Society's expected behaviours with the aim to create a safe space for Members and Non-Members participating in conferences, online webinars, social events and all online content posted relating to the activities of the ACNS and its members.
- 1.3 ACNS wants to encourage respect, inclusivity, and cooperation in our pursuit of excellence in cognitive neuroscience research and education. We expect that all individuals who participate in any ACNS Events should adhere to and demonstrate the expected behaviour outlined in this Code. The Code is designed to create a pathway to manage undesirable behaviour of any person who is a Member of the ACNS or otherwise attends an ACNS Event.
- 1.4 This Code:
 - (a) applies to all ACNS Members;
 - (b) applies to all Non-Members who register for, attend or participate in any ACNS Event;
 - (c) continues to apply to a Member even after that Member's membership has ceased, if that Constituent Member breached this Code whilst they were a Member;
 - (d) may be amended by ACNS from time to time pursuant to the Constitution.

1.5 For the purposes of this Code,

- (a) **'Attribute'** has the meaning given to it at Clause 2.3(a) of this Code;
- (b) **'Code'** or **'Code of Conduct'** means this code of conduct;
- (c) **'Constitution'** means the constitution of the Society as amended from time to time;
- (d) **'Committee'** means the committee of the Society appointed pursuant to the Constitution;
- (e) **'Delegate'** means a person (who must be a Member) appointed by the Committee to lead the investigation process pursuant to this Code;
- (f) **'Event'** means any ACNS event whether it be online or in person, and includes but is not limited to any function, seminar, conference, online webinar or other planned social occasion.
- (g) **'Member'** means a person taken to be an ACNS member pursuant to the Constitution;
- (h) **'Misconduct'** means a breach or attempted breach of Clauses 2.2(b), 2.3, 2.4 or 2.5 of this Code, irrespective of whether such breach or attempted breach is carried out in person or within an online forum (for example, by way of social media); and
- (i) **'Non-Member'** means any person who registers for, attends or participates in any ACNS Event, who is not a Member.

2. MISCONDUCT

2.1 Misconduct:

- (a) Any Member who engages in Misconduct may be sanctioned in accordance with this Code.
- (b) For the purposes of this Code, any Member or Non-member will be deemed to have engaged in Misconduct if they:
 - (i) are complicit in, encourage, sanction, cover up or authorise another person's Misconduct; or
 - (ii) agree with any other person (irrespective of whether they are a Member) to engage in, or intentionally give the impression to any other person that the Member is attempting or agreeing to engage in Misconduct; and
 - (iii) have engaged in the conduct deliberately or recklessly or negligently (other than where intent is a necessary element of the type of Misconduct).

2.2 **General Behaviour:**

- (a) ACNS prioritises the wellbeing of its Members and the wider associated community, and expects that whenever a Member is representing the ACNS, whether that be at an ACNS Event or attending any other social function within the community on behalf of the ACNS (irrespective of whether that event be online or in person), to adhere to:
 - (i) uphold the reputation of the ACNS, the profession of cognitive neuroscience and shall avoid any action which will adversely affect the good standing of the professional community;
 - (ii) encourage and support fellow Members in their professional development, and, where possible, provide opportunities for the development of new entrants to the profession of cognitive neuroscience; and
 - (iii) act with integrity towards fellow professionals in the field of cognitive neuroscience, and to other persons with whom they engage with in a professional capacity.
- (b) A Member must not engage in any of the following conduct:
 - (i) offensive behaviour, including offensive, obscene, abusive, provocative, indecent or insulting gestures or language;
 - (ii) physically assaulting another person;
 - (iii) provocation or incitement of hatred or violence;
 - (iv) intimidating another person or creating a hostile or unsafe environment at any ACNS Event;
 - (v) damaging property at an ACNS Event;
 - (vi) any conduct (including making any oral or written statement) that is disparaging otherwise brings, or may damage ACNS' reputation, or bring ACNS, any of its sponsors or Members into disrepute; or
 - (vii) any conduct that compromises the safety, welfare or health of any person who attends an ACNS Event.

2.3 **Discrimination:**

- (a) Members and Non-Members must not engage in any Discrimination towards a person on account of an attribute such as but not limited to their race, colour, religion, language, politics, national or ethnic origin, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, relationship status, pregnancy, intellectual or physical impairment, or any other attribute specified under any state, territory or commonwealth law (**Attribute**).
- (b) For the purposes of Clause 2.3(a), Discrimination includes:

- (i) publicly disparaging or vilifying;
- (ii) inciting hatred towards, or contempt for or ridicule of; or
- (iii) otherwise discriminating against (as provided by any state, territory or commonwealth laws),

a person on account of an Attribute.

2.4 **Bullying and Harassment and Victimisation**

- (a) Members and Non-Members must not engage in any conduct which amounts to bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment (including sexual harassment) or any unwelcome physical, verbal or sexual conduct which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated where that reaction is reasonable in the circumstances.
- (b) Members and Non-Members must not victimise another person for reporting or indicating an intent to report a complaint.
- (c) Members and Non-Members must not participate in any form of harassment or bullying, which is defined as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards other Members, Non-Members, or any other person participating in an ACNS Event, which includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) abusive or offensive language or comments;
 - (ii) aggressive and intimidating behaviour;
 - (iii) belittling or humiliating comments;
 - (iv) practical jokes or initiation rituals; and
 - (v) unjustified criticism or complaint.

2.5 **Criminal Offence:**

Members and Non-Members will be taken to have engaged in Misconduct if they commit, or are charged with, a criminal offence.

2.6 **Cooperation with Investigation**

Members and Non-Members must comply with any cooperation obligations that they may be asked to do under this Code, which may include to assist a Delegate as necessary for them to action their duties pursuant to this Code.

2.7 **Non-Compliance with Disciplinary Process:**

- (a) Members and Non-Members must follow the directions of the Committee in connection with a disciplinary process which they are subject to.

- (b) Members and Non-Members must respect and comply with any decision or determination of a Delegate or the Committee arising from a disciplinary process or proceeding which they are subject to.

3. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

3.1 Reporting Breaches

- (a) A Member or Non-Member who is aware of, or reasonably believes that there may be, Misconduct or any other breach of this Code is encouraged to report such a breach, immediately after becoming aware of such a breach, to ACNS directly to a Committee member or otherwise by way of email to the email address published on ACNS' website for the reporting of such matters.
- (b) Any Member or Non-Member not behaving in accordance with the terms of the Code of Conduct at an Event organised by the Society may be asked to leave or otherwise excluded or removed, and they will not be entitled to a refund of any monies paid.
- (c) Any inappropriate behaviour of any Members or Non-Members may be investigated, discussed, and an appropriate course of action will be taken by ACNS in accordance with this Code.

3.2 Confidentiality

- (a) Any report made to ACNS (including the identity of a person making a report) will be kept confidential and only disclosed to those Committee members, Members or Non-Members who have a need to know the information, except to the extent such information:
 - (i) must be disclosed as required by law or any regulatory body;
 - (ii) must be disclosed as permitted by or is required to fulfil the objectives of this Code; or
 - (iii) is already in the public domain.

3.3 Cooperation with Third Parties

The conduct prohibited under this Code may also be a criminal offence and/or a breach of other applicable laws or regulations. This Code is intended to supplement such laws and regulations with further rules of conduct for Members and Non-Members. This Code is not intended, and should not be interpreted, construed or applied, to prejudice or undermine in any way the application of such laws and regulations.

4. **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE AND SANCTIONS:**

4.1 **Procedure**

- (a) ACNS may enforce the terms of this Code and invoke the sanctions only if it has given the party alleged to have infringed this Code:
 - (i) reasonable details of the alleged infringement;
 - (ii) notice of possible sanctions; and
 - (iii) the opportunity to be heard in relation to the issues of infringement and sanction.

4.2 **Investigation Process:**

- (a) ACNS aims to address alleged breaches as quickly and informally as the circumstances allow. Once a Delegate has been appointed to investigate the alleged breach, the relevant parties will be notified.
- (b) A number of decisions will be made in the process of handling allegations of Code of Conduct breaches, including:
 - (i) the initial decision as to how to handle the report of the alleged breach;
 - (ii) reporting any criminal activity to the police;
 - (iii) deciding whether to suspend a Member during the investigation of the alleged breach; or
 - (iv) determining whether the alleged behaviour has occurred and, if so, whether it constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- (c) During an investigation into an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, the person whose interest may be adversely affected by a decision will:
 - (i) be informed by the Delegate (in writing if the circumstances allow) of the allegations against them in as much detail as possible to enable them to understand the nature of the alleged breach,
 - (ii) be provided with reasonable time to respond to the allegation (in writing if the circumstances allow), and
 - (iii) have their response taken into account in the decision-making process.

4.3 **Sanctions**

- (a) The Committee may sanction a member as they see is reasonably fit according to the findings of the Delegate.

- (b) Sanctions may include, but is not limited to:
- (i) a reprimand or warning,
 - (ii) the removal of a member of the Committee's position/titles,
 - (iii) reporting Misconduct to a Member's employer,
 - (iv) suspension of a Member's membership for a set period of time depending upon the severity of the Misconduct,
 - (v) termination of a Member's membership and expulsion from the ACNS, with no future prospects for reapplication, or
 - (vi) for Non-Members, removal or banishment from certain or all future ACNS Events.
- (c) The Sanction of a member does not take effect until:
- (i) the expiration of the period within which the member is entitled to appeal against the resolution concerned pursuant to Clause 4.4; or
 - (ii) if within that period the member exercises a right of appeal within the Constitution, unless and until the Society confirms the resolution pursuant to the Constitution.

whichever is the later

4.4 **Appeals**

If a Member or Non-Member disputes a decision made by a Delegate, or a sanction imposed by ACNS on a Member, the process of appeal shall be dealt with as a dispute pursuant to the Constitution

5. **ENFORCEMENT**

This Code comes into force on [date] 2022 and any amendments made to this Code come into effect immediately upon publication of such amendments by the ACNS.