



# ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

## ANNEX 1

### ISF INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS

The International Seed Federation (ISF), in line with its engagement to fostering the “3-G” Diversity principles (Generation, Gender, and Geography), is strongly committed to supporting and promoting diversity and inclusiveness within the ISF staff, ISF volunteers and all delegates and members attending ISF events worldwide.

The ISF is dedicated to organizing, hosting, and facilitating the ISF events in which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful, and safe environment. ISF events are guided by the highest ethical and professional standards, and all participants are expected to behave with integrity and respect towards all other participants attending or involved with any ISF event or activity.

At ISF events and in ISF virtual environments, it is the Federation’s top priority to ensure a safe, healthy, discrimination-free atmosphere that openly accepts all individuals regardless of age, ethnicity, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression or any other group identity.

This policy applies to all ISF activities, including:

- ISF World Seed Congress, conferences, workshops and symposia;
- ISF meetings;
- Exchanges among Board of Director, Coordination Groups, Advisory Groups, Experts Groups, committees or other ISF bodies, publications, and communications sent through ISF communication channels and carried out in the context of ISF activities.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

The ISF expects its staff, members, volunteers, and event participants to be guided by the highest standard of ethics, to communicate professionally and constructively, whether in person or virtually, to handle dissent or disagreement with courtesy, dignity, and an open mind, being respectful when providing feedback, and being open to alternate points of view.

### UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The ISF does not tolerate harassment of ISF members, ISF staff, or other persons involved in ISF events and activities. Any improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or is reasonably perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person is prohibited at ISF events or activities.

Forms of unacceptable behaviour at any ISF activity or event are, inter alia,:

- **Abuse:** any action directed at an individual that interferes substantially with that person’s participation; or causes that person to fear for his/her personal safety. This includes threats, intimidation, bullying, stalking, or other types of abuse;

- **Discriminatory harassment:** includes offensive verbal or written comments and negative behaviour, sustained disruption of talks or other events, either in real or virtual space, including those that are related to or are based upon gender, age, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion, relation or other group identity;
- **Sexual harassment:** any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or is reasonably perceived to cause offense or humiliation. Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal, or physical nature, including written and electronic communications.

## ISF ETHICS TASK FORCE

The ISF Ethics Task Force is a permanent group which has the responsibility of:

- Defining and updating (whenever necessary) the "ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct";
- Overseeing the application and implementation of the "ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct";
- Assessing reported cases of violation of the "ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct";
- Deciding on immediate actions to prevent any further damage, in the case of any imminent danger;
- Acting as Ad-hoc Investigation Board.
  - By investigating for a specific case of violation of the "ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct". It has the responsibility of:
    - Deliberating the results of the investigation;
    - Elaborating and presenting to the ISF Board of Directors recommendations on the consequences (if any) of the violation case, based on the investigation results;
    - Communicating with all parties concerned with the investigation.
- The ISF Ethics Task Force is composed of persons not having any conflict of interest pertaining to the specific case of alleged violation.

## COMPOSITION

- **Chair**

- ISF President

- **Members**

- ISF 1<sup>st</sup> President
- One (1) ISF BOD member (associate)
- One (1) ISF BOD member (ordinary)
- ISF Secretary General

- **Secretary**

- ISF Secretary General

Members of the ISF Ethics Task Force having a potential or actual conflict of interest pertaining to the specific case of alleged violation shall not participate in the assessment and decision-making process of the case.

## HOW TO REPORT AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE "ISF CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT"

If any participant in ISF activities or events would like to report on experiencing or noticing an alleged violation of the "ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct", a written report on the alleged violation shall be sent to the ISF Ethics Task Force at [report@worldseed.org](mailto:report@worldseed.org). The ISF Secretary General can also be informed in person [m.keller@worldseed.org](mailto:m.keller@worldseed.org).

A report on an alleged violation shall never be knowingly false or misleading.

Appropriate sanctions also will be taken toward any individual who knowingly makes a false allegation of unacceptable behavior.

## PROCEDURE IN RESPONSE TO A REPORT ON AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE “ISF CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT”

- The ISF Ethics Task Force decides whether any imminent danger exists and, if yes, decides on immediate actions to prevent any further damage;
- The ISF Ethics Task Force may request additional information from the claimant to decide whether an investigation shall be initiated or whether the incident can be closed without an investigation;
- In case an investigation is deemed necessary, the ISF Ethics Task Force acts as Ad-hoc Investigation Board and elects an Ad-hoc Chair and two members;
- The Ad-hoc Investigation Board shall contact the accused in writing informing them about the report on the alleged violation and requesting a written statement;
- When necessary, the Ad-hoc Investigation Board may conduct interviews with the claimant, the accused, and potential witnesses;
- The Ad-hoc Investigation Board shall deliberate on the findings and elaborate recommendations on consequences (if any);
- The Ad-hoc Investigation Board shall communicate to the ISF Ethics Task Force;
- The ISF Ethics Task Force shall review and validate the recommendations of the Ad-hoc Investigation Board;
- The ISF Ethic Task Force shall communicate the final decision and consequences (if any) to the Board of Directors for approval and later on to the accused and the claimant, officially closing the investigation.

All communication between the Ad-hoc Investigation Board and the claimant/accused/witnesses about specific case of alleged violation shall be properly documented (filed or recorded).

All information about a specific case of alleged violation, including names of all parties involved, shall be protected by the utmost confidentiality. Disclosing any confidential information is considered a violation of the “ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct”.

## CONSEQUENCES OF A VIOLATION OF THE “ISF CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT”

In case of a confirmed violation of the “ISF Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct” the ISF Ethics Task Force after approval by the Board of Directors reserves the right to impose consequences (depending on level of violation). In case of imminent danger, the ISF Task Force may directly need to impose consequences, whereby the Board of Directors is informed later.

Consequences may include:

- Temporary suspension from participating in ISF activities;
- Temporary suspension from participating in ISF events;
- Permanent ban from participating in ISF activities;
- Permanent ban from participating in ISF events.