

## Code of Conduct for International Debate Education Association (IDEA)

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Code of Conduct International Debate Education Association (IDEA) is an organization that facilitates youth work by empowering young people for personal growth and development, building interpersonal relationships, and promoting inclusion and active participation in society. IDEA activities include, but are not limited to, debate club meetings, workshops and seminars, debate tournaments, public debates, roundtables, focus groups, and more.

In this environment, it is essential that all participants have a common understanding of the standards of behavior expected of them to maintain a safe and enjoyable event for everyone involved. This is especially important for any IDEA or external staff or volunteers working with program participants, many of whom are minors. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is thus to help maintain a pleasant, safe and healthy environment for all participants.

1.2 To whom does the Code of Conduct apply? This Code of Conduct shall apply to the following: (a) IDEA staff (b) IDEA volunteers (coaches, trainers, debate adjudicators, and others) (c) external contracted staff (d) external/visiting volunteers (e) young people participating in any IDEA activities (f) individuals assigned other roles by IDEA.

All of the above will be referred to as "programme participants" in this document.

1.3 All participants must agree to abide by this Code of Conduct: (a) Before the start of each IDEA activity, all participants shall sign the undertaking at the conclusion of this Code of Conduct that they will abide by this Code of Conduct for the duration of the event. (b) In case of long-term IDEA activities, such as debate meetings taking place periodically for the duration of the school year, programme participants will have to sign this Code of Conduct at least once per year. (c) At least one parent or guardian of every minor (person under the age of 18) attending any IDEA activity shall also sign the undertaking. (c) No participant shall be allowed to be involved in IDEA activities unless: (i) they have signed such an undertaking (ii) in the case of a participant who is a minor, one parent or guardian has signed the undertaking.

1.4 Who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct? (a) All participants shall ensure that they comply with the Code of Conduct for the duration of their participation in IDEA activities. (b) In case of debate clubs, each debate club needs to be represented by at least one debate coach responsible for the club participants' compliance with the Code of Conduct and the delivery of signed Codes of Conduct to IDEA. (c) The debate coach shall: (i) be at least 18 years of age/ over the age of majority; and (ii) be either a member of the school staff or a volunteer with IDEA, in which case they will have signed a volunteering contract with IDEA.

## 2. What is expected of participants?

2.1 What participants must do At IDEA activities, all participants must: (a) behave in a respectful and courteous manner towards other participants in the event, guests and any type of staff, and members of the public attending IDEA activities; (b) abide by the relevant national laws; (c) abide by any rules, guidelines and restrictions set by IDEA, such as the IDEA Code of Ethics and principles of youth work.

2.2 What participants must not do During IDEA activities, participants must not: (a) make insulting comments, jokes, insults, or insinuations about another person's culture, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation or which may be construed as being derogatory or as harassment, whether in the presence of that person or in any other forum in which the person may not be present; (b) stalk or physically harass another individual; (c) engage in any form of violence or threats of violence; (d) engage in any form of sexual harassment; (e) take or use other people's property without permission; (f) intentionally cause damage to the property of other individuals or legal persons; (g) consume any substance which they are not legally entitled to consume, or supply any such substances to others; (h) consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

2.3 Relationships Any romantic or sexually-based relationship during or outside of IDEA activities between a minor and an adult acting as a volunteer, staff member, coach, adjudicator, shadow adjudicator, lecturer, or an adult in any other way associated with or participating in the IDEA activity in question, will not be tolerated and shall be treated as sexual harassment regardless of intention or apparent consent.

## 3. Enforcement of the Code of Conduct

3.1 Breaches can be reported to the IDEA Board of Directors or other IDEA bodies or personnel appointed for the purpose (e.g. complaints officers) If a participant believes that another participant has breached this Code of Conduct, they may report the breach to the IDEA Board of Directors or other IDEA bodies or personnel appointed for the purpose (e.g. complaints officers).

3.2 Adult programme participants (e.g. staff and/or volunteers) have a duty to report Code of Conduct breaches Adult programme participants have a duty to prioritize the safety and well-being of other programme participants, and minors in particular, over other concerns, including the confidentiality principle in working with young people and collegiality towards other adult programme participants.

3.3 What happens after a suspected breach of the Code of Conduct has been reported? The disciplinary measures in place in cases where a suspected breach of the Code of Conduct has been reported to any body of the organization are defined as follows:

If the Board of Directors estimates that the complaint should be acted upon, a body will be formed which must issue a proposal for disciplinary measures or reject the application within 30 days.

The composition of the decision-making body will not be defined in advance, except by instructions that it must include representatives of both sexes, persons of appropriate qualifications to decide on the application, at least two debate club leaders, and one member of the Board of Directors. The work of the body is confidential.

On the basis of the recommendation and in accordance with the gravity of the misdemeanor, the Board of Directors will impose a disciplinary measure on the member. The Board of Directors may impose the following disciplinary measures on the members of the organization:

(i) written warning; (ii) temporary denial of assistance and services of the organization; (iii) temporary or permanent ban on access to certain activities of the organization; (iv) temporary or permanent exclusion from the organization.

In addition to the above, the decision-making body shall be responsible for: (a) being available to participants to receive complaints about breaches of this Code of Conduct (b) investigating complaints (c) supporting the complainant appropriately, which could include referring him/her to: (i) a counsellor (ii) a doctor (iii) a lawyer (iv) the police (v) their parents (vi) an adult member of their family or contingent.

3.4 The decision-making body can deal with some complaints themselves If the Body considers it appropriate, they may discuss the complaint with the complainant and the person about whom the complaint has been made to try to resolve the matter by mediation so that both parties are satisfied with the outcome of the matter.

3.5 Complaints about the application of the Code of Conduct; The code of conduct is written by the Statute of the organisation and the Code of Ethics. All complaints about its application should be reported to the organisation's Supervisory Board for review. The Supervisory Board is obligated to respond to any complaint within 30 days.

3.6 What can the Supervisory Board do? (a) The Supervisory Board may: (i) decide to take no further action and elaborate the decision for the complainant; (ii) make a decision about the complaint without a hearing (but it may not suspend or expel the person complained about without a hearing) or; (iii) hold a hearing about the complaint. (b) Regardless of which option it takes, the Supervisory Board may also refer the complaint to the relevant authorities (such as the police) if it considers that this is appropriate.

3.7 What are the rights of a person complained about at a hearing?

If the Decision-making body or the Supervisory Board hold a hearing, the person complained about must:

(a) be told what the complaint is about; (b) be told the date and time of the hearing; (c) be allowed to participate in the hearing and to be heard; (d) be allowed to bring a person of their choice with them to the meeting with whom they may confer before and during the hearing; (e) be allowed to remain silent during the hearing if they so choose; (f) be allowed not to attend the hearing if they so choose;

3.8 A person complained about who is under the age of 18 shall have special protection and assistance (a) If the person complained about is under the age of 18 and the Decision-making body or the Supervisory Board deem it necessary to hold a hearing, they shall: (i) ensure that the person complained about fully understands their rights as set out in paragraph 3.7 above before the hearing begins; (ii) ensure that an adult chosen by the person complained about attends the hearing to support the person complained; (iii) if the person complained about is unable to choose an adult to attend with them, select an adult to take on this role. (b) The adult chosen in accordance with paragraph 3.8(a) shall attend the hearing and shall be able to speak on behalf of the person complained about at the hearing.

3.9 Hearings are confidential Until a decision is made about a complaint, details of the complaint and the hearing shall be kept confidential and shall be discussed only with the people participating in the hearing.

3.10 The Supervisory Board's decision is final The Supervisory Board's decision shall be final. The person complained about is not able to appeal it, but where the person complained about has been expelled for longer than a year, they may apply for readmittance.

3.11 Who must be told about the Decision-making body's or Supervisory Board's decision? The Chairperson of the Body or Board must give a written copy of the decision to: (a) the complainant; (b) the person complained about; (c) where the person complained about is a minor, their coach and parents/guardians.

3.12 Where a hearing has led to a suspension or expulsion

Where a complaint has led to a suspension or expulsion, the Chairperson of the Body or Board must give a written copy of the decision to: (a) the people mentioned above in rule 3.11; (b) the Board of Directors of the organization.

3.13 Limitation on disclosing complaints decisions The written decision of the Complaints Committee shall not be disclosed, published, produced, copied, or otherwise communicated to people other than those specified in 3.11 above unless: (a) The complainant and the person complained about agree; or (b) Disclosure of the written decision is required by the law.



Undertaking required to be signed prior to participation in the organization's activities

Undertaking by all those participating in activities organized or facilitated by the organization:

FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name, ID number), residing at \_\_\_\_\_ (full address), undertake that:

(a) I have read and understood the Code of Conduct above, and (b) I will abide by the Code of Conduct for the duration of my participation at activities organized and facilitated by the organization, and (c) If my participation in the organization's activities extends beyond 12 months, I will sign a new Code of Conduct.

Signed .....

Dated .....

FOR PARTICIPANTS OVER THE AGE OF 18

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name, ID number), residing at \_\_\_\_\_ (full address), undertake that:

(a) I declare that I have never been the subject of any investigation, concern or disciplinary process in relation to my contact or care of children by any official body, and (b) I declare that I have never been under investigation, or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity, due to allegations of inappropriate behavior towards a child, and (c) I declare that I have never been disqualified from working with children or young people, and (d) I agree to enclose a certificate of non-conviction issued by the relevant authority as an annex to this Code of Conduct.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_