



WHS Meeting Code of Conduct

September 15, 2021

1 Purpose

The Willi Hennig Society (hereby referred to as WHS) aims to be inclusive to the largest number of contributors, with the most varied and diverse backgrounds possible. As such, we are committed to providing a friendly, safe, and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, and religion.

This Code of Conduct policy outlines our expectations for all those who participate at WHS functions, which are defined as WHS-organized business meetings, academic sessions, online presentation series, and social events. WHS functions include both meetings organized exclusively by WHS (such as the annual meetings) and meetings organized by other organizations that feature WHS sections (such as workshops), hereafter referred to as WHS functions. Social events are considered a part of WHS functions and include events organized by the WHS Council and events organized unofficially by WHS annual meeting organizers or members, such as student events and other impromptu social events.

2 Expected Behavior

We expect all participants at WHS functions (attendees, members, vendors, exhibitors, contractors, staff, venue staff, and guests) to abide by this Code of Conduct policy in all venues at WHS functions, including ancillary events and official and unofficial social gatherings.

- Communicate openly with kindness, respect, and consideration for others, valuing a diversity of views and opinions (including those you may not share)
 - Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions
 - Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech
 - Photography during presentations is permitted but follow guidance from the organizers or session moderators when it is not. Video recording of entire presentations is not permitted.
 - Turn off any ringers or otherwise disrupting devices during oral or poster sessions
 - Alert the ombudsperson if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this Code of Conduct policy
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3 Unacceptable Behavior

It is important that the WHS function to be a place where no attendee or staff is ever belittled, criticized or made to feel unsafe.

Unacceptable behaviors include:

- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory or demeaning speech or actions by any participant in WHS functions, at all related events, and in one-on-one communications carried out in the context of WHS. WHS event venues may be shared with members of the public; please be respectful to all patrons of these locations.
- Harmful intent or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, age, appearance, or other personal characteristics
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public (including presentation slides)
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Harassing photography or recording
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events
- Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact
- Real or implied threat of physical harm
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm

Harassment committed in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behavior. Remember that sexist, racist, and other exclusionary jokes can be offensive to those around you.

Retaliation for reporting harassment is a violation of this Code of Conduct policy.

Reporting harassment in bad faith is a violation of this Code of Conduct policy.

4 Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior from any participant at WHS functions, including attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, contractors, volunteer leaders, vendors, venue staff, and anyone with decision-making authority, will not be tolerated.

If a participant engages in unacceptable behavior, the WHS Council reserves the right to take action that the WHS Council deems appropriate. The WHS Council reserves the right to remove an individual from WHS functions without warning or refund, and to prohibit an individual from attendance at future WHS functions. For unacceptable behaviors that may be criminal in nature, the WHS Council reserves the right to inform local police and the individual's employer of the incident.

5 If you are subject to, or witness, unacceptable behavior

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact the designated ombudsperson (see also below) responsible for acting as a liaison between participants and the WHS Council. The designated ombudsperson will be identified by name and contact information in the event's program book or at the beginning of an online event. **All reports are confidential.**

If your safety is threatened, please contact venue security (if available) or local police.

If possible, provide the following information, preferably in writing:

- Identifying information (name, appearance) of the participant doing the harassing
 - The behavior that was in violation of this policy
 - The approximate time of the behavior (if different from the time the report was made)
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- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- Other people involved in, or witnessing, the incident

If needed or requested, the ombudsperson will help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the WHS function.

- You may choose to submit an anonymous report. Please note that while the ombudsperson will keep track of anonymous reports, she/he cannot take action on a single anonymous report without further corroboration.
- The ombudsperson will gather all relevant details and information (verbal or written) from the reporter, the target (if they are not the reporter), and witnesses. Please note that investigations may extend beyond the end of the meeting
- The outcomes of investigations and subsequent sanctions will not be made public; however, those reporting incidents may request to be informed of the outcome
- In addition to the actions that may be taken at meetings (as described above), violators of the Code of Conduct policy will receive written documentation of the actions taken at and following the meeting

6 WHS Meeting Ombudsperson

WHS Council will designate an ombudsperson for all WHS annual meetings, WHS-organized workshops, and WHS-organized online presentation series. The ombudsperson will be present and contactable throughout the event. The ombudsperson's name and contact information will be included in the program book and announced during the opening remarks of WHS functions or communicated electronically for online presentation series. The ombudsperson can solicit assistance and support in investigations from the President of the WHS plus at least one other member of the WHS Council as deemed by the President.

7 Addressing Grievances

If you feel you have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating this Code of Conduct policy you should notify the WHS Council or ombudsperson with a concise description of your grievance. Your grievance will be handled in accordance with our existing governing policies.

8 Policy on Liability

WHS shall not be responsible for any defamatory, offensive, or illegal conduct of all WHS function participants, and shall not be held liable for personal injury, property damage, theft or damage of any kind suffered by the participants at or in connection with WHS functions. By registering for and attending any WHS functions or events associated with WHS functions, each participant acknowledges that they have read this Code of Conduct policy and disclaimer, and expressly releases WHS and its executive, directors, employees, volunteers, or agents from any and all liability in connection with WHS functions as provided herein.
