ICAR 2020
CODE OF CONDUCT

October 2019: Developed by the NAASC Diversity and Inclusion Task Force drawing heavily from existing efforts; references, re-use and acknowledgement policy at bottom of this Code.

ICAR 2020 Code of Conduct ("ICAR Code")
By participating in ICAR 2020 all participants agree to abide by the ICAR Code and the procedures by which Code violations are addressed and resolved.

The North American Arabidopsis Steering Committee (NAASC) [1] is organizing the 31st International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR) at the University of Washington, Seattle (6-10 July 2020). We are committed to ensuring that the meeting is a welcoming and inclusive space for community engagement, the sharing of ideas, knowledge exchange, and for developing networks and collaborative opportunities for all who participate.

To achieve this, NAASC will, to the best of our abilities, provide a safe and productive environment that promotes equal opportunity and treatment of all participants that is free of harassment, coercion, and discrimination.

- We will require all registered conference participants (including speakers, exhibitors, staff, contractors, volunteers and guests) to agree to abide by the following Code of Conduct ("Code").
- The Code applies to all conference participants regardless of seniority, level of authority, or celebrity.
- This Code applies within the ICAR 2020 conference venue and associated events and locations where ICAR 2020 delegates are present, including but not limited to: sessions, social events, lodging (dormitory space, hotels), and pre/post event gatherings (as applicable).

What is a Code of Conduct and What are the Desired Outcomes?
- A code of conduct provides clear guidelines for ethical behavior. [2], [3] "Codes guide productive and acceptable behavior when followed [4] and create an inclusive environment that welcomes all voices, especially those who are historically marginalized."
- "Creating codes that outline behavior to ensure safe, inclusive, and equitable environments is one important avenue to discourage discrimination and harassment and promote an inclusive environment." [2], [3]
- Propagating inclusive and positive standards of behavior in off-campus contexts such as conferences will improve the effectiveness of efforts made within organizations to increase diversity and retention of marginalized groups in STEM. [5]

Why is a Conference Code of Conduct Necessary?
Rationale
1. It is unjust to treat people differently in ways that deny to some of them significant social and professional benefits. Such treatment is demoralizing and diminishes recruitment, retention, and advancement prospects of minorities and marginalized groups in our scientific community.
2. Differentials of power at academic conferences contribute to the exclusion and marginalization of members of the professional community. [6] E.g., "Discrimination and harassment at conferences negatively impact marginalized researchers' participation in science." [5], [7], [8] "However, recognizing and remedying these problems in academia is challenging for reasons that are deeply entrenched in the culture of science, and in how institutions have long operated, ... Scientists pride themselves on objectivity, and may therefore be slow to see how unconscious biases alter their judgement and actions." [5] [9]
3. Empirical evidence indicates that power differentials historically have harmed our colleagues who are women, people of color, and LGBTQ, among other identity groups. E.g., "Women disproportionately experience sexual harassment at conferences, including gender harassment, unwanted sexual advances, and inappropriate remarks." [5], [6], [10] Productive conference networking occurs during evening conversations that often involve alcohol, and/or occur at locations removed from the conference venues, events which increase liability and potentially compromise the safety of participants. [2] Such treatment is one of several contributing factors unrelated to ability that contributes to gender inequality in science

careers. [11] Evidence also indicates that academic and research excellence premised on inclusivity and equity benefits the profession as a whole as well as improves the professional lives and experiences of all members of the community. [11]

4. As a community we strive to mitigate the unintended but detrimental effects of discrimination and exclusion. We desire to preserve the integrity and quality of research while improving the success rates of marginalized scientists.

5. Therefore, conferences organized and sponsored/supported by this organization should expect to implement more inclusive behavior at all levels of participation.

ICAR 2020 Code of Conduct ("ICAR Code")

By participating in ICAR 2020 participants agree to abide by the ICAR Code and the procedures by which Code violations are addressed and resolved. Any form of behavior to exclude, intimidate, or cause discomfort is a violation of the ICAR Code. We do not tolerate behavior that is disrespectful to ICAR participants or to any associated personnel (e.g. hotel or meeting staff). We do not tolerate discrimination based on characteristics that include, but are not limited to, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, citizenship, nationality, ethnic or social origin, pregnancy, familial status, veteran status, genetic information, religion or belief (or lack thereof), age, education, socio-economic status, and experience level. [12]

Table 1. Operationalizing key terms (adapted from [6])

Term	Definition
Bystander intervention	Bystander intervention occurs when an individual witnesses an incident of harassment or incivility, feels responsible for intervening, and takes action ([5], [13]).
Diversity	The range of proportional representation of people with various categorical identities (e.g. race, gender, socioeconomic status) within a group [14].
Inclusion	The degree to which all people feel welcome, safe and included in a group or structure [15].
Equity	In contrast to equality (or sameness), equity is the systemic pursuit of fairness and justice [15]. Equity reinforces that rights and opportunities should be unfettered by cultural, political and institutional biases.
Identity-based discrimination	Discrimination based on any or multiple aspects of one's identity. A full list of identities found by authors of this paper is included in the provided reference, *SI Appendix, Table S3* [6].
Incivility	General disrespectful behavior, such as use of patronizing or otherwise inappropriate language [16]. When targeted at people with minoritized social identities, it becomes a "covert manifestation" of prejudice (e.g. racism, sexism) and can contribute to institutionalized inequities [17].
Intersectionality	Intersectionality suggests a multiplicative rather than additive approach to understanding the ways in which historically oppressed people's subjectivities are inextricably linked [18]–[20].
Sexual harassment	A 3-part term indicating gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion. Of these three, gender harassment is the most prevalent form of sexual harassment in the scientific community, and it includes nonsexual harassment an individual receives because of their gender (e.g. offensive or degrading remarks, sexist slurs, and demeaning comments) [5].
Sexual misconduct	Any unwelcome sexual behavior enacted without consent and/or via intimidation, coercion, or exploitation [5].

(Table 1 reproduced with permission by Alicia J. Foxx, of [6])

Expected Behavior [12]

All participants in our events and communications are expected to show respect and courtesy to others. All interactions should be professional regardless of platform: either online (including via social media) or in-person. In order to foster a positive and professional environment, we encourage the following behaviors in all interactions or events associated with ICAR 2020, both onsite and offsite:

● Be respectful of different viewpoints and experiences
● Use welcoming and inclusive behavior
● Show courtesy and respect towards other participants, including but not limited to: conference attendees, speakers, staff and all University personnel** including staff, students, etc.
● When possible, we encourage "bystander intervention" of any code violations that are witnessed. (Table 1)

Examples of inappropriate conduct and behavior prohibited by the ICAR Code [6], [12]

● Identity-based discrimination: written or verbal comments which have the effect of excluding people on the basis of membership of any specific group such as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender presentation, etc., as described above
● Causing someone to fear for their safety, such as through stalking, following, or intimidation

- Violent threats or language directed against another person
- Sexual harassment or misconduct: unwelcome sexual attention; nonconsensual or unwelcome physical contact, offensive or degrading remarks, sexist slurs, or demeaning comments
- The display of sexual or violent images
- Incivility: Sustained disruption of talks, events or communication; insults or put downs; sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, or exclusionary jokes; excessive swearing
- Continuing to initiate interaction (including photography or recording) after being asked to stop
- Publication of private communication (text, verbal, images) without consent

Keep in Mind
- Behavior that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so we ask that you use discretion to be sure that respect is communicated. Harassment intended in a joking manner nevertheless constitutes unacceptable behavior. [21]
- Participants who are asked to stop any inappropriate behavior are expected to comply immediately. This applies to ICAR events and platforms, in-person, or online. [12]

ICAR Code Violation Reporting and Review Mechanisms at ICAR 2020

Any code violation, whether experienced directly or witnessed, should be reported in one or more of the following ways. NAASC will provide a number of formal, informal, anonymous, and non-anonymous modes of reporting. Each individual should decide the appropriate approach for them.

Reporting Options
- Immediate response needed: If the situation feels or seems imminently unsafe, please approach a member of the conference venue security team either in person or using a conference venue phone. All complaints will be taken seriously and responded to as promptly as possible by members of the ICAR 2020 Incident Response Team (IRT*) and/or University personnel**. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others. [21]
- For non-immediate responses:
  - Anonymous messages may be sent to the IRT** via this SurveyMonkey URL, which will be checked at least twice a day (morning and evening). *provide link in advance of ICAR 2020*
  - You may email your report to the general conference email address. Please, include as much detail as possible. This address will be monitored on a daily basis during ICAR 2020 by Joanna Friesner, ICAR 2020 Lead Organizer/NAASC Executive Director: arabidopsisconference@gmail.com
  - You may report to one or more individual members of the IRT**
  - You may report to designated University personnel**
- Note: if you want IRT** member(s) to follow-up with you please, provide your contact information.
- Retaliation for reporting harassment is also a violation of this policy; this extends to bystanders.

Review and Resolution Process [21]
Once we have received a report of an ICAR Code violation, a minimum of two IRT** members and/or University personnel** will meet to review the report and determine if more information is needed. If more information is needed, it will be requested from the complainant (the "reporter".)
1. At least two members of the IRT* will meet privately with the reporter to discuss the situation. This meeting will help the IRT* and reporter determine what additional action is appropriate. [Note: if the complaint is made anonymously, the IRT* will meet with the named offender(s)/reportee(s). We encourage anonymous reporters to name any witnesses to the offense for the IRT* to consult as well.]
2. If additional action is deemed appropriate, at least two members of the IRT* will request a meeting with the named offender(s)/reportee(s), outline the ICAR Code violation report, and ask for a response.
3. After collection and review of information, members of the IRT* (with University personnel** if applicable) will meet to discuss a resolution which may include consulting the list of Consequences for Unacceptable Behavior/ Violations of ICAR Code (outlined below.) The IRT* must agree on a resolution by a majority of all members investigating the incident. If the IRT* cannot reach a majority decision, they will take the matter to all organizing committee members present at ICAR 2020. The IRT* and organizing committee will not publicly discuss the details of an incident unless the full committee agrees to make a public statement.

4. IRT* member(s) will consult with both the reporter and reportee(s) before taking action/seeking resolution.
5. If appropriate, the IRT* will notify appropriate authorities for legal action.
6. ICAR 2020 organizers/NAASC, IRT*, and/or University personnel** (if involved) reserve the right to implement the consequences detailed below.

Conflicts of Interest [12]
- In the event of any conflict of interest, the IRT* member must immediately notify the other members and recuse themselves if necessary.
- In the case that an IRT* or member of the ICAR organizing committee is involved in a report, the member will be asked to recuse themselves from ongoing conversations, and they will not have access to reports after the enforcement decision has been made.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior/ Violations of ICAR Code
Based on IRT** (and University personnel**, if applicable) review and discussion as described above, the consequences of ICAR Code violations will include one or more of the following actions: [6]
- Warned/asked to stop
- Removed from meeting without warning or refund
- Prohibited from attending future ICARs
- Employer notified
- Reported to law enforcement

Retaliation for reporting harassment is also a violation of this policy. This provision extends to bystanders.

For questions or comments about the ICAR 2020 Code of Conduct, contact Joanna Friesner (NAASC Executive Director: arabidopsisconference@gmail.com)

*IRT: Incident Response Team: *to be confirmed prior to 6 July 2020, ICAR 2020*
1. ICAR 2020 Lead Organizer: Joanna Friesner (Email: arabidopsisconference@gmail.com)
2. Others from NAASC and ICAR 2020 Organizing Committee:
**University personnel: *Update with campus police information; specific personnel, e.g. for dorms; building staff*

ICAR 2020 Code of Conduct References, Re-use and Acknowledgement Policy

NAASC developed this Conference Code of Conduct ("ICAR Code") for the 31st International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR); July 6-10, 2020 at the University of Washington, Seattle. NAASC drew on existing resources to develop the Code and have endeavored to properly cite and reference all sources gathered herein. NAASC contacted the author/ designated staff liaison for the primary sources used to develop the Code to clarify re-use and acknowledgement protocols ([6], [12], [21]). Text in this Code that appears in quotations marks are verbatim quotes from the indicated reference; in-line references lacking quotation marks indicate information/ideas that are based on the indicated reference(s). It is not our intent to represent this Code as original work; it is a compilation of existing sources and original text, organized to meet our needs for ICAR 2020.

You may re-use and adapt this code of conduct for your use as long as you maintain the indicated references and acknowledgements, as indicated.

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Citations

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