



Women in Technology and
Entrepreneurship in New York

Participant Code of Conduct

The Women in Technology and Entrepreneurship in New York (WiTNY) initiative is committed to creating a respectful, welcoming environment for every participant in our programs. We frame our expectations for conduct and behavior in WiTNY spaces within respect - something that each and every individual in our sphere deserves, as do the spaces we work within.

Where and When this Code of Conduct is Applied

We hope it goes without saying that respect should be a universal constant. That said, the specific conduct requirements in this document will be enforced in all spaces and at all times that WiTNY programming takes place, including all communications between participants in person, by phone and electronically.

Rules for Respectful Conduct

The sections below outline specific rules for respectful conduct. They are not exhaustive. Any behavior that is reported to, or witnessed by, WiTNY staff that is determined to be disrespectful or harmful to others in the WiTNY community can be a violation of this Code of Conduct, even if not explicitly outlined below.

Respect for Others

Harassment: WiTNY is dedicated to providing a community free of harassment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Offensive comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, mental illness, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, age, race, or religion
- Sexual images or behavior in spaces where they are not appropriate
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Threats of violence
- Incitement of violence towards any individual, including encouraging a person to engage in self-harm
- Inappropriate photography or recording, including logging online activity for harassment purposes
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome sexual attention
- Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior

Respect for Identities: Within the context of WiTNY programming and communications, we consider the following to also be harassment:

- Deliberate misgendering or use of 'dead' or rejected names, including incorrect pronouns
- Deliberate "outing" of any aspect of a person's identity without their consent, except as necessary to protect vulnerable people from intentional abuse (i.e., through reporting harassment to WiTNY staff)
- Deliberate, unwelcome comments regarding a person's lifestyle choices and practices, including those related to food, health, parenting, drugs, and employment

Respecting Staff and Other Program Leaders: WiTNY staff are here to facilitate programs, help participants, and act as a resource. Participants are expected to abide by any additional program rules or expectations set by staff, and cooperate with instructions at all times.



Women in Technology and
Entrepreneurship in New York

When WiTNY contracts or otherwise includes guest presenters, facilitators, and/or volunteers, they are to be afforded the same respect as WiTNY staff members, and participants will be held to the same rules for respectful conduct.

Respecting Space

WiTNY hosts events at various spaces, including virtual locations. To be respectful to these places, intentional damage to supplies, furniture, and other elements of program spaces, including deliberate modification or disruption of online community spaces, is prohibited.

Additionally, all participants are to treat location employees, online moderators, and others affiliated with programming locations with the same respect afforded to WiTNY staff.

Reporting

Everyone who participates in a WiTNY program deserves an environment of safety and respect, and reporting violations is part of ensuring that happens. If you experience or witness harassment, general disrespectful behavior, or anything else you think might be a violation of this Code of Conduct, please report it to a WiTNY staff member as soon as possible, in person or via email. The staff member will then ask for the following information:

- Who was involved, including name(s), affiliations, and other identifying information
- When and where the behavior/incident was experienced or witnessed
- A detailed description of the behavior/incident, including any documentation (email threads, screenshots) that may be available
- Any relevant context outside of this particular incident
- What actions the reporting individual has already taken (if any)

Individuals who would prefer not to share any of the above, in whole or in part, are not required to; That said, corrective action may be limited by the lack of information.

All reports are confidential, unless required to be reported by federal or state law.

Enforcement

When a violation is reported, WiTNY staff will use the information provided to determine any appropriate measures needed to ensure that WiTNY community activities and spaces remain respectful and supportive for all.

For imminently harmful or dangerous situations, WiTNY staff reserve the right to contact the appropriate authorities and/or emergency services.

For reports including accounts of sexual assault or violence, in very rare cases staff may be required to report to the appropriate academic institution's Title IX Coordinator. More information on this process is available upon request.

For all other situations and reports of behavior, WiTNY staff will follow the following procedure:

- When possible and deemed appropriate, WiTNY staff will ask other witnesses or affected parties for additional information and/or context. In the case of reports involving few individuals where additional conversations would



Women in Technology and
Entrepreneurship in New York

violate the confidentiality of the reporter, WiTNY staff will ask for permission to speak with others, and refrain if not permitted by the reporting individual.

- WiTNY staff will determine the nature of the Code of Conduct violation, and proceed accordingly.
 - For single violations deemed unintentional, with no pattern of behavior, and/or no imminent threat of recurrence or continued harm, the violating participant will be issued a written warning via email.
 - For a repeat violation after a warning, or if reported behavior establishes a trend of violations, participants may be removed from any and all WiTNY programming, including future programming opportunities and online communities.
 - For situations involving harassment of any kind, participants in violation of the Code of Conduct may be immediately removed from any and all WiTNY programming, including future opportunities and online communities, without a written warning.
- WiTNY staff will follow up with the reporting participant, as desired and appropriate, which is determined at staff's discretion.

WiTNY staff reserve the right to determine other remediating actions within the contexts of individual programs, as appropriate, for all Code of Conduct violations.

Portions of this policy are drawn from an example policy from the Geek Feminism wiki, created by the Ada Initiative and other volunteers.