

Code of Conduct

AIGA is Committed to Providing a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment.

This policy is designed to clearly communicate standards of behavior for our members, attendees, volunteers, speakers, sponsors or others and the process for reporting violations of these standards. We are committed to having an inclusive community embracing different perspectives and viewpoints. And we are equally dedicated to providing a safe and productive experience for everyone who participates in AIGA and to treating everyone with respect. That means that misconduct, including but not limited to harassment in any form, will not be tolerated. AIGA Members violating these standards jeopardize their membership (without a refund), and any individual found to be violating these standards jeopardize their attendance at AIGA or AIGA Chapter meetings and conferences at the discretion of the National Board of Directors.

Actions that Further a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment

Examples of individual actions that further a welcoming and inclusive environment are:

- Addressing an individual in a respectful manner
- Listening more than speaking
- Remembering that others may have expertise of which you are unaware
- Encouraging and yielding the floor to those whose views have not yet been presented and those whose viewpoints may be under-represented within a group
- Using welcoming language
- Accepting criticism graciously and offering it constructively
- Giving credit wherever it is due
- Offering assistance to others where appropriate to facilitate a fully accessible meeting environment
- Staying alert, as active participants, to the welfare and feelings of all those around us

Actions that are Contrary to a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment

Examples of individual actions that are contrary to a welcoming and inclusive environment are:

- Any form of discrimination
- Any form of harassment
- Use of sexual language or imagery
- Jokes or slurs relating to the religion, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation or appearance of a person
- Offensive or demeaning comments
- Threats or demands
- Intimidating language or conduct
- Stalking and other forms of unwelcome attention
- Photographing or recording without permission when there is a reasonable expectation of privacy
- Sustained interruptions of educational programs or social events
- Any unwelcome physical contact or sexual attention, whether in person, in written or visual form, or online

The actions listed above are to be considered in the context in which they arise.

Anyone who experiences or observes inappropriate comments or actions may wish to intervene personally if it is appropriate and safe to do so. Such intervention, even if there is immediate compliance with the request, does not preclude a subsequent complaint regarding the perceived violation.

Retaliation in connection with a complaint regarding a perceived violation of this Code of Conduct is itself a violation of this Code of Conduct.

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors at the AIGA national office, or in connection with AIGA- or AIGA-Chapter hosted activities or events:

- Sexual harassment, which includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example, submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or participation in the AIGA-hosted activity, or submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. An individual could be harassed by an AIGA employee, volunteer, or a member at AIGA's office or at an AIGA-hosted event or activity, and the conduct need not be overtly sexual; a pattern of profanity or rudeness based on an individual's gender, for example, might constitute sexual harassment. Other examples of behavior that might constitute sexual harassment, depending on the circumstances, include, but are not limited to, publicly indecent behavior*; subtle or overt pressure for sexual favors; repeated and unwelcome sexual jokes, innuendo, advances, or propositions; repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature; repeated and unwelcome graphic commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; repeated leering or insulting or obscene comments or gestures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

- Harassing, physically threatening, or physically or verbally abusing any person because of, but not limited to, that person's race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, appearance, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, native language, political party affiliation, or viewpoint. Harassment also can occur when a member is subjected to discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, or insult by another member that is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it creates an abusive environment, or an environment where the member feels uncomfortable.

- Conducting oneself in a manner endangering the health or safety of another person.
- Exhibiting disorderly conduct, including but not limited to, abuse of controlled substances or overt drunkenness.
- Bringing any weapons, firearms, dangerous chemicals, or any materials specifically banned by AIGA, an AIGA chapter and/or venue space to an AIGA or AIGA Chapter hosted activity or event.
- Defacing property.
- Any social media posting reflecting any of the above behavior occurring at an AIGA- or AIGA Chapter-hosted event or activity.

**Publicly indecent behavior is defined as:*

- *Obscene or indecent acts, characterized by, or for the purpose of becoming aroused.*
- *Sexual behaviors that are unlawful in nature and are performed with the intention of arousing the perpetrator or the person to whom the behavior is directed.*

Other Misconduct

Failing to respect the confidentiality of sensitive information obtained in the course of the member's professional engagements, unless compelled by law to divulge the information.

Making intentionally false communications, either written, spoken, or posted on any social media, that harms a member's or the organization's reputation.

Stealing or misappropriation of any property (including digital) belonging to another member or the association. This includes all materials developed for or on behalf of AIGA or an AIGA chapter without the express permission of the member, national association, and/or chapter.

Reporting of Concerns or Complaints

The safety, well-being and professional reputations of our members and participants is of the utmost importance. If someone engages in behavior that is perceived to violate this Code of Conduct, witnesses are urged to address the situation. If a witness is not comfortable confronting the person directly or if the misconduct continues, they are urged to report the behavior.

A person's concerns about possible violations of this Code of Conduct originating at the chapter should first be addressed at the chapter level and if no redress is received then concerns should be escalated to the Audit & Ethics Committee of the National Board of Directors.

A person's concerns about possible violations of this Code of Conduct originating at or escalated to the National office should be reported to any member of the Audit & Ethics Committee. Alternatively, to facilitate reporting of suspected violations where the complainant wishes to remain anonymous, a written statement may be submitted to the Audit & Ethics Committee through AIGA's online complaint intake form. Whether or not the complainant chooses to identify themselves, we encourage them to provide AIGA with as much information as they can, sufficient to conduct a proper investigation, including where and when the incident occurred, names and titles of the individuals involved, including the names and titles of any witnesses, and as much other detail as they can provide.

While confidentiality will be respected to the extent possible, allegations of illegal behavior must be investigated and must be based on a written complaint. If a complainant is uncomfortable putting their report in writing, the person to whom they brought the allegations will create a written report and ask the complainant to review and correct it and then to approve the final version. Complainants should be assured that there will be no retaliation against them for making good faith claims.

How Complaints are Investigated

The Audit & Ethics Committee will conduct an initial inquiry to gather any relevant information about the complaint to determine whether an investigation is necessary. All allegations of illegal behavior will be investigated. In all other cases, if the Audit & Ethics Committee deems an investigation necessary, they will appoint a lead investigator. Persons not affiliated with AIGA may be asked to serve in this capacity. Lead investigators or their designees will interview complainants and review relevant documents, and the Audit & Ethics Committee will prepare a report for the National Board of Directors summarizing their findings. If any charges were upheld, the Board of Directors will determine an appropriate sanction.

Sanctions for Violations of this Code of Conduct

AIGA's response to violations of this Code of Conduct will depend upon the AIGA National Board of Directors' evaluation of all the relevant circumstances. Sanctions shall be imposed based on credible evidence as determined by the AIGA National Board of Directors in its sole and absolute discretion.

In the event an individual is found to have violated this Code of Conduct, AIGA reserves the right, by way of example and without limitation, to give a confidential verbal warning and admonition to such person; to direct such person to leave a meeting or event or to cease engaging in AIGA-related online activities; to prohibit such person from attendance at one or more future meetings or participation in other certain programs or activities of AIGA, including volunteer board service; to revoke any payments for speaking engagements; to expel such person from AIGA; and to make such submissions to law enforcement authorities as may be appropriate and/or required in the circumstances.

The decision of the AIGA National Board of Directors as to whether an individual has violated this Code of Conduct, and what, if any, sanctions to impose as a result, shall be final, and no party shall be entitled to any appeal.