

EVENTS CODE OF CONDUCT¹

The Geological Society of America (GSA) offers a variety of meetings, events, and activities (referred to collectively as “**GSA Events**” defined below) that give participants dynamic opportunities to learn, grow professionally, and exchange ideas. GSA is committed to fostering a professional, respectful, inclusive environment at all GSA Events, where all participants can participate fully in an atmosphere that is free of harassment and discrimination based on any identity-based factors.

Table of Contents

- A. [Applicability and Definitions](#)
- B. [Conduct Requirements for all Participants](#)
- C. [Additional Conduct Requirements for Abstract Submitters](#)
- D. [How to Report Conduct Concerns](#)
- E. [Investigation Process and Consequences](#)
- F. [Recordkeeping](#)

A. Applicability and Definitions

This Events Code of Conduct (the “Events Code”) applies to all “**GSA Events**,” defined broadly as any in-person or online GSA-sponsored or -organized meetings or gatherings, wherever located, including but not limited to annual and section meetings, conferences, workshops, field trips, short courses, mentorships, retreats, GSA business meetings involving elected and appointed volunteer leaders and committee members, and activities associated with, in the general time frame of such GSA-sponsored or -organized meetings or gatherings.

This Events Code applies to all “**Participants**” in GSA Events, meaning organizers, attendees, speakers, session chairs, individuals submitting abstracts, guests, volunteers, exhibitors, GSA staff, service providers, and anyone else in attendance.

“**RISE**” stands for *Respectful Inclusive Scientific Events*. GSA typically displays RISE signage at GSA Events to reinforce this Events Code and promote a positive, professional climate.

“**RISE Liaisons**” are trained GSA staff and volunteers, who attend annual and section meetings, and are available in case Participants want to speak with them about any conduct concerns. RISE Liaisons typically wear a conspicuous badge or button so they are easy to find.

“**GSA Leaders**” have decision-making authority under this Events Code. For the purpose of this policy, they are GSA’s Executive Director and President.

In addition to adhering to this Events Code, GSA Members must comply with GSA’s [Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct](#) in all of their professional activities regardless of location.

¹ Approved by GSA Council on 25 September 2016, Updated in May 2019, 2021, and 2022. This policy is based in part on a model policy created by EducationCounsel LLC and is subject to a license agreement (https://societiesconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/4-2-19-Members-License.final_.pdf) requiring the following attribution: © American Association for the Advancement of Science for the benefit of and sponsored by the Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment In STEMM (<https://societiesconsortium.com/>); original created by EducationCounsel LLC.

B. Conduct Requirements for All Participants

GSA expects all Participants to comply with the letter and spirit of this Events Code. GSA Leaders reserve the right to enforce this Events Code against any Participant found to have violated GSA’s commitment to a professional, respectful, inclusive environment even if a specific behavior is not listed below.

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show respect and consideration for all people, and do not dominate discussions; • Listen to others. Make room for a diversity of voices in group discussions, on panels, and the like without pressuring those who choose not to speak; • Be collegial and collaborative. Be mindful of your tone and the potential impact your position, experience, and/or privilege may have on others; • Show that you value differing perspectives. Communicate openly and civilly – critique ideas, not people; • Be inclusive and intentional about welcoming a diversity of individuals and their identities when networking, organizing panels, leading sessions, or inviting others to share ideas; • Honor presenters’ requests NOT to take pictures or recordings. It is up to presenters to let Participants know if they do not allow pictures or recordings; • Act professionally and responsibly if you choose to drink when alcohol is available at GSA events, or you use other legal intoxicants; • Report concerns immediately so that GSA can act quickly to address and resolve issues (see section D below for details on how to report concerns); • Respect confidentiality of the identities of any individuals involved in a conduct concern while it is being reviewed and addressed; • Comply with requests to stop behavior. If any GSA Leaders, GSA staff, session or field trip leader, or other person in a facilitation or leadership role asks you to stop a behavior deemed unacceptable; immediately and respectfully comply; • Obey the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, GSA-contracted facility, or any other venue where your meeting badge and GSA affiliation is likely to be displayed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally talk over or interrupt others; • Engage in conduct or make comments that are biased, demeaning, intimidating, coercive, or harassing/hostile, whether seriously or in jest (examples include derogatory, exclusionary behaviors or comments toward others based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin or any identity-based factors); • Engage in personal attacks or bullying; • Comment on personal appearance, seriously or in jest, unless you know such comments are welcome; • Display nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or presentations; • Touch or make physical contact with anyone unless you know such contact is welcome; • Disrupt or engage in violence or abuse, threats of violence, harm, or threats of harm of any kind. Do not create/contribute to a safety threat or unsafe or exclusionary situation. <i>Unless otherwise required by law, firearms, knives and other weapons are not allowed;</i> • Drink or use other legal intoxicants to the extent that your ability to act professionally is compromised; • Invade the personal privacy of individuals. Do not view, take pictures of/record, or distribute pictures/recordings of individuals at times or in places where they reasonably can expect privacy (e.g., bathrooms, breastfeeding rooms, etc.); • Take or distribute pictures or recordings without approval. Presenters are responsible for making it known if pictures and recordings are not allowed; • Retaliate against or disadvantage anyone for reporting a concern or cooperating in an investigation. Do not make bad faith accusations.

Note About Differences of Opinion. To achieve the purposes of a GSA Event in the limited time provided, discussions should be focused on the meeting topic at hand; all Participants must be able and welcome to

participate equitably and effectively. It is not a violation of this Events Code to express an opinion, raise research, or describe an experience that is at odds with the opinions of or is offensive to others, provided that such expressions are relevant to the topic at hand and are offered in a respectful, civil manner that does not interfere with others' reasonable ability to feel welcome and able to participate fully.

C. Additional Conduct Requirements for Abstract Submitters

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit abstracts in good faith - If you submit an abstract for a GSA meeting, plan on presenting your research at the meeting • Display scientific integrity in disseminating your research. • Adhere to the content and conclusions of the abstracts you submit to GSA after they have been reviewed and accepted. • Recognize co-authors that have made bona fide contributions to your work provided they agree to be recognized • Prepare a polished product that conveys high quality scholarship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an abstract unless you sincerely intend to attend the GSA meeting to present your research • List co-author without justification or approval – co-authors must have made a bona fide contribution to your project and agree to be included; • Deviate from your approved abstract when making a presentation • Plagiarize the work of others

D. What To Do If You Have Conduct Concerns

- Call 911 if you have an immediate and serious public safety concern.
- Act if there is a conduct concern. If you have a conduct concern or are in distress or danger from a conduct concern – or if you see anyone in such distress or danger – let us know immediately by:
 - Speaking to a RISE Liaison (look for anyone wearing a RISE pin).
 - Emailing GSA's ethics office at ethics@geosociety.org.
 - Speaking to GSA Staff or Leaders, i.e., GSA Staff and Leaders in designated positions (i.e., GSA President, GSA Councilor, GSA Section Officer, GSA field trip leader).

If you would like GSA to investigate your allegations, you must submit a [formal ethics complaint](#) as explained below in Section E.

E. Investigation Process and Consequences

GSA investigates all conduct concerns as promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially as possible. GSA's Ethics & Compliance Officer (or another qualified individual designated by GSA's Executive Director) investigates conduct concerns. RISE Liaisons and GSA staff/volunteers who receive complaints are expected to notify the designated investigator promptly as they are not authorized to carry out investigations themselves.

1. **Written Complaint Form Required.** GSA encourages you to notify us immediately whenever your experience or witness conduct concerns so that GSA can take appropriate steps to keep our events safe. To launch an investigation, GSA requires the submission of a [formal ethics complaint](#).
2. **Confidentiality & Anonymity.** GSA treats all conduct concerns as confidentially as possible, making a reasonable effort to protect the identity of anyone involved in the investigation process, including targets, accused individuals, and witnesses. GSA may determine that it needs to share information with others to carry out a full investigation, facilitate monitoring and oversight of our procedures, and/or collaborate with other professional societies that host events at GSA meetings. In such cases, GSA will take care to limit what is shared and with whom on a strict need-to-know basis. GSA

expects everyone involved in an investigation, regardless of their role, to respect the confidentiality of the process while the concerns are being reviewed and addressed. Anonymous complaints are not permitted because they may limit GSA’s ability to fully, fairly investigate and respond to allegations.

3. **Investigations.** After a formal complaint is submitted to GSA, GSA’s designated investigator gathers information needed to make findings of fact. Typically, this involves speaking to the identified target, the accused Participant, and any witnesses as well as reviewing any documents, photographs, or other relevant information. To ensure adequate due process, it is GSA’s policy to inform accused Participants of the allegations against them so that they have an opportunity to provide relevant facts.
4. **Notice to GSA Leaders for Decision-Making.** GSA’s Executive Director and President (“GSA Leaders”) are responsible for making decisions about potential violations of this Events Code. The investigator provides the GSA Leaders with pertinent details about the allegations and findings of fact so that they can make timely decisions about whether there have been Events Code violations and, if so, what consequences are appropriate. (See part 2 below for information on potential consequences.)
5. **Consequences that may be Imposed by GSA Leaders.** GSA’s Leaders have the sole discretion to make interim and final decisions about the steps needed to enforce this Events Code, considering what will serve GSA’s best interests and commitment to ensuring safe, respectful, inclusive scientific events.
 - **Interim Decisions.** GSA’s Leaders may decide that immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of a GSA Event *before* an investigation can be completed. For example, upon receipt of credible allegations that an individual is engaging in disruptive, harassing, or biased behavior that is reasonably likely to make other Participants feel unsafe, GSA’s Leaders may require the accused Participant to leave a GSA Event immediately at the Participant’s own expense and without refund. In such a case, GSA would promptly notify the accused Participant and others directly involved of its decision, making it clear that:
 - GSA’s Leaders have not made a judgment that the accused Participant violated this Events Code, but rather they are prioritizing preventive safety and non-disruption measures;
 - GSA will conduct a fair, thorough investigation as soon as it is feasible to do so and that no final decisions will be made until that time;
 - Confidentiality is paramount, and GSA expects everyone involved to respect and maintain confidentiality of the identities of any individuals involved in this process.
 - **Final Decisions.** Once an investigation is complete, GSA’s Leaders will review the findings of fact to determine whether there has been a violation of this Events Code and, if so, what consequences are warranted. Depending on the situation, such consequences may include:
 - Requiring the accused Participant to leave a GSA Event at the Participant’s own cost, without refund;
 - Prohibiting the accused Participant from attending future GSA Events; and
 - Any other actions deemed necessary and appropriate.

Instead of or in addition to any of these consequences, GSA may with the consent of the parties pursue a restorative or other community-building action or remedy.

- **Notice of Final Decisions.** After making a final decision, GSA’s Executive Director will notify the accused Participant and the identified target of the decision.

F. Recordkeeping

GSA maintains confidential records of all complaints submitted under this Events Code and how they were handled to assist GSA in monitoring, evaluating, and improving the effectiveness of this Events Code.