

# Canadian Society of Zoologists Code of Conduct

*Developed by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Canadian Society of Zoologists*

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Original version modified, with permission, from the Ecological Society of America Code of Ethics, Procedures for Ethics Complaints, and Code of Conduct for Events (May 2020, May 2020, April 2018 respectively). The authors are grateful for their generosity in sharing these documents with us.

## 1 Overview

This code provides guiding principles of conduct for all members of the Canadian Society of Zoologists (CSZ) in accordance with our By-Laws. CSZ is a professional organisation dedicated to the enhancement of education and research in Zoology at the provincial, federal, and international level. This Code is intended to support the open and honest communication of research by our members in a manner that reflects the ideals of the society, and to encourage effective education, including mentorship and training, in the disciplines of zoological science. Individuals aware of breaches of this Code are encouraged to refer to the Society's procedures for addressing violations of the Code (Section 9), and to communicate with the CSZ's President who will explain the code and process.

## 2 Executive Summary

The Canadian Society of Zoologists consists of members with a breadth of expertise in all areas of animal biology. Our members also represent a range of career stages, from junior to emeritus. The society has a rich history of collegiality and support for members, particularly for early career scientists. Further we have always striven to model professional conduct and integrity. By enacting and following this Code of Conduct, we will ensure that the diverse, supportive, respectful, and integrous society that currently exists is protected and supports our growth as we move forward. The Code is important as 1) a teaching resource for our members, by listing and explaining tenets of professional conduct, for example, and 2) a reference and a mechanism to ensure our society continues to be a welcoming and supportive environment to our diverse members and to uphold professional scientific integrity. To this end, the society's agency to enforce the code reflects its ability to recognize actions that could reasonably be expected to harm society members and/or its reputation, and to offer avenues for correction, remediation, and/or limiting the harm up to and including removal of membership.

Each section of the code acts as a detailed resource for our members. These details may be useful in instructing early career society members during professional and/or laboratory training. Further, members can refer to each section to refresh their own understandings of professional standards as they relate to the society. Essentially, the tenets of the Code of Conduct enshrine, in writing, the current expectations of the society; that its members behave in a courteous, inclusive, respectful, and professional manner. Professional standards such as authorship, publications, plagiarism, as well as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion standards are outlined and explained. Further, expectations of professional behaviour at conferences are also listed. In addition to providing written tenets for professional integrity, the Code of Conduct presents the procedures for addressing ethical or misconduct issues that may arise. Specifically, reporting a violation to a member of Executive and/or the President of the Society will initiate the handling of complaints according to the process outlined in Section 9.

In summary, the Canadian Society of Zoologists represents an array of excellent researchers in a collaborative, open, and supportive membership. To ensure the preservation of these fundamental and important ideals of our society, adherence to the Code of Conduct, representing principals of professional conduct as well as respectful and responsible behaviour, is essential. In essence, the Code reflects the ideals of the Canadian Society of Zoologists and states that members should be respectful and professional in their conduct.

## 3 Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Canadian Society of Zoologists is a not-for-profit scientific society whose objective is to promote the advancement and public awareness of Zoology and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and ideas among all persons interested in the science and practice of Zoology.

The Society strives to be a diverse and inclusive community that welcomes members of any age, gender identity and/or expression, race, ethnicity, colour, cultural background, religion, place of origin, pregnancy or parental role, marital status, creed, sexual orientation, abilities/disabilities, organizational affiliation, or socio-economic status.

The Society aims for a membership that reflects the diversity of the Canadian zoological community, and at the same time will work to ensure that the diversity of the zoological community reflects the Canadian population at large. Within the Society, the expectation is that diversity of its membership should be reflected at all levels, including participation at meetings, representation on council and committees, and when determining the recipients of its awards to the extent possible.

The Society recognizes that a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion among its membership is both a moral imperative and an essential part of enabling the highest-quality, most innovative zoological research. Building a society that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive is an ideal, not a task that can ever be considered complete. To this end, the CSZ has established an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee, and is currently developing an action plan and code of conduct, to provide mechanisms to remove barriers to participation for zoologists.

## 4 General Principles

Overall, CSZ expects members to conduct themselves in a manner that should not reasonably be expected to damage the reputation of the society and its members. This includes encouraging principles of professional conduct and actions outside of meetings (which are discussed in Section 5).

Members are encouraged to resolve ethical issues privately among individuals directly involved in the matter, using the CSZ's Code of Conduct as a set of guidelines. Otherwise, the procedure outlined in Section 9 will be followed.

### A General Principles of Professional Conduct

All members of the CSZ are expected to conduct themselves in a professional setting in a manner that prevents harm to the reputation of the society. This can include but is not limited to observing the following principles in the conduct of their professional affairs:

1. Members should offer professional advice and guidance only on those subjects in which they are informed and qualified through professional training or experience. They should strive to accurately represent zoological understanding and knowledge and to avoid and discourage dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about zoology.
2. Members should not represent themselves as spokespersons for the CSZ without express authorization by a member of the Executive of the CSZ.
3. Where possible and appropriate, members should cooperate with other researchers to assure rapid interchange and dissemination of zoological knowledge, while recognizing and/or being respectful of the intellectual property of others.

4. Members should not plagiarise in verbal, written, or visual communication, should give full and proper credit to the works and ideas of others, and should make every effort to avoid misrepresentation.
5. Members should not commit scientific fraud including but not limited to: fabricating, falsifying, or suppressing results, and/or deliberately misrepresenting research findings.
6. In professional communications, members should clearly differentiate facts, opinions, and hypotheses. Further, members should not engage in any communication that can reasonably be expected to bring harm to the reputation of the CSZ.
7. Members should not seek employment, grants, or gain, nor attempt to injure the reputation or professional opportunities of another scientist by false, biased, or undocumented claims, by offers of gifts or favors, or by any other malicious action.
8. Where possible and appropriate, members should conduct their research to avoid or minimise adverse environmental effects of their presence and activities. Further, members should conduct research in compliance with legal requirements for protection of researchers, human subjects, and/or research organisms and systems.
9. Where possible and appropriate, members should engage meaningfully with the communities in which they practice, with particular attention to activities conducted on Treaty and unceded lands, to achieve any of the following: meaningful collaborations and exchanges of knowledge, teaching, learning and understanding of these activities, enhancement of local infrastructure for research and education, and/or dissemination of the results broadly to benefit the local community.

## B General Principals of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

1. Members should not discriminate against others on the basis of age, gender identity and/or expression, race, ethnicity, colour, cultural background, religion, place of origin, pregnancy or parental role, marital status, creed, sexual orientation, abilities/disabilities, organizational affiliation, or socio-economic status. As such, members should actively work to broaden the participation of underrepresented and equity-seeking groups in the field of zoology.
2. Members should not practice or condone harassment in any form, including sexual harassment, in any context.
3. Where appropriate, members should take all possible steps to ensure the personal safety of their colleagues and trainees in locations where professional activities occur, including but not limited to field sites, laboratories, office spaces, classrooms, workshops, conferences, etc.

## C General Principals Regarding Publications

All members are expected to maintain rigorous professional standards in regards to reviewing, editing, and/or publishing in professional literature. This may include, but is not limited to, any of the following principles of ethical professional conduct:

1. Members should meet ethical standards set forth in scientific publishing. This may include but is not limited to:
  - a. Authorship of a paper should only be claimed if a substantial contribution, as considered in the field, is made. Examples of contributions can include: ideas or experimental design conception; active participation in execution of the study; analysis and interpretation of the data; or writing of the manuscript.

- b. Authors should not be added and/or deleted from a manuscript submitted for publication without consent of all authors.
  - c. All authors should agree to the content of the final version of the manuscript.
  - d. Authors should not represent previously published or submitted research results as new, and/or submit a manuscript for publication while it is under review for publication elsewhere.
  - e. When using ideas or results of others in manuscripts submitted for publication, authors should give full attribution of sources. If the ideas or results have not been published, they may not be used without permission of the original researcher. Illustrations or tables from other publications or manuscripts may be used only with permission of the copyright owner.
  - f. Any errors in research results or interpretations discovered after submission or publication should be promptly reported to the editors.
2. CSZ assumes the principal investigator(s) of a research project retain(s) the right to control use of resulting unpublished data unless otherwise specified by contract or explicit agreement. Therefore, authors should not submit for publication any manuscript containing data they are not authorised to use.
3. Editors or reviewers should treat manuscripts under review as confidential, recognizing them as the intellectual property of the author(s).
4. Members should not purposefully delay publication of another person's manuscript to gain advantage over that person.
5. Members should critically reflect on conflicts of interest during their professional duties. For example, members should not serve as editors or reviewers of a manuscript if present or past connections with the author or the author's institution may prevent objective evaluation of the work.

## 5 Code of Conduct for CSZ Events

CSZ values the diversity of views, expertise, opinions, backgrounds, and experiences reflected among CSZ members and the broader zoology community, and is committed to providing a safe, productive and welcoming environment for all participants of CSZ meetings and events. This Code of Conduct supports the Society's commitment to promoting diversity and creating an inclusive, supportive, and collaborative environment for all peoples.

All CSZ meeting and event participants – including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, venue staff, members of the media, vendors, and service providers (hereinafter “participants”) – are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct for CSZ Events. This Code of Conduct applies in all venues, including ancillary events and social gatherings, online events and discussions including social media platforms where the society may be associated.

### A Expected Behavior

1. Participants should treat all participants with kindness, respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views, opinions and perspectives (including those that may not be shared by the participant).
2. Participants should communicate openly, with respect for other participants, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
3. Participants should refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech directed toward other participants.
4. Participants should be mindful of their surroundings and of their fellow participants. Where possible and appropriate, participants should alert CSZ Executive and/or venue staff to dangerous situations or individuals in distress.
5. Participants should respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, CSZ-contracted facility, or any other venue, including any location from which an online event is accessed.
6. Specific events may have additional Codes of Conduct, offered by the organisers, hosts, or vendors etc. These additional Codes of Conduct are expected to be met and upheld by participants.
7. Organisers and participants should be mindful of accessibility for participants and strive to ensure inclusiveness through meeting platforms.
8. Consent from all authors should be obtained before information that is the intellectual property of another is shared. Authors are strongly encouraged to notify the audience when/if data can and/or cannot be shared. Further, session moderators are strongly encouraged to remind the audience of intellectual property rights and to not share information without consent.

### B Unacceptable Behavior

1. Participants should not engage in harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form. Harassment may include but is not limited to speech or behaviour that is not in line with acceptable behaviour outlined in Section 5A and/ or is personally offensive. Behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so participants should use discretion to be certain respect is communicated. Harassment intended in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behaviour.

2. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Physical or verbal abuse of any participant
  - b. Unwelcome or offensive verbal comments or exclusionary behavior related but not limited to any of the following: age, physical features, employment, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, abilities, political affiliation, sexual orientation, race, creed, or religion
  - c. Inappropriate physical contact
  - d. Unwanted or inappropriate sexual attention or contact
  - e. Use of sexual or discriminatory images in public spaces or in presentations
  - f. Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following including but not limited to unwanted electronic communication of any kind
  - g. Harassing photography or recording, including taking photographs or recording of another individual's oral presentation or poster without the explicit permission of that individual
  - h. Sustained disruption of talks or other events
  - i. Bullying or aggressive behaviour including but not limited to unwanted communication of any kind
  - j. Retaliation for reporting unacceptable behaviour

## 6 Immediate Serious Threat to Public Safety

When it is safe and appropriate and/or possible to do so, anyone experiencing or witnessing behaviour that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public and/or personal safety at any time should immediately contact the appropriate authorities (ex. 911, facility security, crisis response unit).

## 7 Reporting Unacceptable Behavior

To report unacceptable behaviour, any of the 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, President, and/or Past President, should be contacted. Further, the Local Organising Committees may also offer additional methods for reporting; please refer to specific Meeting guidelines for these. All reports will be treated seriously, with the utmost consideration for privacy, and will be responded to promptly.

Once a report is made, if the inquiry or complaint is resolved through conversation with these officers, no further action need follow. Should the matter remain unresolved, the matter will be forwarded to the President and Procedures outlined in Section 9 followed. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others. Individuals aware of breaches of this Code are encouraged to refer to the Society's procedures for addressing violations of the Code (Section 9), and to communicate with the Society's President who will explain the Code and process.

Home institutions (e.g., universities, government agencies) often have their own ethical standards and should have priority in reporting and/or resolving ethics complaints that concern their employees or students. CSZ will not interfere with or duplicate processes of the home institution.

## 8 Consequences

Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behaviour as defined above or who is in breach of the CSZ Code of Conduct, and/or other Codes of Conduct that are applicable, is expected to comply immediately. CSZ Executive (or their designate) or venue security may take any immediate action deemed necessary and appropriate, including removal from the meeting or event without warning or refund.

The matter may be referred to an ad hoc committee, struck by the CSZ Executive, for consideration of further consequences, which may include but is not limited to prohibition from attending future meetings and events as described in Section 9.

While CSZ will not consider complaints already resolved by the home institution, if action is taken by a home institution the matter may be considered by the Executive if the reason for action is deemed harmful to the reputation of the society. Consequences, which may include but is not limited to prohibition from attending future meetings and events as described in Section 9 may be considered.

## 9 Procedures for Complaints and Violations

### A Preamble

The CSZ Executive has primary responsibility for interpreting and applying the CSZ's Code of Conduct. In particular, the CSZ Executive is responsible for considering possible violations of the Code by members of the Society and for recommending actions by the Society in response to such violations.

### B General Principles

Members are encouraged to resolve ethical issues privately among individuals directly involved in the matter, using the Code as a set of guidelines. Otherwise, the procedure outlined below will be followed.

Generally, complaints will be lodged within one year of the incident. If discovered after this one year period, complaints will be lodged 60 days after discovery. In special cases, complaints about older incidents may also be considered.

If a complaint rises to a level that may have legal or privacy concerns, or if necessary for technical reasons, other procedures than those outlined below may be used as recommended by CSZ legal counsel or leadership. Such procedures might include mediation or evaluation by an outside group or consultant or by a special ad hoc committee.

In this document, the person or group making the complaint is referred to as the "complainant" and the accused person or group is referred to as the "respondent".

The role of the CSZ Executive is to evaluate complaints and responses. The complainant is responsible for presenting the complaint and any associated evidence. Likewise, the respondent is responsible for providing their own defence.

All communications with the complainant, respondent, and any other individuals involved in the matter will be made only by the CSZ President. Other members of the CSZ Executive will not contact these or any other individuals, nor will individuals involved in the matter contact members of the CSZ Executive other than the



President. In general, all communications will be made by electronic mail to provide documentation of all conversations and exchanges of materials to the Executive. The CSZ President will ensure confidential copies of all communications are available to the next President for a period of 7 years, after which they will be destroyed. However, if necessary for legal matters, confidential records will be kept and forwarded by the CSZ President indefinitely.

CSZ will maintain confidentiality, except as necessary to complete the process. The names of the complainant and respondent, and details about the complaint may be shared with complainants, respondents and other individuals involved in the matter; CSZ Executive, and individuals who carry out any actions or sanctions imposed by the Executive. These individuals are also expected to maintain confidentiality.

Resolution of complaints that are referred to the CSZ Executive for formal consideration as outlined below may take several months.

### C Procedure for Evaluating Possible Violations of the Code

1. Any person or organisation may make an inquiry concerning the Code or lodge a complaint about a potential violation of the code with any of the following CSZ leaders:
  - a. President
  - b. First Vice-President
  - c. Second Vice-President
  - d. Past President

If the inquiry or complaint is resolved through conversation with these officers, no further action need follow.

2. The complaint must include the name and affiliation of the complainant and respondent; a description of the alleged ethical violation that includes the date and as much detail as possible about the circumstances of the incident; names and affiliation of others who may have first-hand knowledge of the incident; any documents or other relevant items (data, scientific papers, memos, etc.) with annotation explaining specifically how each item relates to the complaint; an explanation of which provisions of the Code may have been violated; and a statement explaining any relationship between the complainant and respondent, particularly if a conflict of interest may be present.
3. The officers listed above may decide about the complaint individually or will decide to refer the complaint to the CSZ President. The President may form an ad hoc committee, struck for the purpose, for formal consideration of the case. Some complaints will not be considered by the Executive for evaluation, for example:
  - a. The Code does not apply to the respondent; that is, the respondent is not a CSZ member or event attendee.
  - b. The complaint is vague, trivial, or otherwise without merit.
  - c. The complaint was not made in a timely fashion.
  - d. The complaint can be resolved informally by asking the respondent to take appropriate action (e.g., withdraw a presentation at an annual meeting).

- e. The complaint should be (or was) evaluated by the home institution or some other outside group, as described above.
4. If accepted for formal consideration, the officer originally made aware of the complaint will refer the complaint to the President for consideration by the Executive or to another investigative body as described above.
5. Upon receipt of this formal referral, the President may notify the Executive as a whole and forward the complaint to all members and/or form an ad hoc committee for consideration. If the complaint is not sufficiently clear as to what happened and who was involved, the Executive and/or ad hoc committee will request a more detailed written complaint. The complaint must identify which provisions of the Code may have been violated. Executive and/or ad hoc members may ask questions or request specific information of the complainant through the President. The President will also request that the complainant provide any documentation of their claim. A reasonable deadline for receipt of this information will be provided.
6. After the complaint and supporting documents are received, the President, Executive and/or ad hoc committee will identify information needed from the respondent and other individuals involved in the matter, particularly those with direct knowledge of the alleged ethical misconduct. The questions should be narrowly focused on specific incidents that are within the purview of CSZ, its bylaws, and Code of Conduct. As a courtesy, the President may inform the complainant who will be contacted for the investigation; however, the complainant will not be able to decide who will be contacted. To conduct a thorough investigation, the President must reveal who made the complaint and some details about the complaint with all who are asked to respond. This may include the identity of the respondent as well if warranted.
7. The President, Executive and/or ad hoc committee will send letters to the respondent and other individuals outlining the complaint and asking for their written response to the complaint and any questions. Respondents and others so contacted may also provide supporting documentation. A reasonable deadline for receipt of this information will be provided.
8. If the respondent admits to the alleged ethical violation, the investigation process is complete and the president, Executive and/or ad hoc committee will determine any actions or sanctions (below). Otherwise, the process continues as described below.
9. After responses are received by the President, they will be forwarded to the Executive and/or ad hoc committee if applicable. The Executive and/or ad hoc committee will start their evaluation and identify any additional information needed from the complainant, respondent, or other individuals. Discussions among committee members will be conducted electronically, using “reply all” to ensure that all members see all discussion. If necessary, a conference call or videoconference may be held.
10. The Executive and/or ad hoc committee, via the President, may ask the complainant and respondents for additional information. Either party may be given an opportunity for rebuttal.
11. After discussing the information received and reaching consensus, the Executive and/or ad hoc committee will impose any actions or sanctions they determine to be appropriate. The President will communicate the decision with the parties by letter.

12. The decision may be appealed by either party in writing within 30 days of notification of the decision. Any appeal is made to the President, who will determine whether to re-examine the complaint or to seek outside mediation or evaluation.
13. A complaint may be re-lodged as described in step 1 above if new, substantive information becomes available. This complaint could be treated as a new case or dismissed as not sufficiently different to pursue.

## D Actions or Sanctions

Actions or sanctions will be specific to each case and maybe for a specified duration or permanent. Although the following list is not intended to be complete, some possible actions may include:

- No action because no ethics violation was found to have occurred.
- Private reprimand or warning in a letter. This letter will become part of the case file kept by the CSZ for 7 years. This action may be considered if any future cases involve the individual.
- Revocation of, disqualification from, or delayed conferral of an honour or award.
- Prohibition from appointment to voluntary or elected positions in the Society.
- Prohibition from participation in CSZ events.
- Suspension of membership or expulsion from CSZ.

If remediation is undertaken, for example attending a sexual harassment training seminar, considerations will be made on a case-by-case basis to amend the file to reflect these actions. Verification will be required and amendments to the file will be at the discretion of the CSZ President and Executive.

## E Adoption and Amendment

These procedures will be effective upon adoption by the General Membership and may be amended by Council. This document will live on the Society website. These procedures should be reviewed by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee periodically and amendments recommended to Council as appropriate.

The Bylaws will also be amended to reflect the Code of Conduct.

## 10 Resources

For any questions about this policy, contact the Executive Representative on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the CSZ at [secondvp@csz-scz.ca](mailto:secondvp@csz-scz.ca).