

## Victorian Biodiversity Conference Meetings Code of Conduct

*This code of conduct is adapted from that of the Ecological Society of America.*

VicBioCon values the diversity of views, expertise, opinions, backgrounds, and experiences reflected among VicBioCon members and the broader ecology community, and is committed to providing a safe, productive and welcoming environment for all participants of VicBioCon meetings and events. VicBioCon meetings and events can serve as an effective forum to consider and debate science-relevant viewpoints in an orderly, respectful, and fair manner. This Code of Conduct is important to promoting diversity and creating an inclusive, supportive, and collaborative environment for all peoples.

All VicBioCon meetings and events participants – including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, VicBioCon committee, members of the media, vendors, and service providers (hereinafter “participants”) – are expected to abide by this VicBioCon Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct applies in all venues, including ancillary events and social gatherings, and on-line forums and discussions associated with VicBioCon.

### Expected Behaviour

- Treat all participants with kindness, respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions (including those you may not share).
- Communicate openly, with respect for other participants, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behaviour and speech directed toward other participants.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert a VicBioCon committee member if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, VicBioCon-contracted facility, or any other venue.

### Unacceptable Behaviour

- Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form. Harassment includes speech or behaviour that is not welcome or is personally offensive. Behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so use discretion to be certain respect is communicated. Harassment intended in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behaviour.
- Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:
  - Physical or verbal abuse of any participant
  - Unwelcome, disparaging or offensive verbal comments or exclusionary behaviour related to age, position/seniority, appearance or body size, employment or military status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, physical or cognitive ability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, race, or religion
  - Inappropriate physical contact
  - Unwanted sexual attention
  - Use of sexual or discriminatory images in public spaces or in presentations
  - Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
  - Harassing photography or recording, including taking photographs or recording of another individual’s oral presentation when they have explicitly prohibited it, e.g. when discussing non-published material
  - Sustained disruption of talks or other events
  - Bullying behaviour
  - Retaliation for reporting unacceptable behaviour

### Immediate serious threat to public safety

- Anyone experiencing or witnessing behaviour that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to personal or public safety at any time should contact local law enforcement (by calling 000) and immediately notify facility security.

### Reporting Unacceptable Behaviour

- If you are not in immediate danger but feel that you are the subject of unacceptable behaviour, have witnessed any such behaviour, or have other concerns, please notify a VicBioCon committee member as soon as possible (identifiable by the fluorescent lanyards) who can work with appropriate VicBioCon leadership to resolve the situation. All reports will be treated seriously, confidentially and responded to promptly.
- To report incidents of any sort during or following a VicBioCon event, please contact VicBioCon at [vicbiocon@gmail.com](mailto:vicbiocon@gmail.com)
- Once VicBioCon is notified committee members will discuss the details first with the individual filing the complaint, then any witnesses who have been identified, and then the alleged offender before determining an appropriate course of action. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others.

### Consequences

- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behaviour is expected to comply immediately.
- VicBioCon committee members (or their designee) or security may take any immediate action deemed necessary and appropriate, including removal from the meeting or event without warning or refund.
- Any breaches of this code may result in prohibition from attending future meetings and events.
- The matter may be referred to employing universities or institutions for consideration of further consequences.

For any questions about this policy, please contact VicBioCon at [vicbiocon@gmail.com](mailto:vicbiocon@gmail.com)