

IAP2's Code of Ethics for Public Participation Professionals

As members of IAP2, we recognize the importance of a Code of Ethics, which guides the actions of those who advocate for including all stakeholders in public decision-making processes. To fully discharge our duties as public participation professionals, we define terms used explicitly throughout our Code of Ethics. We define stakeholders as any individual, group of individuals, organisation, or political entity with a stake in the outcome of a decision. We define the public as those stakeholders who are not the decision maker(s). We define public participation as any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision making and that uses public input to make better decisions.

This Code of Ethics is a set of principles that guides us in our practice of enhancing the integrity of the public participation process. As professionals, we hold ourselves accountable to these principles and strive to hold all participants to the same standards.

1. **Purpose.** We support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decision-making body.
2. **Role of Professional.** We will enhance the public's participation in the decision-making process and assist decision makers in being responsive to the public's concerns and suggestions.
3. **Trust.** We will undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process and among all the participants.
4. **Defining the Public's Role.** We will carefully consider and accurately portray the public's role in the decision-making process.
5. **Openness.** We will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public's understanding and evaluation of a decision.
6. **Access to the Process.** We will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.
7. **Respect for Communities.** We will avoid strategies that risk polarizing community interests or that appear to "divide and conquer."
8. **Advocacy.** We will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for a particular interest, party or project outcome.
9. **Commitments.** We will ensure that all those decisions made by the decision maker are made in good faith.
10. **Support of the Practice.** We will mentor new professionals in the field and educate decision makers and the public about the value and use of public participation.

IAP2's Code of Ethics: Building Integrity

