



Conference: Code of Conduct

The International Communication Association is committed to fostering a vibrant, diverse, and respectful community for its members. At academic conferences, a large and diverse group comes together to live, work, collaborate, and socialize in close quarters for many days at a time. ICA expects participants to manage their interactions responsibly, and to be aware of any imbalances of power from which they may be benefiting, so that all participants have the opportunity to learn, network, and have fun in a safe, vibrant environment.

As excerpted from the 3rd and 4th ethical commitment in the [ICA Code of Ethics](#):

- ICA maintains that ethical values are practiced through continued reflexivity, debate, engagement, and dialogue in our communication scholarship, research, and teaching. Open communication and scholarly expression are essential to ethical practice and intellectual freedom. Technological platforms enable communication scholars to reach broader audiences. However, ICA members should reflect on the appropriate levels of publicness for their own research and respect the wishes of other members regarding the publicness of their research. ICA Divisions are encouraged to develop their own policies and consent expectations regarding audio and visual recordings of conference sessions. ICA members are expected to maintain a professional tone when using the ICA hashtag. Any ICA speaker has the right to request that their work and comments not be shared on social media.
- ICA upholds the principles of non-discrimination and respect for human diversity. ICA strives to be an inclusive and welcoming point of contact for our diverse membership of communication scholars, teachers, and students from around the world. We expect members to treat one another, as well as colleagues, staff, students, and research participants, with the utmost professionalism, civility, and respect, whether in speech or act, whether in formal or informal settings, and regardless of gender; sexuality; race; ethnicity; religious affiliation; ability; status; age; marital, domestic, or parental status; gender identity or expression; caste; social class; nationality; or immigration status.
- ICA is committed to open and free scholarly exchange. Harassment of any member, attendee, or staff member infringes upon their freedom and self-determination. Harassment occurs when someone's actions or words violate another person's dignity and create an environment that is intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive. ICA is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for our community of scholars, free from discrimination and harassment. While at the ICA Annual Conference, the above precepts apply not only to ICA members, but all attendees, speakers, sponsors, and volunteers, who are required to agree to this code of conduct.¹

In order to provide a professional conference experience for all attendees, ICA does not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form in any conference venue, whether a formal or informal setting. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of social media; Twitter/X, and other online media, particularly in conjunction with the use of the @icahdq handle or conference hashtags. This conference code of conduct is not intended to constrain responsible and respectful scholarly, artistic, or professional



discourse and debate. Speakers are asked to frame discussions as openly and inclusively as possible and to be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others, especially given the international nature of this organization. Those in a position of power (a committee chair leading a meeting, for instance, or the chair, respondent, or moderator of a session) are obligated to safeguard the academic and professional integrity of the event and to serve as an example of professionalism, stepping in and managing any inappropriate interactions.

The following behaviors are specifically prohibited:

- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwanted sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or non-consensual physical contact.
- Harassment or intimidation based on, but not limited to: ability(ies), age, appearance (including comments about hairstyle or clothing), body size, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, immigration status, language, marital status, national origin, race, religion (or lack thereof), sexual orientation, or other group status.
- Name-calling or abusive/threatening language, even as part of an otherwise academic dialogue or Q&A. While healthy, participatory discourse is encouraged, we will not tolerate abusive language or personal insults or threats directed at other attendees or at staff.
- Fabrication of conference materials such as registration materials, name badges, or drink tickets for receptions.
- Sharing of one's conference badge with a non-paying person or any other means of subverting the registration process.
- Unauthorized vendor solicitations of any kind. Exhibit space is reserved for registered publishers and other businesses with a legitimate purpose related to communication studies. Any solicitation of ICA attendees for the sale of unauthorized items will result in expulsion from the conference and banning from future events; those who wish to sell items related to fundraising for a project or division/interest group are welcome: please email headquarters in advance to seek permission/collaboration.
- The consumption or possession of illegal substances is strictly prohibited. The possession or consumption of any alcoholic beverages not expressly provided or authorized by the conference venue is strictly prohibited. ICA reserves the right to refuse entry or request venue security remove anyone suspected of impairment.
- For the safety and security of all attendees and staff, weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms (regardless of permit), knives, explosives, chemical agents, and any other object deemed dangerous.

Consequences of misconduct

Anyone who is asked—by another conference attendee, by hotel/venue staff, or by ICA staff—to stop any harassing or abusive behavior is expected to comply immediately. Failure to do so will be subject to the involvement of conference organizers and, at the discretion of the ICA Executive Director and/or Executive Committee, potential removal from the conference without a refund. **Egregious examples of abusive**



International Communication Association

Global Headquarters
1500 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036 USA
(01) 202.955.1444
www.icahdq.org/

behavior will be noted by staff, shared with leadership, and may affect eligibility for leadership opportunities within the organization.

These rules apply to all areas in which attendees, staff, and volunteers come into contact with each other including, *but not limited to*, the convention center, conference hotels and condo properties, common areas surrounding these properties, in hotel fitness centers and pools, and at social events both on- and off-site.

How to Get Help

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have other concerns about inappropriate behavior, please contact a member of conference staff immediately. Conference staff can most easily be found at the registration desk, and will be wearing badges that say STAFF (please take care to find an actual ICA staff member and not student volunteers who may also be in this area). Alternatively, one may email both [Julie Arnold](#), Director of Governance, and [Laura Sawyer](#), Executive Director, with any concerns. Conference staff will be happy to help participants contact hotel/venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the conference, and to take action to remove those who are acting inappropriately.

☐ **By registering for the ICA conference, I assent to and agree to abide by the rules above and to treat attendees, colleagues, and staff with dignity and respect while in attendance at the ICA conference and at all related events.**

Note: (1) Parts of this statement have been adapted from the MIT Sloane code of conference conduct available at <http://www.sloansportsconference.com/about/code-of-conduct/>; the National Communication Association code of conduct available at https://www.natcom.org/sites/default/files/annual-convention/NCA_Convention_Resources_Anti_Harassment_Policy.pdf; the Creative Commons 3.0 conference code of conduct available at <https://confcodeofconduct.com/>; and the American Library Association code of conduct for conference available at http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/statement_appropriate_conduct