International Communication Association

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ICA Code of Ethics

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Preamble

Members of the International Communication Association (ICA) are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards in all aspects of scholarship, research, and professional practice. The interdisciplinary diversity of research encompassed by ICA and our international diversity of members requires consideration in the specific application of broad ethical principles. Ethical guidelines must be sensitive to institutional, legal, and cultural contexts that may vary among nations and regions. It should be noted that the commitments are not meant to be overly prescriptive or detailed regulations, but rather to articulate a set of values and ethical principles to which ICA holds the association, members, and staff accountable.

Ethical Commitments

The ICA upholds the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and affirms our commitment to widely recognized ethical principles, including, but not limited to, standards regarding:

1. Human rights: The ICA recognizes the freedom, self-determination, and privacy of all humans, 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.

1.1 Rights of research participants: ICA calls for the protection of the human rights of research participants and data subjects. ICA members are expected to uphold the research values of autonomy, beneficence, and justice, and where applicable, to abide by their local institutional ethics and review boards. Participation in communication research studies should include the voluntary and informed consent of participants (or, where appropriate, assent). ICA members should only collect personal information for legitimate ends and without violating the rights of individuals or groups.[2] ICA expects researchers to take care to address the specific needs of vulnerable populations in their research, such as children, refugees, people who are mentally unwell, etc.

2. Scholarly and scientific integrity: ICA upholds that scholarly and scientific integrity requires the responsible use of evidence in developing arguments and fairness in hearing, reading, and reviewing the arguments of others.[3] Such integrity ensures the conduct and research by members is free from

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fabrication, falsification, suppression of evidence, and censorship. Further, ICA recognizes that transparency in scholarly method and findings are central to scholarly evaluation, criticism, and debate. Given the interdisciplinary nature of communication, ICA upholds and respects the variety of modes and objects of inquiry that are central to intellectual freedom.

2.1. Honest attribution and authorship: ICA upholds that ideas and work of others should be explicitly attributed in research and scholarship. ICA journals and conferences will not accept work that uses others' published and unpublished ideas, words, or other intellectual property without attribution or permission, and presents them as new and original rather than derived from an existing source (i.e. plagiarism).[4] To avoid concerns of plagiarism, authors should be transparent and cite others' works. Authorship credit is also an important form of honest attribution. All submissions to ICA conference and journals are to contain clear and accurate attribution of authorship. The contributions of students, associates, and researchers should be honestly attributed. For all research presented at ICA conferences or published in ICA journals, all authors that contributed to the work should be fairly acknowledged and the published author list should accurately reflect individual contributions.[5]

2.2. Transparency and disclosure: ICA fully supports the openness of scholarly research. While ICA supports the transparency of open data initiatives, it recognizes the need to protect the privacy and rights of data subjects. Researchers should take care to prevent the re-identification of anonymized data.[6] Authors should be transparent and disclose where and how their datasets, writings, and research have previously appeared at the time of submission of research for review as well as publication or presentation. This includes submissions to conferences as well as journal publications. Potential conflicts of interest [7], financial support, or sponsorship that could unduly influence one's research should all be fully disclosed before presentation or publication.

2.3 Fair use: ICA recognizes the importance of fair use in communication research, scholarship, and teaching, as well as, clear attribution of such works. Fair use is the right to use copyrighted material without permission or compensation where the social and cultural benefits are greater than the costs to the copyright holder.[8]

3. Open communication: 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.[9] 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.

4. Inclusivity and respect: 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 or staff 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.[10] ICA is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for our community of scholars, free from discrimination and harassment.

5. Enhance the public good. As an academic not-for-profit organization, ICA recognizes our social responsibility to enhance the public good. This includes our scholarship, research, and teaching, but also the ways our research might get taken up by organizations, industries, and politics. ICA members have a responsibility to consider the ways the results of their efforts will respect human diversity, will be used in socially responsible ways, will meet social needs, and will be broadly accessible.[11]

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[1] http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf

[2] Parts of this statement have been adapted from the ACM statement of ethics available at https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics

[3] Parts of this statement have been adapted from the MLA statement of ethics available at https://www.mla.org/Resources/Research/Surveys-Reports-and-Other-Documents/Staffing-Salaries-and-Other-Professional-Issues/Statement-of-Professional-Ethics/Read-the-Statement-Online

[4] This definition comes from the World Association of Medical Editors and is cited in the ICA Publications Manual.

[5] Parts of this have been adapted from the Oxford University Press Authors Ethics statement: https://academic.oup.com/journals/pages/authors/ethics Extended details for handling issues can be found in ICA publication guide and in the ICA Conference Planner's Guide.

[6] Parts of this statement have been adapted from the ACM statement of ethics available at https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics

[7] A conflict of interest is can be as "when an author's private interests might be seen as influencing the objectivity of research or experiment, to the point that a reasonable observer might wonder if the individual's behaviour or judgement was motivated by considerations of his or her competing interests." https://academic.oup.com/journals/pages/authors/ethics#conflict

[8] Please refer to the ICA Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Scholarly Research in Communication for more details regarding fair use and the factors which are often used in determining the legality of

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copyrighted material usage. It should be noted that all members should follow their national policies regarding fair use.

[9] Parts of this statement have been adapted from the Shakespeare Association of America statement on civility and respect available at http://www.shakespeareassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/January_2017_Bulletin_.pdf as well as the National Women Studies Association Code of Ethics https://www.nwsa.org/content.asp?contentid=46

[10] Harassment, including but not limited to objectionable epithets, threatened or actual physical harm or abuse, or other intimidating or insulting conduct directed against the individual because of his/her race; ethnicity; religious affiliation; ability; status; age; marital, domestic or parental status; gender identity or expression; caste; social class; nationality; or immigration status interferes with an individual's participation in the association and creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Gender harassment may include offensive remarks, generalized sexist slurs, obscene humor or jokes about sex or any gender in general, degrading anecdotes, gender-derogatory nicknames, demeaning or insulting conduct that conveys negative attitudes about a particular gender or transgendered person, and/or the transmission or display of gender-degrading material.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature if that behavior interferes with an individual's participation in the association, and creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

[11] Parts of this statement have been adapted from the ACM statement of ethics available at https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics.