



## CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

As a nonprofit organization at the forefront of promoting excellence in A/E/C firm management, SDA's policy is to uphold the highest legal, ethical, and moral standards by our members and our leaders. We will adhere to rigorous standards of conduct and guard our reputation for integrity and excellence. SDA will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its members, leaders, and employees to conduct the business of the organization in accordance with the letter and spirit of all relevant laws; to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct; to act in a professional, businesslike manner; and to treat others with respect. In general, the use of good judgment based on high ethical principles will guide members, chapter leaders, and national leaders with respect to lines of acceptable conduct.

**Professional Responsibility:** We are responsible for engaging in activities that enhance the competence and value of A/E/C business management professionals and for adding value to the organization we serve. We endeavor to build respect and strategic importance for the A/E/C business management professional; to inform and educate our firms' administrators and business managers; and to assist our firms in achieving their objectives and goals through the implementation and management of effective business practices. We strive to adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct; to enhance knowledge and skills that support best business practices within the industry; to protect the proprietary interests of our firms; to respect the rights and acknowledge the aspirations and contributions of colleagues; and to accept responsibility for all our decisions and actions.

**Use of Information:** As A/E/C business management professionals, we can significantly influence the image and success of our firms by contributing to the free exchange of information and ideas. We are, therefore, committed to building and sustaining trust among members by maximizing the open exchange of information and to protecting rights to privacy and confidential information shared, sought, or received. Members shall treat as confidential any information to which they are given access by virtue of their position or membership in SDA or by their presence at any functions where they are representing their firm or SDA. Members shall acquire and disseminate information only to the extent, and by means, which are both ethical and responsible. Members shall protect their individual firms' proprietary interests, safeguard restricted or confidential information, and take appropriate steps to ensure the accuracy of all disseminated information.

**Professional Development:** We recognize the importance of continuing education and professional expertise to meet the highest professional standards of competence. We endeavor to further our understanding of how our firms function and to pursue continuing education and encourage the same for our colleagues. We further seek to continue professional development throughout our careers. We are committed to continuous learning, skills development, and the application of new knowledge in A/E/C firm business management; to contributing to the body of knowledge through discussion, publication, and speaking; to assisting colleagues and SDA members in their professional development; and to pursuing professional certification as a measure of competency and knowledge.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The personal interest of members shall **not** interfere with the performance of duties to their organizations or to the SDA and shall **not** result in personal, financial, professional, or political gain at the expense of our organizations, the Society, its members, or its supporters. We shall avoid activities that are, or may appear to be, in conflict with any provisions of this Code of Ethics and Professionalism document. If at any time an SDA member believes they may be unable to maintain professional objectivity on any issue, the member shall abstain from any position on the subject. Full disclosure of any conflict of interest shall be made in writing to National Headquarters with written action or acknowledgement within 30 days.

**Acknowledgement:**

Acceptance of and adherence to the Code of Ethics and Professionalism is a requirement of all new members and renewing members. Additionally, the Code of Ethics and Professionalism is a part of the Chapter Affiliation Agreement and must be accepted and adhered to at the chapter level.

**Violations:** A chapter member believed to be in violation of the ethics and standards of SDA shall be first investigated by the member's Chapter Board of Directors in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. A report of the violation is to be communicated to the national Executive Committee, outlining the violation and the action, if any, taken by the Chapter Board of Directors. If no action is taken by the chapter, and the national Executive Committee deems the violation egregious, including theft, slander, libel, or other similar actions, the national Executive Committee may, with a vote, determine action to be taken regarding the violation. The decisions of the national Executive Committee in accordance therewith shall prevail.

A member-at-large believed to be in violation of the ethics and standards of SDA shall be investigated by the national Executive Committee in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. The decisions of the Executive Committee in accordance therewith shall prevail.

Any chapter believed to be in violation of the ethics and standards of this organization may be investigated by the national Executive Committee in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. The decisions of the Executive Committee in accordance therewith shall prevail.

Approved by ExCom – October 30, 2019