

EUSPR Code of Ethics

Introduction: Ethical principles as applicable to EUSPR and its activities

The European Society for Prevention Research (“EUSPR”) is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organisation dedicated to the advancement of prevention research and the implementation of science-based prevention, independent from commercial interests.

The EUSPR’s mission is to advance the science base of environmental, universal, selective and indicated prevention aimed at improving human health and well-being and addressing health inequalities. Among its aims, *to maintain the highest levels of ethical standards in scientific research and professional practice, ensuring that EUSPR members declare and take steps to avoid conflicts of interest*, as listed in item d) of section B.8 of the Statute of the EUSPR, gives ground to this Code of Ethics.

Therefore, EUSPR Code of Ethics (“Code”) sets detailed behavioural standards for EUSPR members, conference attendees, staff, volunteers, suppliers, sponsors, benefactors and any individual who participates in any activities promoted, supported, sponsored by or connected in any way to EUSPR. The Code is designed to assist and enable all EUSPR-members to engage with one another and with EUSPR with integrity, honesty, efficiency, safety and legality, including relationship with industries and entities that are inimical to science-based prevention. It sets a model to guide its membership.

The EUSPR shall therefore make public its values in order to avoid behaviours that might bring discredit on the EUSPR or what it stands for: the promotion of science-based prevention, independent from commercial interests. Hence, essential values particular to the EUSPR are **Integrity, Responsibility, Inclusiveness and Transparency**.

The EUSPR is aware that its members come from diverse cultural, professional and regulatory backgrounds in Europe and are often already guided in their research and professional ethics by the Codes of Conduct laid out by their professional societies or institutions in their countries. This Code is not intended to additionally regulate or police the professional and commercial activities of EUSPR members in their private or professional lives, once they neither publicly associate or connect in any way whatsoever with EUSPR nor represent or speak on its behalf.

EUSPR, as a respected society in the prevention field, has a role and responsibilities to the public, as such, must do its best to protect its reputation, as well as to promote and disseminate its core values. Therefore, we need to reflect this responsibility in the way we support, endorse and promote collaboration in research, by ensuring it is being conducted and disseminated with transparency, honesty and integrity, free from undeclared commercial interests. However, this applies only for activities on behalf of the EUSPR.

Violations of this Code may result in sanctions imposed under the Procedures for Review of Conduct Concerns described in Annex II below. These Procedures aim to provide due process to EUSPR members and to protect the integrity and ensure the efficacy of the Code.

Integrity

EUSPR members shall act ethically and with integrity. This includes conducting academic and research activities respecting EUSPR values and goals.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest situation arises when the private interests of EUSPR members compete or conflict with the interests of the EUSPR.

EUSPR members should therefore avoid:

- putting themselves in a position that may lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the EUSPR;
- any situation that may involve a conflict between their personal interests, including those of their family members, and the interests of EUSPR. Members are therefore not allowed to undertake any activities, investment or outside job which may cause others to doubt their impartiality or which interferes with their ability to perform on behalf of the EUSPR objectively and effectively.
- Not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of EUSPR in such a way to confer any financial benefit on themselves, their immediate family members or any organization in which they or their immediate family members have significant interest as stakeholders, directors or officers.

In particular, EUSPR members involved in editing and/or organizing conventions, congresses, workshops or similar events should declare conflict of interest to be checked by the EUSPR Code Committee (ECC) if they are closely related to, have beneficial interest in or are approached by someone expecting any kind of advantage due to its connection with EUSPR.

The ECC will assess on a case by case basis the reported or declared conflict of interest within 10 (ten) days, taking into account the values and the mission of the EUSPR, as well as the usual ethics criteria applied to public and academic entities. The ECC will assess whether the reported facts or situations should be considered or not a conflict of interest and notify the EUSPR board and the member who brought the potential conflict of interest to the ECC's attention.

Trust and collaboration

Mutual trust and collaboration are essential features of the EUSPR's identity. This is because its members collaborate in numerous projects, share valuable information and research data, often a prerequisite for applying for EU and national funding.

EUSPR conducts its activities with high ethical standards and, therefore, trust and collaboration among its members is vital. As an example, any misuse of trust-based exclusive and privileged information and data sources, including using them for individual benefit, in detriment of other EUSPR members or EUSPR values, will be considered a violation of this Code.

Acceptance of Advantages

Using EUSPR reputation and academic prestige to intentionally obtain any kind of personal advantage as well as to pursue personal or private interests and/or goals of any nature does not align with EUSPR

principles or interests. Dubious situations will be dealt with in a case-by-case basis. In case of doubts, see the section on Conflict of Interest.

Members inadequately using their affiliation with the EUSPR as a mean to obtain or facilitate financial funding and any reputational advantages vis-à-vis governments, funding bodies and public entities of any nature will be considered in breach of this Code. Equally, members offering any kind of advantages in exchange of any kind for personal benefit, even if not financial, will be deemed as a violating this Code.

EUSPR members shall refrain from soliciting any advantage (even indirectly) from any persons having business dealings with the society (e.g. suppliers, contractors, academic institutions, foundations, etc). Any members who wish to accept any kind of advantage from such persons should seek special permission from the Board prior to the acceptance.

Responsibility

Responsible research

A cornerstone of EUSPR work is promoting, supporting and bringing together research activities of its members. Due to their sensitivity and visibility, inappropriate practices or behaviour may constitute a serious risk to the society standards of scientific quality and ethical integrity. Intentionally fraudulent research activities and poor practices can result in harmful consequences for public health, EUSPR's reputation and trust in international organisations. It also has repercussions on the advancement of the prevention science, an impact that is as difficult to estimate as it is to mitigate.

Recognising the importance and sensitivity of research activities, and in line with the [WHO Policy on Misconduct in Research](#) and the definitions of research ethics herewith in, we use procedures for reporting (through ethics@euspr.org) and examining wrongdoing in research, as well as the measures to be taken in response. Example: refusal to share raw data (e.g. a sample of anonymised questionnaires) with a statistician within an EUSPR work group, who has doubts about a dataset.

Intellectual property

EUSPR members shall not use any kind of distinctive sign, logos, symbols and any other similar or comparable way to identify EUSPR without previous express consent of the Board¹.

EUSPR members are often engaged in consortia that have produced relevant materials over which EUSPR might have rights. EUSPR members shall not promote or commercialise such products of EUSPR collaborative projects as their own, without communicating this to their consortium partners and to the EUSPR board.

EUSPR also respects the property rights of others. Under no circumstances shall its members infringe such rights while representing, publishing under any sponsored publication or being connected to EUSPR in any way whatsoever.

¹ As defined in EUSPR Statutes.

Transparency

Sponsorship and relations with industry

Each sponsorship, whether providing a cash or in-kind contribution, must be approved by the EUSPR Board.

EUSPR will consider sponsorships from companies or organizations whose interests, products, and services (as relevant) align with the EUSPR's mission statement. All sponsorships are handled separately from programmatic content. Sponsors will have no control over conference programmes or sponsorship policies.

The EUSPR does not officially endorse the products and/or services of corporations and other third parties. Therefore, the EUSPR's name and/or marks cannot be used in association with a sponsor's product and/or service so as to imply the Society's endorsement.

EUSPR will acknowledge sponsorship in the annual meeting programme app, on signage at the meeting, and on its website. The EUSPR will not accept sponsorships from companies or organisations that would create a conflict of interest (real or perceived) with the society.

Accordingly, the EUSPR will not accept sponsorships from the following types of organisations and industries:

- Companies that manufacture, sell, or promote tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, other illicit drugs, gambling or firearms, or organisations that advocate for such companies, or are foundations linked to them.
- Companies that manufacture, sell, or promote processed, sugary or otherwise unhealthy food, or companies that commercialise and promote unproven concepts such as homeopathy, or bodybuilding.
- Partisan political, lobbying, advocacy, and/or cause organisations beyond those supportive of the EUSPR's mission and approved by the EUSPR's board.
- Companies or organisations that publicly or privately advocate messages or missions inimical to the interests of the EUSPR, its members, and/or its mission.

Nevertheless, individuals are allowed to present papers sponsored by the aforementioned companies and organisations at EUSPR conferences, provided that they clearly state the nature of their relationship with the above-mentioned companies and/or organisations.

Relationship with entities that are a potential threat to science-based prevention

Engagement with entities that are a potential threat to science-based prevention, either commercially or otherwise, might provide their activities undue legitimisation vis-à-vis governments, funders and society at large. It might also undermine and weaken other EUSPR members who strive to promote and uphold the objectives of the EUSPR in the same environment. Therefore, prior to any kind of engagement with such entities, individuals acting as EUSPR members should inform and consult with

the EUSPR board in order to determine whether larger strategic objectives accommodate such engagement.

Confidential information and privacy protection

EUSPR activities constantly require data, documents and information regarding its members subjects to the researches or other individual's personal data, to be obtained, retained and eventually disclosed.

Each Member is thus required to safeguard the private and confidential nature of the information acquired as part of his/her member duties, and – more specifically – to comply with the confidentiality terms when applicable.

All information, knowledge and data acquired by EUSPR by way of its activities may not be utilised, disclosed or divulged without prior and specific authorisation being granted by the Board.

Inclusiveness

EUSPR embraces difference and diversity. A diversity of perspectives, experiences, genders, backgrounds, races, ethnicities, talents, seniorities and interests significantly strengthens and deepens the EUSPR experience and research.

Equality and diversity

EUSPR strives for inclusive relationships that promote feelings of being respected and valued as individuals. EUSPR–members should establish relationships of respect, openness, trust and inclusiveness in their interactions with each other and with the communities engaged in their work.

Equity and respect for all people regardless of status, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, ancestry, academic seniority level, pregnancy status, sex, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, mental or physical disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, political opinion or any other characteristics. In our prevention work, and in our interactions with each other, EUSPR members recognise the need for fairness and justice (assuring that all persons are treated equitably), and for respect for people's rights and dignity, including the rights to privacy and confidentiality.

EUSPR embed diversity and inclusion in its activities, with particular focus in empowering early career researchers to promote them equal access and to develop their capacities within the EUSPR community.

Harassment and inadequate social behaviour

At EUSPR we rely on human and social capital first, which also means we treat people with respect and equality. We are committed to providing a healthy collaborative environment and culture. EUSPR is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can fully contribute and have equal opportunities.

Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, condoned or ignored. If a claim of harassment or discrimination is proven, measures will be applied, up to and including termination of membership.

As such the EUSPR in all of its activities prohibits engagement in:

1. Unlawful discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy status, sex, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, mental or physical disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics protected by law.
2. Harassment that creates a hostile atmosphere, or is intimidating or abusive through jokes based on individual identities, bullying, epithets, crude language, and hostile or sexualised physical conduct or gestures.
3. Quid pro quo harassment, including use of social power, i.e., an academic advisor to a trainee/student or employer to employee or senior to junior colleague or when one can influence decisions that can directly affect the status, well-being, or advancement of a colleague or trainee.
4. Sustained or disrespectful verbal or physical disruption of speakers or events such as by threatening speakers (verbal or physical).

Annex I: Definitions

Concern: for purposes of the Procedure in case of Concerns, is any issue or matter of importance which relates to any potential, real or alleged violation of any aspect of this Code of Ethics.

Entities that are a potential threat to science-based prevention are considered organisations, individuals or associations that capitalise on commercialising or promoting, overtly and uncompromisingly, interventions that have not been outcome-evaluated and contain elements with potential for harm. Examples are the use of ex-drug-addicts as testimonials in prevention, or using scare tactics with exaggerated threats.

EUSPR member: an individual who participates in any EUSPR activity in any capacity is referred as an “EUSPR member”. EUSPR members affirm their commitment to uphold its principles by joining as a member and subsequently renewing their membership, registering for an EUSPR conference, or volunteering for service activities of EUSPR.

EUSPR activities: Any activities promoted, supported, coordinated and/or organised by EUSPR.

Harassment and inadequate social behaviour: Under this Code, specific examples of prohibited activities are:

- Verbal and nonverbal insults or discriminatory jokes, directed at individuals based on their minority group membership
- Bullying in any form; including, verbal, physical, relational or cyber
- Violence, threats of violence, or violent language directed against another person for any reason
- Posting or displaying sexually explicit or violent material
- Posting or threatening to post other people’s personally identifying information
- Inappropriate, unwelcome, or non-consensual photography or recording
- Unwelcome sexual attention including sexualised comments or jokes, non-consensual or unwelcome and inadequate touching, and unwelcome sexual advances
- Deliberate intimidation, threats of retaliation for rebuffing advances, stalking or unwelcome following (online or in person)
- Sustained disruption of community events, including talks and presentations, for any reason

Private interests means both the financial and personal interests of the member or those of their connections including: family and other relations; personal friends; the clubs and societies to which they belong; and any person to whom they owe a favour or are obligated in any way. Members should avoid using their position or any information made available to them in the course of their duties to benefit themselves, their relations or any other persons with whom they have personal or social ties.

Research: development of knowledge with the aim of understanding health challenges and mounting an improved response to them. This definition covers the full spectrum of activities EUSPR undertakes to support research.

Annex II: Procedures in case of Concerns

It is important to EUSPR that any non-compliance or other misconduct within EUSPR sponsored, supported or promoted activities and research is reported and properly addressed. As part of this commitment, EUSPR encourages either members or third parties who have Concerns (as defined in the Annex I hereof) to come forward and express them in order to enable EUSPR to investigate and address these matters.

According to the nature of the violation, if the Board considers appropriate, referral to adequate EU or local authorities may be made about such conduct or acts.

Scope

This procedure (“Procedure”) applies to all EUSPR members and to any third-party with an interest, issue or concern with EUSPR or its activities (hereinafter “Stakeholders”). Stakeholders are encouraged to address any concern they may have through the use of the contact details below for the EUSPR Code Committee. This Procedure is designed to provide EUSPR members and stakeholders with a mechanism to address Concerns confidentially, anonymously and without fear of reprisal and/or retaliation.

Implementation and application of this Procedure is supervised by the EUSPR Code Committee (ECC), which consists of the EUSPR President (ECC Chairperson), a member of the Early Career Forum (ECF) and one additional member to be elected by the Assembly for a one-year mandate, or, alternatively, their respective delegates.

The role of the ECC is to ensure that: (i) there is an independent channel to report Concerns; (ii) such Concerns receive proper follow-up; (iii) feedback is provided to the person reporting the Concern; and (iv) recommendations are made to the Board for any required follow-up actions.

Submission of Concerns

Anyone who has information about a violation of this Code can file a Concern. Concerns may be transmitted to EUSPR in writing via the contact details provided below. In addition, the President or any Board Member may self-initiate an inquiry if circumstances warrant. Inquiries, complaints or submissions other than Concerns sent via the communication channel provided exclusively for them may be handled by EUSPR at its discretion. All such Concerns, inquiries or submissions relating to the Code are re-directed to the President to define the appropriate next steps, unless the Concern involves the President, one of the ECC members or their family members and close associates. In these cases the Concern shall be redirected to the EUSPR Board who will appoint one of its members to carry out the tasks originally assigned to the President in the procedures better described in the following items.

Review of Concerns

Preliminary analysis by the EUSPR President

Upon receipt and preliminary review of any submission, the President in consultation with the other ECC members may conclude that the submission: 1. contains factually unreliable or insufficient information; 2. is indeed a Concern as defined herein; 3. is patently frivolous or trivial.

In such cases, the President and other ECC may either determine that (a) the submission does not constitute a Concern that would justify further investigation or bringing it before the Board. Such submission shall be disposed of by the President and notice to its submitter shall be provided by the President, once the submitter is identified. All such preliminary dispositions by the President, in consultation with the other ECC members, shall be yearly reported to the Board in a way to ratify and approve such decisions. If (b) a submission is deemed by the President in consultation with the other ECC members on a preliminary basis to be a Concern, the ECC shall convene within 15 (fifteen) days and, within the same period, provide notice to the individual submitting the Concern that it is being reviewed.

Review of Concern

Once a submission is deemed as a Concern, an internal investigation into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary in order to clarify, expand or corroborate the information provided by the submitter.

The ECC will conduct the inquiry, make a determination as to whether the Concern should be brought to the Board, and formulate formal actions for the Board, if warranted. The ECC may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by EUSPR staff and/or legal counsel. All ECC investigative work will be conducted respecting high standards of confidentiality.

Both the individual submitting the Concern and the EUSPR member(s) or any individuals who is (are) the subject of the Concern also may be contacted for additional information with respect to the Concern. The ECC may, at its discretion, contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the Concern.

The ECC shall determine by majority vote, based upon a standard of the preponderance of the evidence, whether or not there has been a violation of the Code, and whether the Board should impose sanctions. When the ECC finds that there has been a violation, it shall also recommend imposition of an appropriate sanction.

ECC summary of the Concern and conclusions shall be put in written in a specific report to be issued within 90 (ninety) days after the commencement of the investigation. If further investigation is needed, the report shall indicate it to the Board, who will decide for next steps. Otherwise, a written determination confirming the violation of the Code with a proposed sanction shall be prepared under the supervision of the President. Alternatively, if ECC determines that a violation has not occurred, the Concern shall be dismissed upon ratification of the Board.

A notice to all individuals, members and/or stakeholders involved with the Concern shall be sent by ECC indicating the outcome of the investigation and the eventual sanctions to be applied. Such notice shall be sent at least 30 (thirty) days before the assessment and final decision of the Board on potential sanctions, in order grant the EUSPR member the possibility of submitting a written statement to the Board, within the same period, to clarify or to give additional information on any facts related to the violation reported.

Sanctions

The purpose of Sanctions should be focused on discouragement of violations and, at the same, incentivising behaviours aligned with EUSPR Code of Ethics and values. The responses applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation.

Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Board upon an EUSPR member whom the Board has determined to have violated the Code.

Common responses may include:

- No action (if the team determines no violation occurred);
- A private or – if required – public warning notice referring potential additional sanctions in case of recurrence;
- Requiring a public apology;
- Requiring that a EUSPR member stops their behaviour;
- Cancelling a conference talk or equivalent event;
- Suspension of an individual from EUSPR activities for a certain period of time;
- Removing a participant from the conference, meeting or online space, without refund;
- Suspension of the EUSPR member from membership in EUSPR for a designated period or from attendance at EUSPR activities;
- Permanent expulsion of the EUSPR member from EUSPR community; and
- Any other sanction that the Board considers adequate to a certain violation.

Resignation

If an EUSPR member who is the subject of a Concern voluntarily surrenders their membership at any time during the investigation of a Concern under these procedures the Concern investigation shall be finalized as usually under the rules determined herein.

Once the procedures are finished and the Board issues a final determination, the entire record shall be sealed and the former member may not apply for membership in EUSPR and/or EUSPR activities for a certain period of time, to be determined according to the gravity of the violation as assessed by the Board.

However, the Board shall authorise the President of EUSPR to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the Concern which was pending at the time of resignation. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the person or entity who submitted the Concern shall be notified of final determination.

Contact Details

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