

CODE OF CONDUCT

5th International Conference on Global Food Security 9th - 12th April 2024 – Leuven, Belgium

Code of conduct for organizers, participants and sponsors

The 5th International Conference on Global Food Security addresses the topic of food security at all spatial levels from local to global, and from an interdisciplinary and systemic food systems perspective. It aims at better understanding drivers and costs of current and future food security, reconciling the competing environmental, economic or social objectives and outcomes towards achieving the Sustainable Development goals.

All stakeholders of the 5th International Conference on Global Food Security are committed to make this conference a success; each of them, in its own legitimate mission and interests, is part of a scientific endeavor to promote scientific research and knowledge sharing on global food security. The main objective of the conference being the production of public goods, the organizers want to innovate in their financial set-up in order to offer affordable and inclusive registration fees, including specific arrangements for young scientists and scientists from developing countries. For this reason, beyond the organizing costs and the legitimate retribution of the main organizer, the conference is not meant to make surpluses, and any surplus budget will be used to add value to the conference visibility and impact (grants, publication, etc.).

The organizers expect the various stakeholders to respect the highest standards of scientific integrity in their participation and contributions, whether they be scientific, financial or institutional. They want to avoid conflicts of interest. This code of conduct aims at making these standards and the different stakeholders' interests explicit.

Common principles and values

The organizers are using the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, published in 2017¹, as a foundation of the common principles and values of the conference. The European Code defines the following principles:

“- **Reliability** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources.

- **Honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way.

- **Respect** for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment.

- **Accountability** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.”

The European Code calls for a shared responsibility amongst stakeholders, beyond their specific and legitimate interests: “Researchers, academies, learned societies, funding agencies, public and private research performing organisations, publishers and other relevant bodies each have specific responsibilities to observe and promote these practices and the principles that underpin them.”

European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity: <https://www.allea.org/publications/joint-publications/european-code-conduct-research-integrity/>

The different stakeholders of the conference

The conference represents a common endeavor of different stakeholders, each with different interests and expectations:

1. **Organizers:** Represented by Elsevier, the “**main organizer**”, and the academic and public institutions, scientifically and financially involved in organizing the conference - KU Leuven and Wageningen University & Research

International-, the “**lead conveners**”. Beyond their financial contribution to the budget, the organizers' interest is a visible, dense, wide and inclusive science sharing and debating conference, generating scientific progress to contribute to food security.

2. **Participants:** All individuals, registered and participating at the conference, for presenting or attending the sessions are looking for an enriching scientific experience, respectful sharing of knowledge and interdisciplinary networking.

3. **Sponsors:** As organizations of different natures willing to provide funding for the conference or specific events, their interest is raising their profile and visibility. Through a marketing strategy, sponsors might look for brand awareness and recognition, media exposure, enhanced credibility, etc.

4. **Commercial investors:** As conference exhibitors and key private partners, their interests target marketing, access to knowledge, profile, visibility, credibility for future new partnerships and commercial profit.

All these stakeholders' interests are legitimate as long as they are not in opposition with the general objective of the conference and its common principles and values.

Code of conduct of all the conference attendees²

Organizers are committed to creating a safe, enjoyable and professional conference environment where mutual trust, diversity and inclusion are valued, and where everyone is entitled to be treated with courtesy and respect. They will not tolerate harassment of attendees in any form and expect all participants to respect the following guidelines:

- Harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate. These include disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, sexual attention, deliberate intimidation, stalking, and photography or recording of an individual without consent. It also includes offensive comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race or religion.
- All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual or sexist language and imagery is not appropriate.
- Interventions should be respectful and not insult or put down other attendees or facilitators of the event.
- Should attendees witness events of bullying, harassment or aggression, organizers recommend that they approach the affected person to show support and check how they are. The witness may also wish to suggest that the person report the inappropriate behavior. However, it is up to the affected person alone whether or not they wish to report it.

Attendees asked to stop any inappropriate behavior are expected to comply immediately. Attendees violating these rules may be asked to leave the event at the sole discretion of the organizers without a refund of any charge. Any participant who wishes to report a violation of this policy is asked to speak, in confidence, to the Scientific Programme Committee.

Sponsors and commercial investors

The conference is welcoming sponsor contributions and commercial investors' participation from organizations that have a demonstrated interest in promoting research in global food security and whose values are consistent with the conference values. The conference organizers reserve the right to make decisions about appropriate sponsors or commercial investors, and to refuse contributions from organizations whose values do not match those of the conference and its theme. While sponsors will not have any influence on the content of the programme, they may suggest and, if asked by the Scientific and/or Programme Committees, to help organize activities/workshops, pre-, post- or during the conference, satellite symposia or focus tracks, with the approval and oversight of the Scientific and Programme Committees. In any case, the boundaries of sponsors' and commercial investors' involvement will be subject to compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and industry good practice, and will also be explicit and clearly disclosed, ensuring that all attendees clearly understand them and avoiding any real or perceived conflicts of interest. The organizers welcome offers of unconditional sponsorship and contributions earmarked for a particular purpose, e.g. travel grants, social programmes, etc.

Dispute Resolution

In case of any disputes arising regarding the application of this Code of conduct, the Conference Scientific Committee will be the unique level of dispute resolution through a vote when necessary, with a tie-breaking vote of the conference Chairs.

² *Acknowledgments: This code of conduct was adapted from the London Code of Conduct (by A. Pontzen and H. Peiris), which was derived from original Creative Commons documents by PyCon and Geek Feminism. It is released under a CC-Zero licence for reuse. To help track people's improvements and best practice, please retain this acknowledgement, and log your re-use or modification of this policy at https://github.com/apontzen/london_cc*