



ESCMID

CODE OF CONDUCT



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Code of Conduct

European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID)

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A Introduction

Message from the ESCMID Executive Committee

European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) is one of the leading scientific and professional organizations for clinical microbiology and infectious diseases. The Society assigns great importance to ethical behaviour and unquestionable integrity as well as responsibility for the interests of its members, officers and employees.

The Society's officers, employees and members are key to ESCMID's long-term success and reputation. This is guaranteed by all ESCMID representatives showing respect for each other and creating a basis on which value can be generated for our stakeholders.

The Code of Conduct outlines how the Society can maintain its high standard of ethical conduct and how it complies with laws, binding standards and internal policies. The Code of Conduct provides guidance on what principles representatives should base their decisions. It also creates a culture of trust where officers and employees feel comfortable raising any issues that may arise.

The ESCMID Executive Committee unreservedly endorses this Code of Conduct and its implementation. We are counting on you to commit and adhere to the principles laid out in the ESCMID Code of Conduct.

ESCMID Executive Committee

1 Purpose of the Code of Conduct

With this Code of Conduct, the ESCMID Executive Committee aims to maintain the sustained long-term success of the Society through the appropriate conduct of every employee, officer or any other person representing ESCMID. The success and reputation of the society in fulfilling its mission depends on the ethical behaviour, honesty, integrity and good judgment of everybody involved.

2 ESCMID's mission

ESCMID is a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of infection-related diseases. This is achieved by promoting and supporting research, education, training, and good medical practice.

3 ESCMID's values

ESCMID is committed to the following core values:

Integrity

ESCMID is committed to integrity in all its activities. Integrity assumes transparency, trust and merit-based criteria. The society is committed to creating a working environment where employees, officers and other representatives can trust each other. ESCMID acts in a transparent manner in all its processes, relationships and communications. ESCMID representatives work with integrity and honesty for the benefit of the Society and with the aim of fulfilling the Society's mission. The Society promotes and supports professional development (employee/officer selection, professional development, fellowships, awards, grants) based on professional merit criteria.

Accountability

As a membership-based society, ESCMID is accountable to its members. Employees and officers are responsible for the actions and the decisions they take. Committee members are responsible for quality of project development and results of projects they have been tasked with. Employees are responsible for the quality of the activities which they have been assigned according to their role and level of seniority within the Society.

Commitment

The Society's activities are aimed at fulfilling the Society's mission. All ESCMID representatives are expected to be fully committed to the Society and its mission. Officers dedicate time and energy to serve the Society, and employees are dedicated to accomplishing their work in line with ESCMID's strategic direction. ESCMID representatives are committed to solidarity: they work together and support each other to fulfil the Society's mission.

4 Responsibilities of ESCMID representatives

This Code of Conduct is binding for all employees, officers and any other person who represents ESCMID in any way. ESCMID representatives who engage with third parties ensure they are aware of the Code of Conduct and apply it accordingly. Certain topics are covered in detail in specific policies. Breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the ESCMID Executive Committee or via a confidential reporting procedure. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, such as reprimand, dismissal, and civil or criminal prosecution.

B ESCMID Rules and Regulations

1 Proper conduct

1.1 Business integrity

Compliance with internal and external rules and regulations

ESCMID is committed to its mission and core values in all its activities. All its representatives must strictly comply with applicable laws and binding standards. Misconduct and non-compliance with any internal or external rules and regulations may not only damage ESCMID's reputation but may threaten its survival. ESCMID representatives are responsible for preventing and promptly reporting the occurrence of unlawful or unethical conduct within ESCMID's activities. Any violation of internal or external rules and regulations will be sanctioned and may not only lead to disciplinary actions but may also result in civil or criminal prosecution.

Procurement

The Society's partners have an interest in the relationship with ESCMID. We expect every ESCMID representative to follow and adhere to the relevant procurement procedures for the selection, evaluation, approval and re-evaluation of third-party service providers and sponsors. The Executive Office must tender all contracts, obtain at least three offers on every new contract and review existing contracts every year. The Executive Committee must approve all contracts. Executive Committee defines rules which need to be agreed by (one or more of the following: Executive Committee, ESCMID President, ESCMID Treasurer, ESCMID Office Director) on basis of amount. A change of rules is possible only by the Executive Committee's decision. A Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) on procurement is available.

Hiring of staff

Executive Committee selects and hires employees working for the Society based on independent, objective and replicable criteria. All job opportunities must be publicly advertised. To prevent nepotism ESCMID prohibits the employment of individuals with significant relationships with the managers and executive officers of the Society. Representatives who know or are related to a candidate may not take decisions on job applications. An SOP on staff hiring is available.

Hiring of external consultants

Hiring and selection of external consultants require due diligence since persons who represent ESCMID in any way are subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct and its internal rules as well. Before hiring a consultant, it is obligatory to consider whether candidate is a suitable counterparty for ESCMID and to include appropriate contractual terms. Every ESCMID representative is required to ensure that there is a proper contract in place that defines all relevant terms and guides the relationship between ESCMID and the consultant. Such terms include but are not limited to: start of contractual relationship, deliveries and milestones, terms of payment and termination as well as responsibilities for the supervision of the parties' compliance with the contractual terms defined. Payments of expenses and fees to consultants require respective recordings and documentation and must be approved by the Executive Committee prior to execution. The Executive Committee must approve all contracts with external consultants. An SOP for external consultants is available.

1.2 Expenses

Expenses of employees

ESCMID expects all employees to ensure that expenses are appropriate and reasonable and in line with the Society's policies. Business-related expenses may include expenses for travelling, meals and accommodation and are reimbursed in accordance with the ESCMID Employees' Expense Policy. ESCMID will not reimburse expenses that are not considered to be business-related.

Expenses of officers

ESCMID expects all officers to ensure that expenses are appropriate and reasonable. Business-related expenses may include expenses for travelling, meals and accommodation and are reimbursed in accordance with the ESCMID Officers' Reimbursement Policy that applies to ESCMID Officers and representatives (members of ESCMID Executive Committee, ESCMID Subcommittees, ESCMID Study Groups, ESCMID Task Forces, ECCMID Program Committee). Accompanying persons of officers and representatives are welcome to social events. Additional costs due to the presence of the accompanying person(s) (e.g. travel costs, meals and accommodation) shall never be paid by ESCMID. Finance & HR bills the additional costs to the respective Officer or representative.

Expenses of contractors, consultants, ECCMID speakers

ESCMID expects all independent contractors, consultants and congress speakers to ensure that expenses are appropriate and reasonable. Business-related expenses may include expenses for travelling, meals and accommodation and are reimbursed in accordance with the ESCMID reimbursement policies for contractors and ECCMID speakers. Accompanying persons are welcome to social events. Additional costs due to the presence of the accompanying person (travel costs, meals and accommodation) are not paid by ESCMID/ECCMID. Finance & HR bills additional costs to the respective individual.

Approval process

The respective officer approves employees' participation in meetings, expected travel time, associated costs and other expenses in advance. Employees must fill in the respective form specifying the business purpose and the expected expenses of the trip. After the trip, Finance & HR will check if the expense claims adherence to travel expense policy, including business purpose, if they are mathematically correct, if the costs are reasonable and if the documentation with original receipts is complete. The respective EC-officer will give the final approval for the reimbursement.

1.3 Conflict of interest

ESCMID employees, officers and representatives are expected to act in the best interest of the Society. It is fundamental for ESCMID to be an independent, impartial organization. Sometimes, an individual's knowledge of, and position within, ESCMID can cause potential conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest can occur on an organizational, personal or institutional level.

Personal or institutional level

A personal conflict of interest is a situation where a person's private interests, such as outside professional relationships or personal financial assets, interfere or may be perceived to interfere with his/her performance of official ESCMID duties. An institutional conflict of interest is a situation where a person's interests as the head of an institutional department or unit, such as unrestricted research grants to the institute, interfere or may be perceived to interfere with the work they are doing for ESCMID. In other words, personal or institutional relationships or interests must not affect a person's professional activities and duties within ESCMID.

Disclosure and Declaration of Interests

ESCMID representative is expected to disclose any actual, potential, real or apparent conflict of interests and seek a solution together with the ESCMID Secretary General. ESCMID officers and all ESCMID employees are expected to disclose all the following interests and relationships according to the ESCMID Declaration of Interests Policy:

Personal financial interests

- Company leadership role, employment relationship or ownership interest
- Consulting and advisory services, speaking or writing engagements, public presentations
- Direct research support to the responsible project lead
- Licensing fees or royalties associated with intellectual property

Institutional financial interests

- Financial support for clinical trials or contracted research

Non-financial interests

- Senior leadership roles in other medical societies, research groups, foundations, political/pressure groups, etc.
- Membership in programme committee of major international meetings and conferences
- Involvement or advisory role with, or membership of, medical, pharmaceutical, healthcare, health policy organisations
- Membership of, or affiliation with, political/pressure groups or associations active in the fields of infectious diseases or clinical microbiology
- Non-remunerated leadership role in companies

As a violation of internal rules and regulations, the non-declaration as well as the false declaration of known conflicts of interests will be pursued and sanctioned accordingly.

1.4 Gifts and invitations

ESCMID conducts its business fairly, relying on the merits of our services and employees. It is not appropriate, and may be illegal, to accept unreasonable gifts and invitations. Furthermore, ESCMID representatives must not try and influence a person to make a decision in ESCMID's favour by offering a payment, an unusual gift or any other benefit.

Accepting gifts and invitations

Gifts and invitations from business partners and suppliers should in no way influence a specific business relationship. At ESCMID, we never accept cash or gifts or any other unreasonable benefits such as invitations from third parties that could potentially imply an obligation to them. If you are offered an unreasonable or illegal gift, invitation or benefit, you are expected to immediately inform respective officer who will take a decision, maybe after consultation with the Executive Committee.

Giving gifts and providing invitations

Gifts and invitations from ESCMID representatives to third parties must not prejudice the professional independence of the recipient either in fact or by implication. When giving gifts or providing invitations, ESCMID representatives follow the guidance below.

Gifts and invitations can be divided into the following categories:

Usually permissible without prior approval

- Business meals: modest, occasional meals with business partners (suppliers, partners, peers, public organizations)
- Invitations from peers or partners to scientific events (as participant, speakers, chairs)
- Invitations from business partners to relevant business-related events: occasional attendance at subject matter events relating to ESCMID's mission
- Invitations from companies to scientific events (as participants, speakers, chairs)
- Gifts of little value, such as small promotional gifts

Not permissible

- Gifts / social invitations worth more than EUR 50
- Gifts of cash or other benefits (e.g. gift vouchers, loans, shares, stock options)
- Invitations from business partners exceeding the value of EUR 50. The Executive Committee must review and approve the acceptability of every invitation
- Invitations that are of an immoral or intimate nature

1.5 Political activity and lobbying

All lobbying activities in which ESCMID engages must be approved by the Executive Committee and must comply with ESCMID's mission and core values. Furthermore, lobbying must be in adherence with applicable laws and regulations about transparency in terms of the definition of targets, registration regulations, spending disclosures, electronic filings, public access, enforcement and revolving door provisions as may be provided by relevant jurisdictions.

1.6 Bribery

Bribery

Giving or asking for money or favours to influence the judgment or conduct of a person is strictly prohibited. ESCMID also strictly prohibits any facilitation payment aimed at expediting an administrative process. These rules not only apply to direct payments, but extends also to indirect payments made in any form through consultants or other third parties.

1.7 Confidentiality

Confidential information

Every ESCMID representative must take appropriate steps to protect confidential information, which represents a significant asset to our society. Representatives may not disclose it to people outside of the society, unless such disclosure has been approved the ESCMID Executive Committee in advance in writing. Any unauthorised disclosure of confidential information will be pursued and sanctioned accordingly. The obligation to protect ESCMID's confidential information continues even after the termination of an assignment or employment.

Privacy

ESCMID is committed to protect the privacy and integrity of all its stakeholders. ESCMID respects their privacy rights and privacy laws. All personal data will be processed fairly and transparently and in compliance with applicable data privacy laws.

1.8 Protecting ESCMID's assets

ESCMID's assets

ESCMID representatives are expected to respect and protect ESCMID's property rights regarding its infrastructure and any equipment provided. ESCMID's assets must be treated with care and may only be used for legitimate business purposes and not for private activities or personal gain.

Business use of communication tools

Unless otherwise specified, ESCMID official e-mail, internet and social media shall only be used for legitimate business purposes. The content of ESCMID official e-mails and documents must always be appropriate. ESCMID official e-mail, the internet and social media must not be used to access or disseminate offensive or illegal content.

Intellectual property

ESCMID protects its intellectual property. The ESCMID names, branding and copyright registered by ESCMID are the Society's intellectual property. Executive Committee authorizes the use of the Society's intellectual property by other organizations. The intellectual property developed by ESCMID belongs to the society. All ESCMID representatives must make sure the Society's intellectual property it is used in accordance with ESCMID's rules and for the benefit of ESCMID.

Financial proceeds from activities

The organizers of ESCMID activities (ECCMID sessions/meetings, ESCMID conferences, educational courses, workshops, summer school, training programmes) must submit a financial report on their activity to the ESCMID Treasurer. The ESCMID Executive Committee and the organizers agree in advance on how the proceeds resulting from the event will be shared.

Speaking on behalf of ESCMID

People who speak on behalf of ESCMID must respect its intellectual property rights such as copyrights and trademarks when using ESCMID's name, logo and other branding material. Persons speaking on ESCMID's behalf must also respect the society's interests and opinions. Persons speaking on ESCMID's behalf must specify if they are sharing their personal view or that of the Society.

1.9 Workplace responsibilities

Everyone active within the ESCMID network is entitled to fair and respectful treatment. ESCMID aims to ensure that every ESCMID representative is treated fairly, respectfully and equally in the workplace. Any form of discrimination, harassment or abuse is prohibited and will be sanctioned accordingly. When engaging with business partners, members or any other third parties, ESCMID expects its representatives to ensure that such relationships are characterized by mutual respect, fairness, support and professionalism.

1.10 Equal opportunities

ESCMID is committed to providing equal opportunities within the ESCMID organization regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation. Professional development of employees and the selection of ESCMID officers should be based on professional merit criteria.

1.11 Discrimination

ESCMID does not tolerate any conduct that relates to the humiliation, denigration or injury of another person because of racial, ethnic, religious, disability-related or age-related differences or sexual orientation. Any form of harassment with the intent or effect of creating a hostile or intimidating work environment, interfering with an individual's work performance in an unreasonable way or affecting an individual's employment opportunities is prohibited. ESCMID does not tolerate sexual harassment (unwanted sexual advances, requesting sexual favours and / or physical contact or behaving in any other sexually offensive way).

1.12 Social responsibility

ESCMID is committed to doing business in a sustainable and socially and environmentally responsible manner. In our role as a leading medical society, ESCMID is committed to protect the health of people and works to maintain a healthy and safe workplace for all ESCMID employees. We invite all ESCMID representatives to support ESCMID's interest in, and commitment to, a healthy lifestyle and encourage everyone to refrain from smoking and other health-damaging activities during ESCMID activities. Conducting our activities, we take into consideration the efficient and responsible use of energy and materials and the responsible disposal of residual waste.

C Upholding ESCMID's Code of Conduct

1 Implementation

1.1 Implementation

ESCMID is committed to effectively implement the values, principles, standards and rules set out in the Code of Conduct. The Executive Committee and management personnel act as role models in complying with the Code of Conduct.

1.2 Internal Control

The Executive Committee is responsible for ESCMID's internal control system. It has established an appropriate control structure and process for identifying, evaluating, monitoring and managing significant risks that may affect the achievement of the organizational objectives. ESCMID acknowledges its duty to maintain an effective system of internal control which provides reasonable assurance of the achievement of business objectives, of the reliability of information used for reporting, of the safeguarding of resources, and of compliance with laws and regulations.

2 Compliance with the Code of Conduct

2.1 Reporting procedure

ESCMID expects every employee and officer to immediately report any suspicious activity that may involve a suspected violation of the Code of Conduct to any member of the Executive Committee or via the confidential reporting procedure. If any doubts exist whether a specific conduct complies with the Code of Conduct, the issue can be discussed with the respective officer or the question can be raised via the confidential reporting procedure.

2.2 Protection from retaliation

All reports will be treated confidentially and will be further investigated if necessary. Reporting of suspicious activities must be done in good faith. ESCMID guarantees that there will be no retaliation for making reports in good faith. This also applies if the investigation provides that no such violation has been committed.

2.3 Violations and sanctions

Besides a direct violation of the Code of Conduct, a breach of this Code of Conduct is also committed if:

- an ESCMID representative tolerates violations of the Code of Conduct
- an ESCMID representative withholds important information in the event of a potential violation of the Code of Conduct upon explicit request
- an ESCMID representative approves or tolerates a violation of the Code of Conduct or discriminates against employees who have reported a violation in good faith

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, such as reprimand, dismissal, or civil or criminal prosecution.