

# ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies

## Code of Conduct

---

### Overview

The ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies is committed to the key principles of scientific research including honesty, accountability, rigour and integrity in all aspects of research, and the promotion of respectful, equitable and inclusive research practices. The Code of Conduct has been formulated to provide a clear statement of the expectations of Centre members in respect of their professional and personal conduct, and outlines procedures for potential breaches of the code.

### Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all Centre members, including staff, Chief Investigators, Partner Investigators, affiliates, visiting researchers, students and participants in Centre-led symposium, seminars and workshops. As the Centre is a collaboration of a number of Australian Universities and other organisations, the Code of Conduct of a Centre member's university or organisation overrides this policy and must be deferred to if there is a conflict between the policies.

### Policy

#### Personal and Professional Behaviour

In performing their duties and functions, all Centre members must aspire to:

- Exercise their best professional and ethical judgement and carry out their duties and functions with integrity and objectivity (Appendix 1);
- Adhere to the Principles of Responsible Research Conduct (Appendix 2);
- Act fairly and reasonably, and treat colleagues, students and visitors to the Centre and members of the public with respect, impartiality, courtesy and sensitivity;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings promptly, openly, responsibly and accurately.
- Maintain a co-operative and collaborative approach to working relationships; and
- Comply with all applicable legislation, industrial instruments, professional Codes of Conduct or practice and their own organisation's policies, including in relation to:
  - the conduct of research
  - confidentiality and privacy of information
  - equal opportunity
  - health and safety policies and practices
  - efficient and effective use of Centre resources

All Centre members are expected to not discriminate against anyone in connection with Centre activities on the grounds of individual characteristics including, but not limited to: age, diversity of sex, sexuality and gender, religion, Indigenous status, non-English speaking background, race, disability, mental and physical health, pregnancy, parenting and other responsibilities related to care of dependents.

#### Symposium, Seminars and Workshops

At the beginning of a symposium, seminar or workshop hosted in Australia and sponsored or

organized by the Centre, an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country should be provided. Participants should also be made aware that their behavior during the symposium, seminar or workshop must adhere to the Centre's Code of Conduct. Example statement for a seminar at James Cook University Bebegu Yumpa (Townsville) campus:

***"I acknowledge that this meeting is being hosted on the traditional lands of the Bindal people, and pay my respect to Elders both past and present.***

***Our expectation is that interactions during seminars are constructive and that all attendees behave with respect and consideration for others in accordance with the Centre's Code of Conduct."***

The Centre is committed to making all Centre sponsored and supported symposia, seminars and workshops productive and enjoyable for everyone. We do not tolerate discrimination or harassment of participants in any form. In attending any Conference or Workshop, Centre participants are expected to:

- Behave professionally. Harassment and sexist, racist, or otherwise exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate. Harassment includes sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, sexual attention or innuendo, 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, nationality, race or religion.
- All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexually-explicit and offensive language and imagery in presentations is not appropriate.

Participants asked to stop any inappropriate behaviour are expected to comply immediately. Attendees violating these rules may be asked to leave the event at the sole discretion of the organisers without a refund of any fee.

### **Social Media**

You are welcome to engage with the Centre and your colleagues through social media, provided that your communications are respectful, appropriate for a professional audience, and adhere to the Code of Conduct. If you have questions or criticisms about a colleague's research or presentation, we strongly encourage you to communicate that directly to your colleague rather than via social media. We also encourage you to only post things on social media about other people, which you would be comfortable saying to them in person.

Twitter @CoralCoE

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ARCCoralCoE>

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/CoralCoE>

Instagram coral.coe

### **Data**

The Centre is committed to the FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable) and CARE (collective benefit, authority to control, responsibility, ethics) Principles for scientific and Indigenous data management and stewardship. To achieve this, all Centre members must comply with the Centre's Digital Data Management Policy and the research codes of conduct, ethics requirements and data management policies and procedures of their institution. The Centre's policy supports the expectations articulated in The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) that: *the results of publicly funded research activities should be made widely available; and sharing and communication of research methodology, data and findings is done openly, responsibly and*

*accurately*. The focus of the Centre's Data Management Policy is on digital research data, but much of the information can also be applied to non-digital data.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

All Centre members must comply with their organisation's policy regarding Conflict of Interest.

All Centre members must ensure that there is no actual, potential or perceived conflict between their personal interests or their duties to other parties and their duties and responsibilities as members of the Centre.

All Centre members must promptly make full disclosure to the Centre Executive of all relevant facts and circumstances giving rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and cooperate with the Centre to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or manage such conflicts.

### **Gifts and Benefits**

All Centre staff, students and affiliates must not solicit nor accept gifts or benefits, either for themselves or for another person, which may in any way, either directly or indirectly, compromise or influence them in their official Centre capacity.

All Centre members must report any offers of bribes to their supervisor, who should then ensure that the matter is reported as corrupt behaviour in accordance with your organisation's code of conduct.

### **Public Comment**

All Centre members who make public comments or representations and identify themselves as members of Centre must comply with this policy and their organisation's Code of Conduct.

### **Use and Security of Official Information**

All Centre members must:

- Maintain the integrity, confidentiality and privacy of Centre records and information to which they have access to in the course of their employment or study.
- Take all reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorised access to, or misuse of, Centre records and information.
- Comply with your organisation's privacy and information policies.

All members must not:

- Disclose, or offer to supply, confidential or private Centre records or information, except when authorised to do so as part of their normal duties and functions, or when required or permitted to do so by their organisation's policy, State or Commonwealth law, court order or other legal instrument.
- Access or use information, including information on electronic systems and hardcopy files, other than for an authorised purpose.
- Destroy, or authorise the destruction of, Centre records other than in accordance with your organisation's policy and relevant legislation.

### **Work Health and Safety**

All Centre members must comply with their organisation's Work Health & Safety policies and procedures, and:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Cooperate with the Centre and their organization to ensure compliance with all relevant

health and safety laws.

- Consider and discuss potential risks of any new activities with the appropriate H&S officer prior to undertaking them.

## **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

### **What to do if you encounter misconduct?**

Members of the Centre who encounter or observe professional or personal misconduct are encouraged to discuss, educate about, and/or report the issue. They can do this by contacting Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee members or reporting a violation to a meeting or workshop organizer, the Centre's Chief Operating Officer (COO), Olga Bazaka or the Director, Graeme Cumming.

### **Response to breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Individuals engaging in behaviour prohibited by this policy, as well as those making allegations of harassment in bad faith, will be subject to disciplinary action that may include verbal warnings, ejection from events without refund of registration fees, having membership of the Centre cancelled, and being banned from participating in any future Centre meetings or other activities. Decisions about disciplinary action, including reporting the matter to the appropriate body in the individual's organisation, will be made by the Centre Executive (COO and Director).

Sexual harassment is unlawful under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984* and it constitutes misconduct. Should a Centre member or someone involved in a Centre-led activity be accused of sexual harassment, the Centre Executive (COO and Director) will take the appropriate action necessary including a decision to take the matter to the appropriate body in the individual's organisation.

## **Node Policies**

Below are some of our nodes' policies around code of conduct, harassment and dispute resolution, which members may find useful:

### ***James Cook University***

JCU Safety and Wellbeing <https://www.jcu.edu.au/safety-and-wellbeing>

Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/research-management/code-for-the-responsible-conduct-of-research>

Staff Code of Conduct <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/corporate-governance/code-of-conduct>

Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/corporate-governance/bullying-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-policy-and-procedure>

Social Media Policy <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/corporate-governance/social-media-policy>

Gender Equity at JCU <https://www.jcu.edu.au/gender-equity-action-and-research/gender-equity>

Students with Disabilities <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/equity/students-with-disabilities>

### ***The Australian National University***

Code of Conduct [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_000388](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000388)

Student Code of Conduct <https://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/program-management/student-code-of-conduct>

Prevention of discrimination, harassment and bullying [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_000623](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000623)

Conflict of interest and commitment [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_000397](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000397)

Staff grievance resolution [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_000500](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000500)

Athena SWAN <https://services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/respect-inclusion/athena-swan>

***The University of Queensland***

Code of Conduct <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.50.01-code-conduct>

Sexual Misconduct <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.50.13-sexual-misconduct>

Prevention of Sexual Harassment <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.70.02-prevention-sexual-harassment>

Equity and Diversity Policy <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.70.01-equity-and-diversity>

Prevention of Racism Policy <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.70.03-racism>

Staff Grievance Resolution <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/5.70.08-staff-grievance-resolution>

Student Grievance Resolution <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.02-student-grievance-resolution>

The SAGE Athena SWAN Program <https://about.uq.edu.au/initiatives/sage-athena-swan>

***The University of Western Australia***

Code of Conduct <https://www.uwa.edu.au/policy/home#Code>

Gender Equity <https://www.web.uwa.edu.au/inclusion-diversity/gender>

*This Code of conduct is based on the Code of Conduct for the ARC Centre of Excellence for All Sky Astrophysics in 3 Dimensions (ASTRO 3D), ARC Centre of Excellence for Engineered Quantum Systems (EQUS) and ARC Centre of Excellence for Gravitational Wave Discovery (OzGrav).*

## **Appendix 1: Avoiding parachute science in research**

### **What is parachute science?**

Parachute science is the practice whereby international scientists, typically from higher-income countries, conduct field studies in another country, typically of lower income, and then complete the research in their home country without any further effective communication and engagement with others from that nation (Ahmadia et al. 2021). These practices are widespread in marine research; 89% of authors publishing on coral reef science come from developed nations, while most coral reef habitat occurs in developing nations (Stefanoudis et al. 2021). Parachute science also occurs within countries when scientists conduct research in a way that does not engage ethically with the traditional owners of the lands and seas on which they work.

### **Why is it important to avoid parachute science?**

Scientific research contributes to shaping societal priorities and policy, and solving global challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, and poverty. Sharing of this knowledge is primarily through scientific publications, and authorship on scientific publications continues to be the main form of currency in research. If this chorus continues to be exclusive, that is amplifying the voices and priorities of a select few, then solutions produced may not be relevant nor appropriate for the realities that different individuals, communities, and nations experience, and at worst will further exacerbate existing inequities and cause undue harm. In short, parachute science creates dependency on external expertise and drives unequal power dynamics, is often conducted without a deep understanding of local problems and research priorities, and can hinder local research efforts (Ahmadia et al. 2021).

### **Ethos for avoiding parachute science**

'Ethical conduct' is more than simply doing the right thing. It involves acting in the right spirit, out of an abiding respect and concern for one's fellow creatures. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) states that engaging ethically means many things but ultimately it is about respect and honour:

***"It is yindyamarra, a Wiradjuri concept which means to act with honour and respect, wisdom, to go slowly and act responsibly, be gentle and polite and honest with each other, be careful of the words and actions you put out to the world and understand the impact they have."***

### **Specific tips on avoiding parachute science for more meaningful research**

1. Recognize that knowledge comes in many forms, and diversity of understanding improves research.
2. Co-produce knowledge – that is establish meaningful collaborations with scientists and non-scientists in host countries where your research will take place. Share authorship (especially relevant for undergraduate, graduate students and early career researchers), promote collective development of research ideas, and develop joint research agendas that explicitly address local priorities.
3. Establish meaningful collaborations and equal partnerships beyond academic boundaries. For collaborators who are not academics, and to whom publications are meaningless, find meaningful ways to give back to them and their communities (e.g. skills transfer, capacity building, community empowerment).
4. Make research findings accessible to everyone. Develop communication materials that effectively translate research to local collaborators and communities (e.g. open access journals, publish in local journals and local language, contact the local press, create a brief YouTube video). Note that while not speaking English may be considered a barrier, not speaking the local language is also a barrier.

5. Liaise with government funding bodies of the host nation – this can also help finding collaborators.
6. Engage with next generation of researchers (e.g. internships, exchange programs for early career researchers, co-supervision of students). This will help to develop local talent and reduce dependency on external expertise.
7. Abide by local written and unwritten rules. Show culturally appropriate behaviour, engagement and respect for the local land and people (unwritten rules) and abide to local law (written rules)
8. Recognize and embrace differences in working culture.
9. Promote collaborative research practices early on. Teach students about parachute research and the problems it can cause. Develop a culture of collaborative science in research groups.
10. Incorporate capacity building into research agendas (e.g. skills, knowledge, equipment, resources).
11. Be transparent when publishing (i.e. research permits and ethics number should be available).
12. Think long-term – people have had strong connections to the places you've worked long before you arrived, and will continue to do so long after you've left.

Ahmadia, G. *et al.* Limited Progress in Improving Gender and Geographic Rep. in Coral Reef Science. *Front. Mar. Sci.* (2021).

Stefanoudis, P. *et al.* Turning the tide of parachute science. *Curr. Biol.* 31, R184–R185 (2021).

## **Appendix 2: Principles of Responsible Research Conduct**

**1 Honesty** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research.

Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.

**2 Rigour** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research.

Underpin research by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.

**3 Transparency** in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings.

Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately.

Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.

**4 Fairness** in the treatment of others.

Treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect.

Appropriately reference and cite the work of others.

Give credit, including authorship where appropriate, to those who have contributed to the research.

**5 Respect** for research participants, the wider community, study organisms and the environment.

Treat human participants and communities that are affected by the research with care and respect, giving appropriate consideration to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people.

Ensure that respect underpins all decisions and actions related to the care and use of animals in research.

Minimise adverse effects of the research on the environment.

**6 Recognition** of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them.

Recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement.

Report to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of research in which they have engaged.

**7 Accountability** for the development, undertaking and reporting of research.

Comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines.

Ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research.

Consider the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.

**8 Promotion** of responsible research practices.

Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.