

ePIC Code of Conduct Policy

DRAFT v1.1

1. Statement of Values:

The ePIC collaboration is a diverse international scientific community working collectively to design, construct, commission and operate the EPIC detector to exploit the physics potential of the Electron-Ion Collider. The success of the ePIC collaboration relies on contributions from all members. Therefore, the ePIC collaboration strives to provide a welcoming, accessible, safe, and supportive environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, where all collaborators representing various cultures and identities are fully included, respected and able to contribute their best work. Sustaining such a peaceful professional environment is the responsibility of all members of the collaboration.

2. Jurisdiction:

The ePIC Code of Conduct is applicable to any interaction which would not have occurred without ePIC. This includes not only internal ePIC meetings but also any social gatherings around those meetings, such as dinners and coffee breaks, as well as any meetings or online interactions where someone represents or could reasonably be assumed to represent the ePIC collaboration.

3. Expectations for Professional Behavior:

Professional behavior is essential and all members of the collaboration are responsible for fostering a respectful, productive and collaborative environment. Therefore, all collaboration members are expected to maintain their Expectations for Professional Behavior Training. This includes completing the initial Expectations for Professional Behavior Training within one year of adoption of this policy or within six months of joining the collaboration. As the collaboration and society evolves, additional training may be implemented by the DEI committee but will not exceed more than 1 required training per year. Such training will be designed to address the needs of the collaboration and will be offered several times throughout the year and at a variety of times.

The basis of professional behavior includes but is not limited to respectful communications, teamwork and integrity. Collaborators must treat everyone with respect, regardless of their position, gender, gender identity, ability, race, nationality, or ethnicity. Everyone must be given a chance to contribute to discussions. Collaborators should listen actively to others and value their opinions, even if (or particularly when)

38 they differ from their own. Collaborators should be mindful of cultural differences and
39 avoid making insensitive or offensive remarks and avoid comments on physical
40 appearance, even when well-intentioned. We understand that even well-intentioned
41 remarks can have a hurtful impact but we all make mistakes. When called out, one
42 should apologize instead of becoming defensive. Likewise, collaborators should avoid
43 physical contact beyond hand shakes, unless they have confirmed the other person's
44 consent.

45 Successful collaboration and teamwork requires fostering a collaborative spirit and
46 willingness to share ideas, data, and resources in an environment free from any forms
47 of harassment, discrimination, or bullying. Collaborators must give credit for the original
48 work of others and acknowledge the contributions of others. They must also be willing to
49 learn from others which requires being open to feedback and constructive criticism.

50 Collaborators will follow ethical practices and uphold the integrity of others and the
51 scientific method. This includes demonstrating impartiality. Collaborators must be
52 honest and transparent in their communication and actions. This includes avoiding
53 conflicts of interest and disclosing any potential conflicts promptly including romantic
54 relationships. Note that the *appearance* of conflicts of interest is relevant, not only their
55 actual presence. Collaborators must also maintain appropriate confidentiality of
56 information received as part of committee duties. Likewise collaborators must safeguard
57 information, documents or data that is internal to the collaboration, and ensure that such
58 material in our possession is properly used and protected.

59 ePIC will maintain a healthy and safe work environment which requires all collaborators
60 to comply with safety rules. Collaborators are expected to know and follow applicable
61 rules and regulations.

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63 **4. Addressing Violations of the Code of Conduct**

64 To ensure that the Code of Conduct is upheld, this section describes the procedures for
65 reporting and handling the reports of violations. The DEI committee will report to the
66 Collaboration Council at least annually on the statistics of reported violations and their
67 handling.

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69 **4.1 Reporting Violations**

70 Individuals who experience or witness any behavior that violates the Code of Conduct
71 are encouraged to report the incident as soon as possible. Violations of the Code of
72 Conduct should be reported to any among the Spokesperson's Office, the Collaboration
73 Council chairs or the DEI Committee. The DEI Committee will be notified of all reports

74 and will ensure the procedures described in section 4.2 of this policy are followed.
75 When necessary or required by law, outside parties including local, state, and federal
76 authorities, and people's home institutions will be notified.

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78 **4.2 Handling Violations**

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80 All reports of violations will be subject to the following procedure which includes a timely
81 assessment of the reported incident and recommended response.

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83 **A. Assessment:**

84 Upon receiving a report, the DEI committee will consult with the Spokesperson's Office
85 and Collaboration Council Chairs and will conduct an initial review to determine if the
86 reported behavior could violate the Code of Conduct. If the initial review indicates a
87 potential violation, the DEI committee will form a hearing committee of at least three
88 members of the Collaboration, that will conduct interviews with the parties involved and
89 witnesses, and will review any relevant documents or materials. Input from the relevant
90 parties may be considered in determining the hearing committee membership. The
91 assessment period must be completed in a timely manner and should not exceed 6
92 months.

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94 **B. Interim Measures:**

95 During the assessment of the alleged violation, interim measures may be taken to
96 ensure the safety and well-being of collaborators. The DEI committee will recommend
97 appropriate interim measures to the Spokespersons. These measures may include, but
98 are not limited to, temporary suspension of the accused individual from attending
99 meetings, no-contact order, alerting local, state, and federal authorities, and/or recusal
100 from deliberations. These measures will be initially effective for a 90 day period but may
101 be extended as needed for no longer than 6 months.

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103 **C. Resolution and Disciplinary Action:**

104 Upon completion of the assessment, the hearing committee together with the DEI
105 committee will recommend appropriate action.

106 Three tiers of possible actions are foreseen:

107 **Tier 1.** In case of minor violations and with the cooperation of the accused, no formal
108 decision is needed by the Spokesperson's Office or the Collaboration Council.

109 Examples of Tier 1 actions may include but is not limited to:

- 110 ● Mediation or verbal discussion of the incident with relevant parties
- 111 ● No sanction, but a maintained record of the incident
- 112 ● Written warning;
- 113 ● Voluntary no-contact order;

- 114 ● Voluntary recusal from deliberations;
- 115 ● Voluntary hiatus and/or resignation from leadership role(s).

116 **Tier 2.** In cases where cooperation and voluntary acts are impractical or impossible,
117 actions are applied after deliberation among the Spokesperson's Office, Collaboration
118 Council Chairs and the DEI Committee, subject to a simple majority vote among the
119 voting members. Voting members here refers to all members of the DEI committee, the
120 Spokesperson's Office and the Collaboration Council Chairs who have not recused
121 themselves. Anyone with a conflict of interest must recuse themselves but others may also
122 choose to do so. Examples of Tier 2 actions may include but is not limited to:

- 123 ● Involuntary no-contact order;
- 124 ● Involuntary recusal from deliberations;
- 125 ● Involuntary hiatus and/or removal from leadership role(s).

126 **Tier 3.** In very serious cases, actions are applied only after a majority vote among the
127 Collaboration Council. Examples of Tier 3 actions may include but is not limited to:

- 128 ● Suspension or permanent exclusion from in-person Collaboration events;
- 129 ● Suspension or removal from email lists;
- 130 ● Suspension or permanent exclusion from giving talks on behalf of the
131 Collaboration;
- 132 ● Expulsion from the Collaboration with the right to reapply after a fixed
133 duration;
- 134 ● Expulsion from the Collaboration with no right of reapplication;
- 135 ● Notification to appropriate funding agency.

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137 **D. Appeals**

138 Individuals who are dissatisfied with the resolution of their report or the interim
139 measures may appeal the decision. All appeals must be submitted to the DEI
140 committee. Individuals affected by Tier 2 and 3 actions may apply for removal of the
141 decided action by a formal request to the Spokesperson's Office. All appeals will be
142 reviewed by the DEI committee in consultation with the Spokesperson's Office and the
143 Collaboration Council Chairs and when they consider it appropriate, the appeal will be
144 subjected to a majority vote of the Collaboration Council.

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146 **4.3 No Retaliation:**

147 The collaboration strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report
148 violations of the Code of Conduct or participate in the investigation process.

149 Retaliation is itself a serious violation and will be subject to disciplinary action.

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