ISO Code of Ethics and Conduct

(As approved under Council Resolution 11/2023 adopted on 23 February 2023)

a) Introduction

Since it was founded, ISO has been associated with fairness, integrity and impartiality. It is a place where global challenges are addressed through international collaboration. Its transparent and consensus-based processes to develop International Standards and other deliverables, relying on the contributions of relevant experts and the participation of concerned stakeholders, provide realistic and state-of-the-art solutions for disseminating technology and innovation.

International Standards and other deliverables benefit the international community over and above the interests of any individual or organization. This is why ISO's work is carried out in an international, multi-stakeholder, multi-sector environment and it is imperative that its activities are conducted in an ethical manner that warrants the confidence of all parties involved in standardization and that of the general public. Therefore, persons acting for or on behalf of ISO are accountable to the organization and must act in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and adhere to a set of values, principles and policies which may go beyond legal requirements.

The principles contained herein set out non-negotiable minimum standards of behaviour. This Code is not meant to be exhaustive and cover all situations that may occur: it provides a framework and a foundation for expected conduct.

b) Target audience

This Code sets out principles for the conduct of persons acting for or on behalf of ISO, i.e. individuals representing ISO members, ISO governance groups and their members, the ISO standards development community, including liaison organizations, and the Central Secretariat (ISO/CS).

c) Principles

As individuals engaged in activities within the ISO system, we adhere to the following principles.

1. Comply with legal and statutory obligations

We respect applicable laws and regulations and we avoid collusive or anticompetitive behaviour.

Within the ISO system, we recognize the *Statutes* as the highest governing document. They are implemented by means of the *Rules of Procedure* and complemented by additional policy documents. ISO's technical work is conducted in conformity with the rules for the work of ISO technical committees, i.e. the *ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 – Consolidated ISO Supplement – Procedures for the technical work – Procedures specific to ISO*.[1]

2. Perform and act in good faith, consistent with the purpose, policies and principles of the organization

Working for the benefit of the global community, we represent our constituencies and stakeholders, consulting them when applicable, while at all times acting in the best interests of ISO. In so doing, we act fairly, impartially and in good faith and do not allow personal or professional interests or relationships to influence our ability to act.

We uphold the key principles of international standardization, namely consensus, transparency, openness, impartiality, effectiveness, relevance, coherence and the development dimension.

We abide by the policies of ISO and embrace the concepts of compromise and consensus building, and notably in the development of ISO standards and other deliverables, and we accept and respect consensus decisions.

We refrain from disseminating false or misleading information or from withholding information necessary to a full, fair and complete consideration of the issues at stake.

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1   Nevertheless, these ISO procedural documents do not supersede the authority of international, regional and national laws and regulations.

3. Behave ethically

We act with honesty, integrity, respect, openness and transparency in all our dealings.

We respect others and the diversity of professional opinions – scientific, technical or otherwise.

Harassment or coercion in any form, such as sexual, moral or financial, is not tolerated.

4. Promote and enable all voices to be heard

As a global organization, we act to ensure that participation in ISO activities is properly representative of the global community and that any barriers to full and equal participation are acknowledged and continuously and actively addressed.

As a community, we uphold diversity and inclusion, with a particular focus on gender, age and level of economic development, and enable all people to contribute to the organization's decision making and all ISO standards and other deliverables.

5. Engage constructively in ISO activities

We exercise our powers with attentiveness, care, diligence and skill.

We understand and actively contribute to ISO within the mandate of our respective roles.

We take care to act on a fully informed basis and take decisions with due diligence.

6. Declare actual and potential conflicts of interest and manage them appropriately

We endeavour to avoid any real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest by communicating in a fair, transparent and timely manner to interested parties. If any actual or potential conflicts of interest are identified, they shall immediately be disclosed and addressed through the appropriate mechanisms.
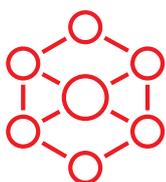
7. Protect confidential information

We protect the integrity of discussions and debates and do not disclose information which is confidential by its very nature.

We ensure that any confidential documents or data in our possession are properly safeguarded.

We comply with the organization's dedicated data protection policies.

8. Protect ISO assets

We act in a financially responsible manner, exercising care in relation to ISO's assets, and actively protect and defend ISO's intellectual property, including copyright and trademarks.

9. Avoid and prevent any form of bribery or corruption

We shall not, directly or through intermediaries, offer or promise any personal or improper financial or other advantage in order to obtain or retain an advantage from a third party; nor shall we accept any such advantage in return for any preferential treatment.

10. Escalate and resolve disputes and uphold agreed resolution

We identify and escalate disputes in a timely manner, according to agreed processes and resolution mechanisms, and we respect and uphold the outcomes of such processes.

d) Implementation

This Code is approved and under the responsibility of Council. It is complemented by implementation documents aimed at the target audience identified in section b) above. Such implementation documents are under the responsibility of:

- Council: for ISO members and governance groups
- Technical Management Board: for the technical community and liaison organizations
- Secretary-General: for ISO/CS staff

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