



MASS Code of Conduct

Parts of this Code of Conduct are adapted from the [LSST Code of Conduct](#), the [LSST@Europe4 meeting Code of Conduct](#) and the [SWATNet Code of Conduct](#).

Preamble

In accordance with the following regulations of Italy in the subject area:

- Ethical code and code of conduct of the University of Rome “Tor Vergata” (D.R. no. 3678/2022 of 20/12/2022 – available in Italian) <https://amministrazionetrasparente.uniroma2.it/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Codice-etico-e-di-comportamento.pdf>

In accordance with the following regulations of France in the subject area (available in French):

- Internal regulations of the University of Côte d’Azur <https://univ-cotedazur.fr/universite/organisation/conseils-commissions-et-comites/documents-institutionnels/reglement-interieur>
- <https://www.nice.fr/uploads/media/default/0001/26/reglement-interieur-sur-banc-fac-2021.pdf>

In accordance with the following regulations of Germany in the subject area:

- National Code of Conduct for German Universities regarding international students https://www.hrk.de/uploads/media/CC_Broschuere_1109-fin.pdf

In accordance with the following regulations of the Republic of Serbia in the subject area:

- Law on Higher Education (“Official Gazette of RS” No. 88/2017, 27/2018 -other law, 73/2018, 67/2019, 6/2020 - other law, 11/2021 – authentic interpretation, 67/2021 - other law, 67/2021) <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2017/88/2/reg>;
- The Statute of the University of Belgrade (“The Gazette of the University of Belgrade”, no 201/2018, 207/2019, 213/2020, 214/2020 and 217/2020, 230/21, 232/22, 233/22, 236/22, 241/22, 243/22, 244/23 and 245/23) http://bg.ac.rs/files/sr/univerzitet/univ-propisi/Statut_UB_precisceni_mart2023.pdf;
- Code of professional ethics of the University of Belgrade (“The Gazette of the University of Belgrade”, no 193/16 and 229/21) <http://bg.ac.rs/files/sr/univerzitet/univ-propisi/Kodeks-profesionalne-etike2021.pdf>;
- The Regulation on procedure for determining non-academic misconduct in the composition of written works (“The Gazette of the University of Belgrade”, no 193/16 196/16, 197/17, 199/17, 203/18, 206/18, 212/19, 214/20, 229/21) http://bg.ac.rs/files/sr/univerzitet/univ-propisi/Pravilnik_neakademsko_ponasanje_pisani_radovi2021.pdf;
- The Regulation on prevention and protection from sexual harassment at the University of Belgrade (“The Gazette of the University of Belgrade”, no 227/21)

http://bg.ac.rs/files/sr/univerzitet/univ-propisi/Pravilnik_sprecavanje_zastita_seksualno_uzn_emiravanje.pdf;

- The Regulation on disciplinary responsibility of students of the University of Belgrade ("The Gazette of the University of Belgrade", no 189/16)
<http://bg.ac.rs/files/sr/univerzitet/univ-propisi/PravilnikDisciplinskaOdgovornostStudenta2016.pdf>.

In accordance with the regulations set out in the MASS Student Agreement published on the MASS website at <https://www.master-mass.eu/students/>.

Introduction

The EMJM-MASS (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Astrophysics and Space Science) program is made up of participants from around the globe with a diverse set of skills, personalities, perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. We value the contributions of every MASS program member, and we recognize a shared responsibility, as participants within a larger community, in maintaining the health of the MASS studying and working environment as a positive, inclusive, supportive, and successful community. While culture is best transmitted by daily example, having some formal standards for conduct can aid newcomers and reinforce good patterns. All MASS students, MASS Consortium lecturers, staff members and collaborators, employees, Third Parties and visitors are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that their conduct reflects our values of civility, respect, and inclusiveness and that prohibited or inappropriate conduct does not occur.

Since the MASS Consortium is fostering the growth of excellent young astrophysicists and space scientists in the European Higher Education Area, the Ethics Statement and Guidelines for Good Practice adopted by the European Astronomical Society (EAS) provides a starting point. As stated in this document, we strive “to create an inclusive environment where all members can grow as scientists, contribute to their fullest potential to the advancement of” this science field “and be afforded equal opportunities to move forward in their careers. All scientists should act ethically in their capacity as researchers, teachers, educators and mentors and should be aware of their responsibility of training students and young scientists in ethical conduct.” MASS supports the values in that document, in addition to the codes of conduct adopted by our partner institutions.

Sexual harassment, other forms of harassment whether physical or verbal (i.e. offensive language), and discrimination are covered in detail in the EAS Ethics Statement and Guidelines for Good Practice. MASS has zero tolerance for these prohibited behaviours. If conclusive evidence of such behaviour is brought to our attention, the MASS Executive Board will take immediate action, up to and including severing the responsible individual’s connection to the MASS Program. This Code of Conduct focuses on expected behaviours that will promote a positive working environment.

MASS is a challenging programme, and it will take all participants exerting their best effort to make it successful. An inclusive, collaborative environment is necessary to support a broad, diverse group of individuals as they contribute to this endeavour.

Elements of MASS Study- and Workplace Culture

Core values

MASS will adopt good practices as outlined in [“The European Code of Conduct for Research and Integrity”](#) developed by the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities (ALLEA). MASS hold the following values at its core in order to promote intellectual environments that foster learning and lead to rigour, excellence, and happiness:

1. **Kindness** – Acting with and encouraging kindness strengthens individuals, relationships, and communities.
2. **Trust** – An inclusive, collaborative environment is best achieved when there is mutual trust, based upon honest behaviour, throughout the community.
3. **Respect** - Inclusive environments foster excellence by challenging us to consider a variety of viewpoints and approaches. We honour alternate viewpoints as opportunities for discussion and learning, and therefore treat others with respect, even if we disagree.
4. **Diversity** - In a diverse community, differences between people are recognized and acknowledged as assets. Our community is stronger, more creative, and more innovative because it is fuelled by a broad range of ideas and perspectives.
5. **Inclusiveness** – MASS recognizes the importance of actively including and encouraging involvement from all corners; diversity is only a benefit if all members feel empowered to participate.

Equal opportunities

MASS promotes equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all involved people, regardless of gender, race, ethnic and national origin (including Indigenous Peoples), religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, veteran status, and all other identities.

1. MASS is not discriminating in any way.
2. MASS supports equality, diversity and inclusiveness in all its actions.
3. The recruitment in MASS is open and fully transparent.

Creativity and innovation

1. MASS is open to new ideas and approaches in the research.
2. Supervisors allow students to apply a versatile set of skills in their research.
3. Supervisors listen to students own ideas and encourage their students for independent, innovative and creative thinking.
4. MASS participants apply their learning, skills and professional experience constructively for the benefit of all.
5. MASS participants seek to adopt alternative approaches in order to generate new thoughts and concepts.

Mindset

1. We are open for new habits and try our best to adapt to different working environments.
2. We show flexibility and willingness to adapt.
3. MASS goal is to educate creative future experts, who can work in a variety of fields for the benefit of the society.
4. We aim to resolve potential conflicts in a discrete manner, respectfully and always keeping an open mind,

Well-being

1. MASS strives for a healthy work-life balance,
2. Supervisors and mentors inform students for ways to seek assistance in both health and mental problems.
3. Both students and supervisors or lecturers aim at openly discuss any issues that may arise, as early as possible.
4. Supervisors help students with practical work skills, such as time management and prioritising.

MASS Communication Code of Conduct

MASS has unique challenges as a distributed programme. We use a variety of different communication tools, and remote participation in meetings is common. Being mindful of the limitations presented by these factors and making a conscious effort to be thoughtful and respectful will lead to more effective and inclusive communication. Use the following guidelines when communicating with others on the Program:

1. **Be respectful.** We treat each other with tolerance, courtesy and mutual respect, and act professionally with regard to others. Respect the rights and sensibilities of others.
2. **Raise all voices.** Recognize that our project includes individuals with different communication styles. All voices must be heard to promote excellence. Share the air. Raise all voices. We strive for a sense of community and are supportive towards our colleagues.
3. **Improve the discussion.** Be sure your message adds to the conversation. Be respectful of the topics and people discussing them. Avoid conflicts of interests.
4. **Be agreeable, even when you disagree.** Any issues are discussed openly, to the extent possible. You may wish to respond to something by disagreeing with it, and that's fine. But remember to criticize ideas, not people. Please avoid:
 - Name-calling or personal attacks. Responding to the tone of a message or post instead of its actual content. Knee-jerk contradictions. Instead, provide reasoned counter-arguments that improve the conversation. Discussions should be undertaken with respect, acknowledging that there may be no right answer.

And if you do mess up on any of these guidelines, don't panic—we all make mistakes sometimes. Apologize, reflect, and move forward.

5. **Acknowledge.** Do not take credit for the ideas and results of others. Give credits to others for their contributions.
6. **Be supportive.** Plan your activities so that others can also contribute to them and be benefited by them. Advise and guide each other where appropriate.
7. **If you see a problem, raise it.** On the MASS facebook group, social media profiles, or any group chat or community forum that may be made available to you, you can signal any problem to the moderators/owners, who will take action as appropriate. If the offending communication is on another platform, bring the issue to the attention of a manager. When you see offensive behaviour, remember that replying or engaging only acknowledges the behaviour and allows it to consume your energy and time.
8. **Always be civil.** Nothing sabotages a healthy conversation like rudeness. It is important to be aware of tone, whether written or verbal.
 - Don't post/email or say anything that a reasonable person would consider offensive, abusive, or hate speech.
 - Respect each other. Don't harass or grief anyone, impersonate people, or expose their private information.

MASS Meetings Code of Conduct

The aforementioned core values will apply to all MASS meetings. In addition, the following applies to any meeting, lectures, schools organized in the framework of the MASS program, whether in presence or online.

Principles of Engagement

- We explicitly ban racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and other kinds of bias—whether these behaviours are overt or subtle. Subtle-“isms” may include more nuanced but also unacceptable behaviour, such as ageism, ableism, etc. All members of the group should be treated with respect regardless of personal attributes, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, physical appearance, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political affiliation or opinions, sexual preference, caregiver status, age, nationality, and language.
- Harassment, verbal or physical, is not tolerated. Keep in mind that what is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. Targeting a member of our community or isolating them deliberately is considered harassment and any such behaviours are never allowed or excused.
- Bullying, including physical bullying, exclusion, marginalization, disparagement, or intimidation, is not tolerated.
- All participants are empowered to request that undesirable behaviour is dismissed.

- All participants are expected to immediately stop any behaviour inconsistent with the Code of Conduct regardless of original intent.

What to do if...

- If you realized or are made to realize that you violate these principles, apologize, reflect, and move forward.
- If you experience these behaviours during the course of the meeting, you should feel free to bring it up directly with the person, or if it's more comfortable, point out the behaviour to the meeting organizers or one of the designated contacts mentioned in the reporting section below.
- If you see something concerning: Should a participant witness events of bullying, harassment or aggression, please, when possible, first contact the person who suffered the abuse to show support, ask how they are doing, and remind them that they can talk to the designated contact person. The decision to approach the contact person should, however, ultimately be left to the person who suffered the abuse.

Virtual presenters or attendees acting inappropriately or using inappropriate language may be muted (video, voice, chat) or removed from the meeting by the moderator. In-person attendees acting inappropriately or using inappropriate language may be asked to leave the meeting.

In-person participants

In addition to the norms stated above, in the event of a pandemic the Organizing Committee follows the indications issued by the relevant national authorities as to the conference organization and reserves the right to upgrade the requirements below, should the need arise. Registered participants will be contacted and informed of any changes. In the circumstances of a pandemic:

- Abide by the relevant national and regional regulations as well as by the rules set out by the local hosting institution;
- Do not interrupt speakers but wait for designated question time.
- Respect participants' personal space, do not expect that participants would be comfortable with common instances of physical contact, such as hand-shaking. Ask and follow the guidance that the organizers will give at the time of the meeting. Ask participants if it is fine to seat next to them.

Online participants

- Remember to mute your microphone when not speaking.
- Raise your hand to be called to ask questions or put your questions in the dedicated chat.
- If you cannot or prefer not to unmute, ask questions on the dedicated chat.

Further Guidelines for Moderators, Presenters, and Participants

- Communication: Dedicated Slack channels and social media hashtags may be made available during meetings. Participants are advised to be mindful and respectful of cultural differences between the participants in online and in-person discourse.

- Meeting sessions may be recorded. In this case, organisers will inform all participants about it. As a presenter or participant of the meeting, your image and/or your voice may appear in recordings that may be publicly accessible. If attending from home, you may consider making use of available tools to avoid a potential feeling of intrusion. As a participant, to avoid your voice being recorded you may consider asking questions on the dedicated chat.
- Guidelines for session moderators are given to ensure and promote an equitable environment: be conscious of their biases and avoid preferentially selecting some people and/or paying attention to only some parts of the room. Discreetly invite contributions from quieter members of the group without forcing anyone into the spotlight (e.g. “what do colleagues from primarily undergraduate institutions think”). In Q&A accept questions from junior members of the audience and members of under-represented communities first, as there is evidence that this makes it more likely that junior people and people from under-represented groups will come forward with questions.
- Guidelines are given to presenters to design inclusive visual content <https://github.com/fedhere/FASTlab/blob/master/AccessibleVisualContent.md> and see also <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02696-z>. We encourage presenters to use color palettes and fonts that are suitable for color-blind and dyslexic participants. In addition, do not belittle or elevate some questions over others (by saying “that is a good question”, implicitly implying others may not have been). It is important that everyone is empowered to and comfortable in saying that they do not understand.

Examples of some basic social rules and communication guidelines are available below and in the Additional Resources section. For details on content for meeting websites and guidelines that are written to allow meeting organizers to modify the content to fit their particular meeting, please see the following documents.

- [LPM-171](#): LSST Bullying and Harassment Complaints Procedure Manual
- [Document-28973](#): LSST Communications Code of Conduct – We use a variety of different communication tools, and remote participation in meetings is common. This document provides details on expectations for behaviour on communication channel tools.
- [Document-28973](#): Meetings Code of conduct – For details on content for meeting websites and guidelines that are written to allow meeting organizers to modify the content to fit their particular meeting

Point of contact

The MASS local coordinator will be appointed to act as the designated contact person for reporting instances of bullying, harassment, or aggression. The contact person is able to advise MASS participants on how to deal with hostile situations and incidents. In the case that an event is reported, and with the approval of the reporting person, the designated contact person will approach the offending person(s) to discuss how their behaviour is causing distress to other MASS participants and remind them of the code of conduct applicable to all participants. If more serious

measures are needed, the designated contact person should inform the reporting person(s) of the procedure to follow in these cases according to the internal regulations of the Full Partner or Third Party at which the instance happened.

Additional Resources

- [AAS Ethics Statement, including “Conduct Towards Others”](#)
- [AAS Anti-Harassment Policy](#)
- [The APS Guidelines for Professional Conduct](#)
- [The Recurse Center Manual](#)
- [AURA Standards of Workplace Conduct](#)
- [European Astronomical Society Ethics Statement and Guidelines Good Practice](#)
- [Astropy Community Code of Conduct](#)
- [Python in Astronomy Code of Conduct](#)
- [LSST DESC Code of Conduct](#)
- [LSST Data Science Fellowship Code of Conduct](#)
- [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) established by the European Commission for all EU-funded research projects
- Nature (*requires personal or institutional subscription*)– [How LGBT+ scientists would like to be included and welcomed in STEM workplaces](#) – doi:<https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-02949-3>
- [Non-Binary Staff and Student Guidance For Higher Education Institutions](#)