

## ACES Conference Policy

*This document should be read in conjunction with the ACES's Code of Conduct Policy*

### 1. Overview

This policy has been formulated to provide a clear statement of expectations of ACES conference and meetings organisers and attendees in respect of their professional and personal conduct.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all ACES organisers and attendees, but is overruled by the corresponding policy of their University or Organisation of primary employment, which must be deferred to if there is a conflict between the policies.

### 3. Principles

ACES is organised and conducted with a commitment to ensuring diversity and equity, including gender, race and age diversity, and a family friendly and flexible work environment.

### 4. Policy<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.1 Personal and Professional Behaviour at ACES conferences and meetings

In performing their duties and functions, all organisers and attendees must:

- a. exercise their best professional and ethical judgement and carry out their duties and functions with integrity and objectivity;
- b. act fairly and reasonably, and treat colleagues and students with respect, impartiality, courtesy and sensitivity;
- c. avoid conflicts of interest or promptly make full disclosure to the organisers all relevant facts and circumstances giving rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest;
- d. comply with all applicable legislation, industrial instruments, professional codes of conduct or practice and their own organisation's policies, including in relation to:
  - Confidentiality and privacy of information
  - Equal opportunity
  - Health and safety policies and practices
  - Proper, efficient and effective use of resources
  - Discrimination where organisers and participants must not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of gender, religious conviction, marital status, pregnancy, physical or intellectual impairment, sexual preference, race or political conviction.
  - Sexual Harassment, which is unlawful under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

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<sup>1</sup> Source Credit: Based on the CAASTRO conference guidelines which acknowledged CAS (Centre for Astrophysics and Supercomputing) guidelines for promoting equity & diversity at conferences and meetings (<http://caastro.org>)

## 5. Approach

ACES organisers and attendees are committed to making ACES conferences and meetings productive and enjoyable for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, nationality or religion.

5.1 Before an ACES conference or meeting, organisers must:

- Make sure that the conference/meeting Scientific Organising Committee (SOC) and Local Organising Committee (LOC) are diverse in regard to gender, race, and age.
- Take into account that some nations have laws and customs that should be taken into consideration when choosing a conference /meeting destination.
- Use the ACES Code of Conduct policy in the opening remarks describing ACES' commitment to equity and diversity<sup>2</sup>.
- Ensure that the list of invited speakers, session chairs, and contributed speakers is diverse in regard to gender, race and age.
- Ensure that the venue is accessible for people with disabilities;
- Consider inviting and supporting participants from disadvantaged countries;
- Follow-up with invited speakers if they decline the invitation to understand the reason for declining (especially those from underrepresented groups).
- Explore initiatives to encourage people with primary carer responsibilities to accept invitations and attend the conference. Therefore, the organisers undertake to:
  - provide advice on potential child care options available upon request;
  - be mindful of how the scheduling of the conference/meeting affects people with children or other family caring responsibilities (e.g. weekends, school holidays, etc.);if possible, offer support for partners.

5.2 During the conference or meeting, organisers must:

- Appoint a number of 'duty officers' who can be contacted in the event that someone is experiencing a problem at the conference (not just the conference organiser but peers). Make the email and phone number of these officers available to conference attendees.
- Where feasible, ensure the venue includes a private 'family friendly' room.
- Session chairs to encourage questions from a diverse selection of the audience
- Have someone from the LOC or another delegate keep track of the gender/seniority level etc. of people attending conference sessions, asking questions and other conference demographics.

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<sup>2</sup> Code of Conduct slide shown at meetings/conferences.

Welcome to our ACES conference/meeting. ACES has adopted conference guidelines under our Code of Conduct that relates to :

- Our commitment to equity and diversity
- Communication which is appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds.
- Respectful interactions that are considerate and respectful to others, including questions and participation from a diverse audience.

- Instruct session chairs to invite questions that rotate between senior, early career researchers, students and gender where possible

## **6. Attendee Conduct**

Attendees of the ACES conferences/meetings are asked to:

- Behave professionally. Harassment and sexist, racist, or 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, race or religion.
- Communicate appropriately for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual or other discriminatory language and imagery in presentations is not appropriate.
- Stop any inappropriate behaviour immediately upon request by the organisers.
- Take note that violating these rules may result in being asked to leave the event at the sole discretion of the organisers without a refund of any charge.
- A conference attendee may report a violation of this policy, in confidence to the Conference Organiser (who will report it to the Chief Operating Officer of ACES), or directly to the Chief Operating Officer of ACES who will conduct a preliminary investigation and decide whether the matter should be settled informally or escalated up to the Principal Investigator.

## **7. ACES sponsorship of conferences**

- ACES will not agree to sponsor any conferences that has less than a 70:30 gender speaker ratio. Preference is for as close to a 50:50 gender speaker ratio as possible.