

Policy Information

Approved by: (sign/date)	Approved – Pending Signature (Board of Trustees)	Policy Number:	2025-1201-06
		Risk Appetite:	Low
		Policy Family:	Human Resources and Organizational Development
Policy Owner: (sign/date)	(Head of HROD)	Version:	3.0
		Effective Date:	December 1, 2025
		Next Review Date:	December 1, 2027

1. FORWARD

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) values its diverse and talented workforce as its greatest asset. United by a shared mission to reduce poverty and hunger through rice science, IRRI staff, contractors, and partners contribute through collaborative research, strategic partnerships, and support to national agricultural systems. This *Code of Conduct Policy* has been aligned to ensure consistency with the CGIAR Integrated Partnership Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, reflecting IRRI’s global operations and commitment to integrity, respect, and professional excellence.

2. PURPOSE

This Code outlines IRRI’s values and expected standards of behavior, promoting integrity, accountability, and transparency. It guides ethical decision-making, especially in complex situations, and encourages individuals to seek clarification from supervisors, Human Resource and Organizational Development (HROD) or the Office of Ethics when needed. The Code also reflects IRRI’s legal obligations and reinforces its commitment to fairness and responsible conduct aligned with organizational goals.

3. SCOPE

This Code applies to all IRRI staff, officers, Board members, and associated parties including contractors, consultants, suppliers, seconded staff, trainees, volunteers, interns, scholars, and visiting scientists working on behalf of IRRI.

Covered individuals must uphold this Code in all professional activities, both within and outside the workplace. Personal conduct, including that of immediate family members, should align with IRRI’s values, as actions even outside of work can impact the Institute’s reputation and interests.

4. IRRI VALUES

This Code is guided by IRRI’s core values. These values describe the minimum standard of ethics and conduct for IRRI staff, individuals, and entities with a contractual relationship with IRRI.

4.1 GUIDING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

We agree to uphold the highest ethical standards in all professional activities. This includes:

1. Integrity and Honesty: Acting in good faith, with intellectual honesty and fairness.
2. Impartiality and Objectivity: Avoiding bias and ensuring decisions are free from personal interests.

3. Respect and Inclusion: Fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace that upholds dignity.
4. Accountability and Responsibility: Taking ownership of actions and ensuring transparency in decision-making.

4.2 EXCELLENCE AND QUALITY SERVICE

At IRRI we aim high. We are passionate about what we do, and we are fully committed to doing the very best we can, to international standards, in all circumstances. The needs of our stakeholders guide our actions and decision-making, and we strive to provide quality service to all of our stakeholders, both internal and external. We seek to anticipate client needs and look for optimal solutions that will help our stakeholders.

4.3 INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Our integrity is central to the maintenance of stakeholder confidence in our Institute. We avoid any activities, whether connected with our official duties or otherwise, which might bring the Institute into disrepute, or jeopardize its relationships, especially while on missions, at training, conferences, or workshops. We take ownership and accountability for our individual actions, commitments, and results, and we take responsibility for our individual and organizational performance. We use resources efficiently, collaboratively, and in consideration of our stakeholders. We are honest and ethical and make decisions in the interest of IRRI.

4.4 INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our individual and collective ability to meet our mission. We accept change that will aid our continuous improvement and foster innovation and creativity to drive that change.

4.5 RESPECT AND DIVERSITY

We are proud to be part of a multicultural organization that employs women and men from all around the world. We embrace differences as natural and normal, and we take responsibility for interacting in respectful and productive ways. We believe our diversity strengthens our capacity to deliver our mission. We are committed to supporting and respecting each other's efforts to balance our personal and professional lives.

4.6 TEAMWORK AND PARTNERSHIP

We acknowledge each other's expertise and are willing to collaborate. We are consultative and participative. We ask questions, raise concerns, and challenge assumptions in a constructive manner. We communicate and cooperate with each other and share credit and recognition. We constantly reach out to new partners outside IRRI, in the public and private sectors, who share our mission and values, and strive to work with them in fulfilling our mission.

4.7 INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We respect and value the important knowledge that indigenous communities hold. We are committed to environmental sustainability, and our research approaches and operations are guided by the principles of respect for indigenous knowledge and environmental sustainability.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 PRINCIPLES OF IRRI HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This Code of Conduct is guided by the following principles:

1. All staff and contractors are treated fairly and in accordance with IRRI policies.
2. Employment and appointment decisions are based on merit.
3. HR practices exclude nepotism, cronyism, patronage, and favoritism.
4. The confidentiality of privileged information is strictly maintained.
5. Equal opportunity is upheld, and discrimination is not tolerated.
6. The work environment promotes achievement, open communication, consultation, and staff participation.
7. Staff are supported through access to training and development opportunities, and fair and appropriate remuneration aligned with responsibilities.

5.2 THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF IRRI STAFF

IRRI is committed to a supportive, equitable, and respectful work environment. Staff are entitled to clear role expectations, regular performance feedback, safe and healthy working conditions, and freedom from harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Fair discipline procedures are in place, including the right to appeal decisions under certain conditions, in line with IRRI's *Guidelines on Disciplinary Procedures*. The Institute also supports work-life balance and personal well-being.

We are committed to upholding IRRI's mission through our professional conduct, sound judgment, and adherence to the Institute's policies and this Code. We act with integrity, support our colleagues and stakeholders, use resources responsibly, and model ethical behavior. We perform our duties diligently, respect reporting lines, and engage constructively to address concerns.

5.3 THE OFFICE OF ETHICS AND BUSINESS CONDUCT

The ethics office is an impartial and professional resource to all staff. This office is mandated to embed a robust culture of ethical practice, compliance, and safeguarding across all facets of our work in order to promote integrity, accountability and mutual respect. This will be through offering confidential advice to staff, policy input, training and awareness sessions, protection against retaliation, and investigation into instances of misconduct.

6. WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Bearing in mind the IRRI Values and the principles under which IRRI operates, we undertake to observe the following workplace behavior and standards of conduct:

6.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

We understand that public comment includes any communication such as public speaking, media appearances, social media posts, or published opinions where it is reasonably foreseeable that the content may reach a broad audience (see *Public Comment Guidelines*). While IRRI encourages us to share IRRI's research to benefit stakeholders, we must do so responsibly. Our public comments must be accurate, respectful, unbiased, and within our area of expertise.

We recognize that public comments may constitute misconduct if they:

1. Disclose confidential information;
2. Imply an official IRRI position without authorization;
3. Include personal attacks; or
4. Misuse digital or social media platforms.

6.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

We do not access or disclose information without proper authorization and never misuse information obtained through our roles. Misuse includes exploiting official records for personal gain or engaging in gossip based on confidential information. We are responsible for safeguarding the integrity, security, and privacy of official documents and only share information as required by our duties.

6.3 DISCLOSURE OF WRONGDOING

We agree to report any unethical behavior, misconduct, or breach of this Code to our supervisor, manager, or HROD. We understand that all reports made in good faith will be treated confidentially and are protected under IRRI's *Whistleblowing and Anti-Retaliation Policy*. We also acknowledge that knowingly making false or malicious reports may result in disciplinary action.

6.4 FREEDOM FROM HARASSMENT, BULLYING, AND DISCRIMINATION

We are committed to a respectful, inclusive, and safe work environment, free from all forms of harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Any behavior that undermines the dignity of others is unacceptable. IRRI prohibits any conduct by staff or associated parties that could reasonably be perceived as discriminatory, harassing, or bullying.

For details, refer to the *Prevention and Response to Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination Policy*.

6.5 HEALTH CONDITION

We are committed to supporting staff with underlying health conditions and ensuring a workplace free from discrimination. Health conditions are never grounds for exclusion from employment, and confidentiality is strictly maintained. All individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and a culture of compassion, inclusion, and understanding is actively promoted.

6.6 PROPER ACCOUNTING AND INTERNAL CONTROL

We provide accurate, clear, and timely financial and operating information. We do not conceal or omit relevant information, and we do not make any false or fictitious entries in our records.

We do not take fraudulent actions to influence, manipulate, or mislead an internal, independent public, or certified accountant engaged in the performance of an audit of the financial statements of our Institute.

Please see the *Detection and Prevention of Fraud, Corruption, and Other Prohibited Practices Policy*, and the *Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Policy* for more information.

6.7 PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY

We ensure that all financial and operational information is accurate, clear, and timely. We do not falsify, conceal, or omit relevant data, nor do we engage in any fraudulent activity intended to mislead auditors or manipulate financial records. For further guidance, refer to the *Procurement Policy and Procedures*.

6.8 USE OF IRRI PROPERTY

We use IRRI property for official purposes. We do not misappropriate the Institute's property for personal use or resale. We do not use the skills or working hours of colleagues for personal benefit or gain.

6.9 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

We comply with IRRI's [Intellectual Property Rights Policy](#) and the [CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets](#) and acknowledge the [Intellectual Property, Commercialization, and Communication Policy](#). All research outputs including data, technologies, and other intellectual property produced during our engagement with IRRI are the property of the Institute. This includes all rights to title, copyright, royalties, and patents. We respect any agreements IRRI has entered into regarding intellectual assets and promptly report any potentially copyrightable or patentable work to the appropriate unit.

6.10 INTEGRITY IN SCIENCE & RESEARCH

We understand that maintaining scientific integrity is essential to IRRI's mission. We commit to upholding the highest standards in research by avoiding plagiarism, ensuring transparency in data collection and reporting, and managing intellectual property in line with IRRI's policies. We also recognize the importance of disclosing any conflicts of interest that may affect the objectivity or credibility of our research.

6.11 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We understand that a conflict of interest arises when our personal, professional, or financial interests or those of close associates, conflict with, or appear to conflict with, the interests of IRRI. Such situations may compromise, or be perceived to compromise, our ability to perform our duties impartially and in the best interest of the Institute.

We are committed to ensuring that our personal interests do not interfere with our professional responsibilities or decision-making. We understand that full compliance with IRRI's *Conflict of Interest Policy* is mandatory, and we are responsible for identifying, disclosing, and managing any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts in a timely and transparent manner.

6.12 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND ENGAGEMENTS

We understand that, as IRRI staff, we may occasionally be offered honoraria, consultancies, or other external work related to our expertise. These may include attending meetings, serving on boards, preparing publications, or providing advisory services. While some activities such as participating in editorial boards or academic events are part of normal professional engagement, we must seek approval from our supervisors to ensure commitments do not affect our time management.

Further, before accepting any external work that involves significant time or financial compensation, we seek written approval from our supervisor, with final endorsement from the Head of HROD and the Ethics office. Prior approval is not required for unpaid, non-professional community or civic activities.

We will not accept outside work if it:

1. Interferes with our IRRI responsibilities or creates a real or perceived conflict of interest.
2. Requires the use of IRRI resources.
3. Involves disclosure of confidential information or risks IRRI's reputation.
4. Raises concerns about legal compliance.

6.13 ACCEPTANCE OF EXTERNAL BENEFITS

We understand that accepting gifts, honoraria, or other third-party benefits requires sound judgment and transparency. These may include cash, travel, hospitality, accommodation, entertainment, or favors. We are personally responsible for any benefit we accept.

We seek prior approval from our supervisor/manager, HROD, the Ethics office and when required by the Director General before accepting any benefit exceeding USD 100 in total value per year from a single source. Exceptions may be made for protocol, courtesy, or special circumstances, but must still be disclosed and approved. We do not give, solicit, or accept any item that could be perceived as a bribe or compromise IRRI's integrity.

6.14 IRRI'S POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

IRRI operates in all its locations as a guest of the host government. The Institute is classified as an international organization, which allows us to function effectively as a research organization. To preserve this status and scientific integrity, we will not engage in any political activity.

6.15 OBLIGATIONS TO STAKEHOLDERS

We engage with all stakeholders with integrity, professionalism, and transparency. When providing advice or information, we ensure it is accurate, independent, comprehensive, and based on facts. We are

committed to offering honest and constructive feedback, including when providing references or reports, and always act in the best interest of IRRI and its partners.

6.16 INTERACTIONS WITH COMMUNITIES

We respect the cultures, customs, and practices of the communities we work with. We do this by treating all persons with respect and dignity and by partnering with private and civil society organizations through initiatives that encourage the involvement of individual staff through volunteerism and participation in outreach programs.

6.17 RESPECT FOR NATIONAL LAWS

We understand that we must not pursue IRRI's objectives through any action that violates the laws of the countries in which we operate. Compliance with local legal frameworks is essential to maintaining IRRI's integrity and international standing.

We are also required to promptly inform HROD if we are charged with or convicted of a criminal offense, or if we become involved in a civil matter related to our IRRI responsibilities regardless of whether the issue directly pertains to our official duties.

6.18 PRIVILEGES, IMMUNITIES, AND COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL LAWS

IRRI staff must comply with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries where they operate. Any privileges or immunities conferred by IRRI's international status do not exempt staff from observing local laws.

Violations of the law vary, and IRRI will exercise its own judgement depending on the nature and circumstances of each case. A conviction is generally recognized as an offence by national criminal laws and would be considered violations of the expected standards of conduct for the staff.

6.19 HEALTH AND SAFETY

We promote staff health, safety, and well-being, recognizing that each staff member and individual under contract to IRRI bears the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of fellow workers.

6.20 RESPECT FOR OTHERS

In line with IRRI values, we are expected to treat colleagues, stakeholders, and the public with courtesy and respect by:

1. Avoiding behavior that might endanger or cause distress or in any way contribute to workplace disturbance.
2. Refraining from allowing workplace relationships to adversely affect the performance of official duties.
3. Respecting the privacy of individuals when dealing with personal information.
4. Refraining from discrimination in any form as per the clause on Discrimination and Harassment of this Code of Conduct.

5. Respecting the cultural background of colleagues, stakeholders, and the public in all official dealings.
6. Considering the safety of others in the use of property, resources, and requests.
7. Not bringing weapons to the workplace.

6.21 TECHNOLOGY USE

Any improper use or abuse of the technology infrastructure is strictly prohibited. These technologies are intended for official business purposes. IRRI has the right to access information contained within its systems.

Staff must adhere to the highest ethical standards when participating in social media and digital platforms.

6.22 ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

We recognize that the abuse of alcohol and other drugs can harm the safety, health, and well-being of our colleagues and that it can also threaten the reputation of the Institute. We will not report to work intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs. We are aware that the unlawful manufacturing, distribution, possession, or use of a regulated substance is forbidden on IRRI premises.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Please see IRRI’s [SharePoint](#) site for more information.

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Effective date	Approved by	Summary of changes
1.0	March 2002	The Director General	Original title “IRRI Code of Discipline”
2.0	November 2013	Dr. Robert S. Zeigler, The Director General	Replaced the “IRRI Code of Discipline “; details of change unknown
3.0	2025	IRRI’s Board of Trustees	Major updates to all sections.

APPENDIX A - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

I have read and have understood the contents of this Code of Conduct and will adhere to the Code as a condition of my appointment with IRRI. I am aware of IRRI's Conflict of Interest Policy, IRRI's Whistleblowing Policy, the *Guidelines on IRRI's Disciplinary Procedures and other* pertinent policies.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Code of Conduct, I can consult my immediate supervisor, Unit Head, the Office of Ethics, the relevant Deputy Director General, or Human Resource Services for clarification.

I understand that the contents of the Code of Conduct may change at any time, and that Human Resource Services will announce such changes. It is my responsibility to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the Code.

I AGREE,

Name

Signature Date

This Code may be amended periodically to reflect evolving standards and operational contexts. Updates will be communicated by HROD, and staff are responsible for staying informed of changes.