

Digital Rights Watch Code of Conduct

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These guidelines aim to support all people engaged with the work of Digital Rights Watch to feel safe to participate, engage and collaborate and inspire others, regardless of any dimension of diversity.

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Our core understanding of our conduct

We base our work on a core understanding of the need to uphold human rights, and as such we aim to work in a manner that welcomes collaborative, respectful, healthy engagement in our work and the communities in which we operate.

Conduct of DRW Board, Members, Employees and Volunteers

Compliance

Every person shall at all times when acting in their capacity as director/board member, organisational member, employee or volunteer:

- pursue as their highest priority the fulfilment of the mission of the organisation
- after that, promote the interests of the organisation itself
- after that, consider the interests of the organisation's stakeholders, its clients, its supporters, its employees, and the society and the environment in which it operates.

Ethics

Every person shall at all times when acting in their capacity as director/board member, organisational member, employee or volunteer:

- ensure to the best of their ability that their actions in relation to the organisation comply with all applicable federal, state and local legislation and regulation
- observe the provisions of the organisation's constitution, its bylaws, its standing orders and its policies.

Conflicts

Every person shall at all times when acting in their capacity as director/board member, organisational member, employee or volunteer:

- be transparent and open in disclosing any potential or perceived conflicts of interest when and if they arise
- place the interests of the organisation above that of their own personal or professional interests
- through their own conduct ensure they do not bring the organisation into disrepute.

Confidentiality

Every person shall at all times when acting in their capacity as director/board member, organisational member, employee or volunteer:

- preserve, where appropriate, the confidentiality of the organisation's business
- protect the privacy of the organisation's employees, members and supporters

Expectations on Behaviour of DRW Board, Members, Employees and Volunteers

Be Respectful

Value each other's ideas, styles and viewpoints. We may not always agree, but disagreement is no excuse for poor manners. Be open to different possibilities and to being wrong. Be kind in all interactions and communications, especially when debating the merits of different options. Be aware of your impact and how intense interactions may be affecting people. Be direct, constructive and positive. Take responsibility for your impact and your mistakes – if someone says they have been harmed through your words or actions, listen carefully, apologize sincerely, and correct the behaviour going forward.

Be Direct but Professional

We are likely to have some discussions about if and when criticism is respectful and when it's not. We must be able to speak directly when we disagree and when we think we need to improve. We cannot withhold hard truths. Doing so respectfully is hard, doing so when others don't seem to be listening is harder, and hearing such comments when one is the recipient can be even harder still. We need to be honest and direct, as well as respectful.

Be Inclusive

We encourage the seeking and supporting of diverse perspectives and views. We encourage all voices to be heard and for debate to be held in a manner that encourages all participants to join. Be inclusive of everyone in an interaction, respecting and facilitating people's participation whether they are:

- Remote (on video or phone), including living in a different time zone
- Not native language speakers
- Coming from a different culture
- Using pronouns other than "he" or "she"
- Facing other challenges to participate
- Think about how you might facilitate alternative ways to contribute or participate. If you find yourself dominating a discussion, step back. Make way for other voices and listen actively to them.

Understand Different Perspectives

Our goal should not be to "win" every disagreement or argument. A more productive goal is to be open to ideas that make our own ideas better. Strive to be an example for inclusive thinking. "Winning" is when different perspectives make our work richer and stronger.

Appreciate and Accommodate Our Similarities and Differences

We often come from many cultures and backgrounds. Cultural differences can encompass everything from official religious observances to personal habits to clothing. Be respectful of people with different cultural practices, attitudes and beliefs. Work to eliminate your own biases, prejudices and discriminatory practices. Think of others' needs from their point of

view. Use preferred titles (including pronouns) and the appropriate tone of voice. Respect people's right to privacy and confidentiality. Be open to learning from and educating others as well as educating yourself; it is unrealistic to expect everyone to know the cultural practices of every ethnic and cultural group, but everyone needs to recognize one's native culture is only part of positive interactions.

Lead by Example

By matching your actions with your words, you become a person others want to follow. Your actions influence others to behave and respond in ways that are valuable and appropriate for our organizational outcomes. Design your community and your work for inclusion. Hold yourself and others accountable for inclusive behaviours. Make decisions based on the organisation's mission.

Behaviour That Will Not Be Tolerated

The following behaviours are considered to be unacceptable under these guidelines and may result in consequences as laid out in the DRW constitution.

Violence and Threats of Violence

Violence and threats of violence are not acceptable - online or offline. This includes incitement of violence toward any individual, including encouraging a person to commit self-harm. This also includes posting or threatening to post other people's personally identifying information ("doxxing") online.

Personal Attacks

Conflicts will inevitably arise, but frustration should never turn into a personal attack. It is not okay to insult, demean or belittle others. Attacking someone for their opinions, beliefs and ideas is not acceptable. It is important to speak directly when we disagree and when we think we need to improve, but such discussions must be conducted respectfully and professionally, remaining focused on the issue at hand.

Derogatory Language

Hurtful or harmful language related to:

- Background, race and/or ethnicity or socioeconomic status
- Gender, gender identity or expression
- Marital status
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Language
- Age
- Ability
- Other attributes

is not acceptable. This includes deliberately referring to someone by a gender that they do not identify with, and/or questioning the legitimacy of an individual's gender identity. If you're

unsure if a word is derogatory, don't use it. This also includes repeated subtle and/or indirect discrimination; when asked to stop, stop the behaviour in question.

Unwelcome Sexual Attention or Physical Contact

Unwelcome sexual attention or unwelcome physical contact is not acceptable. This includes sexualized comments, jokes or imagery in interactions, communications or presentation materials, as well as inappropriate touching, groping, or sexual advances. This includes touching a person without permission, including sensitive areas such as their hair, pregnant stomach, mobility device (wheelchair, scooter, etc) or tattoos. This also includes physically blocking or intimidating another person. Physical contact or simulated physical contact (such as emojis like "kiss") without affirmative consent is not acceptable. This includes sharing or distribution of sexualized images or text.

Ways of Working for DRW Board Members

Communication and coordination

The DRW board is required to meet as a group, as per the stipulations set out in the DRW constitution. These meetings will focus on strategic direction and work-planning for the organisation. Between these board meetings, the board and staff will operate a digital engagement platform (such as Slack) for day-to-day coordination and communication. It is expected that all DRW board members will take an active role in this account and be available for quick decision making whenever possible

Decision-making

Wherever possible, the decision-making mechanism for the DRW board should be by consensus. However, it is recognised that it is not always possible to achieve this on some matters. If consensus cannot be achieved, and strong, competing opinions still exist, a vote may be held to resolve the issue. Note that consensus does not require all board members to be present - see below authorisation.

Authorisation

Speaking out publicly on issues is often a very timely process, with quick turnarounds and rapid responses demanded by the media cycle. However, this must be balanced with having an evidence base and research behind our statements. To ensure this balance, any piece of public or political communication from DRW (media release, policy paper, submission, email update, blog post) must be approved by a minimum of two active board members before being released.

Representation

Any active board member of DRW is expected to represent the organisation in a respectful and professional manner, in any public or private forum that is relevant to the work of the organisation. Individual board members have the authority to speak publicly about the mission, objectives, projects and public stance of the organisation. It is expected that any

upcoming opportunity to speak (conference, sector meeting, media appearance, lobby meeting) will be communicated to other board members ahead of time.

Finances

Wherever possible, the allocation and distribution of organisational finances should be decided upon by the DRW board as a whole. However, for day-to-day payments and financial decisions, the DRW Chair and Deputy Chair have the authority to decide and act without the board's express permission.

These guidelines are built upon the great work of [Mozilla's Community Participation Guidelines](#) and the [Institute of Community Directors of Australia](#).