



CODE OF ETHICS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Ethics sets out to define and foster ethical behaviour on the part of people linked to the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC), both in their everyday work and at acts or events organised within the framework of the Association.

By adopting this Code, which defines the culture of the IAEC and lays down guidelines that its members and related professionals should adhere to, the IAEC wishes to underline its commitment to non-discrimination and the prevention of any type of violence. What's more, it shows the IAEC's firm commitment to adopting a proactive attitude both in the prevention of harassment and violence and in the implementation of as many measures as necessary to deal with situations that contravene this Code of Ethics. Moreover, this Code of Ethics highlights the Association's commitment to values such as equality, solidarity among its members, sustainability, transparency and the fight against corruption.

Purposes:

- To define the Association's values and commitments.
- To facilitate and make known the Association's way of proceeding and culture.
- To convey the will to comply with the law and the will to prevent and eradicate irregular or criminal conduct.
- To define mandatory criteria.
- To establish whistleblowing channels and sanctions in the event of non-compliance.
- To create an inclusive, respectful, educating and safe environment for everyone involved.

2. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

These are the principles and values that govern the IAEC, based on which there is a commitment to act:

- **Integrity:** All human beings have the same dignity regardless of any circumstance, and are therefore deserving of equal consideration and respect. The IAEC explicitly prohibits the abuse of authority and any type of harassment, whether physical, psychological, sexual, verbal or moral, as well as any other conduct that may create an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment for people. Likewise, it categorically rejects any actions that could be interpreted as sexual harassment.
- **Equality:** The IAEC has zero tolerance for any type of violation of rights or discrimination based on colour, ethnic origin, gender, age, culture, religion, ideology, functional diversity, sexual orientation, position or any other circumstance susceptible to being discriminated against, as this violates the most elementary principles of human dignity. In addition, it fosters equal opportunities and especially the equal treatment.
- **Exemplary behaviour:** The members of the Executive Committee, the staff of the Secretariat, and the different delegations and networks must lead the Association by example and by extension comply with the commitments and guidelines of conduct described in this Code. Their behaviour must be a 'role model' for other members.
- **Political and religious independence:** The IAEC is not subject to the dictation or authority of any party, political force, religious denomination or any other belief when it comes to establishing its internal organisation, goals and priorities. The Association recognises the right of its members and employees to exercise their freedom of expression, political thought and participation in public life, provided that it does not interfere with their activity in the IAEC, and provided that said participation does not lead an external observer to associate the IAEC with a certain political leaning.
- **Sustainability:** The IAEC sees respect for the environment and the fight against climate change as a benchmark framework. It always guarantees that sustainability criteria govern members' activities and calls for compliance with the environmental procedures and requirements applicable in each case.
- **Solidarity:** The IAEC sets an adequate and fair balance between the various territories and members of the Association.
- **Transparency:** The IAEC's relations are conducted according to the principles of cooperation and transparency and it carries out its activity and carries out its activity without hiding information and in accordance with the law. The IAEC requires its elected representatives, employees and members to be honest, transparent and fair in the management of in-house resources, subsidies or aid received, and in commercial and institutional relations, when it comes to financial statements and the performance of any of their roles. Likewise, it firmly rejects all forms of bribery or corruption, both direct and indirect, and undertakes to fight against any form of favourable treatment, corruption and/or conflict of interest.

- **Confidentiality:** The IAEC understands that information is one of its main assets, essential for the management of its activities. Therefore, one of its objectives is to preserve the integrity, availability and confidentiality of information and thereby minimise the risks derived from its disclosure and misuse. All elected representatives, employees and members of the Executive Committee are obliged to guarantee confidentiality and professional secrecy regarding information accessed as a result of their job.
- **Loyalty:** The IAEC considers its image and reputation as one of its most valuable assets for preserving the trust of the General Assembly and partner entities, so its elected representatives, employees, suppliers and other partners must take the utmost care to preserve its image and reputation. To do so, they always show loyalty in the fulfilment of their responsibilities and in defence of the Association's interests.

3. SCOPE

The Code of Ethics is applied by the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) and is mandatory for all members of the Secretariat, the Executive Committee, the different territorial and thematic networks or other working groups, volunteers and all members, present and future, regardless of the position and role they have within the organisation.

This Code applies both to internal relations, which occur within the organisation, and to external ones, which occur in relations with third parties (suppliers, volunteers, other organisations and institutions, etc.), as well as in the workplace, during travel, meetings and Congresses, within the framework of communications, and in any other situation related to the IAEC's activity.

It will also apply to workers and partners not directly contracted by the IAEC, but who are part of the organisation chart, work teams or operational areas of the Association. It may also be extended to any natural or legal person related to the Association, whether they are a provider, a partner in the provision of services, or a member or participant in any activity organised by the IAEC.

All the above-mentioned persons have the duty to know, comply with and enforce this Code and assume the duty to report any breach or practice that they observe or know that is contrary to its content, based on their responsibility.

4. SPONSORS

Criteria required in the search for sponsors or partners must include (i) respect for human rights; (ii) the adaptation of their social, employment and financial management practices to the IAEC's principles and values; and (iii) compliance with environmental regulations.

Sponsors will not influence the work of the IAEC or the events it organises, and the Association will retain ownership and control of all events, projects, services and awards convened.

5. GIFTS AND OTHER COURTESIES

As a general rule, no person from the Secretariat or from the Executive Committee may offer, request or accept, directly or indirectly, gifts, favours or compensation, of whatever nature, to or from any authority, company or institution.

Only gifts and courtesies of low value* are excepted from the previous rule, as long as they are proportionate and reasonable according to local practice, and delivered for legitimate interests, socially acceptable, and punctual.

In those cases in which, due to their origin or characteristics, the acceptance of gifts could raise doubts, on an individual basis, it will be up to the IAEC Presidency and the Treasury to decide on their possible use or return.

Money gifts are expressly prohibited.

*50€ subject to review

6. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The Association is committed to intervening in the event of any violation of this Code. The IAEC Executive Committee is the body empowered to investigate the procedure and agree on the corresponding sanction, in accordance with Art. 24 of the bylaws, and agreements will be adopted by a simple majority.

These violations may be classed as minor, serious or very serious. Based on this, violators will be given a warning, will be temporarily excluded from IAEC activity, or permanently excluded.

7. WHISTLEBLOWING CHANNEL

Anyone who becomes aware of behaviours which are clearly contrary to the principles established by this Code of Ethics, or which constitute infractions or criminal acts, will use the whistleblowing channel set up for this purpose.

Two whistleblowing channels are available. Reports will be sent by email to: iaec_ethic_mailbox@bcn.cat. In cases involving Secretariat personnel, reports must be made through the [Ethics and Good Governance Mailbox of the Barcelona City Council](#).

The report must include all the data and details known. If requested by the whistle-blower, anonymity will be respected.

Both channels are to be used solely and exclusively to report any conduct that may involve criminal behaviour or a violation of this Code. They are not channels for complaints or disagreements, for which the IAEC has set up other resources.

Reports made under this Code of Ethics will not affect the right to inform the competent authorities of the alleged offence committed, insofar as this may constitute an administrative, civil or criminal offence under applicable legislation.

8. REVIEWING AND SHARING THE CODE

The IAEC undertakes to communicate, share and review this Code so that it is known and respected by all members of the network.

It will also be incorporated into the Transparency section of the Association's website for information purposes.

The Association's activity and realm are constantly evolving, so this Code of Ethics is a living document that will be reviewed and updated when necessary.

Any change or update of this Code of Ethics will be communicated to members.

9. ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Code will enter into force the day after its approval and all members will be informed of it. Its validity will be indefinite, unless the Executive Committee or the General Assembly decide otherwise.