



An initiative to advance professional and ethical conduct, climate & culture

Societies Consortium Fifth Annual Hybrid Convening Virtual Conduct Policy

This **Convening Conduct Policy for virtual participants** seeks to advance productive outcomes, with safety, full participation and belonging for all Participants¹ in the Societies Consortium's Fifth Annual Hybrid Convening. Prior to the Convening, Participants are expected to read and be familiar with this Policy. A link to this Policy will be posted in the Zoom chat box during the Convening.

By registering to attend, the virtual Participant will be acknowledging familiarity with this Policy and that it applies to the Fifth Annual Hybrid Convening, and any activities associated with² it. The virtual Participant must also provide an email, text, landline, or (for special needs) other contact where they can be reached during the Meeting. Failure to RSVP/acknowledge, provide such contact, or be available via the contact provided is grounds for being disconnected from the Convening without further notice or process.

As noted in the RSVP form, registering to attend constitutes consent to audio and visual recording at the Convening (and use and alteration of the recording) by the Societies Consortium (or those it authorizes) for non-commercial purposes aligned with the Societies Consortium's mission.

Participation norms

- Virtual Participants may join the Convening via phone or the internet, using (at the Participant's choice) an audio/video or audio function.
- Generally, panelists, facilitators, presenters and moderators will join in-person but may join via video/audio. They will describe any visuals that have not been provided in advance in case anyone is unable to view them during the Convening.
- Participants: Mute audio when not speaking. Use the chat box to be recognized by the facilitator or moderator.
- The Societies Consortium intends for its Convening to enable full participation, regardless of the range of individual visual, audio and other sensory abilities, and welcomes contact about special needs for registration and participation. ASL and closed captioning are planned for all plenary sessions. If you need ASL services to accompany you to any breakout sessions you attend, please let us know by checking that box on the RSVP form. Also please let us know if any other special needs by the RSVP deadline so that we may make reasonable accommodations by sending an email to taylor.shotwell@educationcounsel.com

Requirements for Ethical, Professional and Inclusive Conduct

Participants' conduct at the Societies Consortium's Fifth Annual Hybrid Convening must meet the following requirements to satisfy the Convenings' purpose of advancing excellence by enabling equitable and full engagement and contributions by all Participants. These requirements also apply to activities that are associated with the Convening.

¹ Participants include organizers, attendees, speakers, staff, volunteers and guests.

² “Associated with” the Convening means, e.g.: planning activities, extending or communicating about invitations, assembling panels, preparing presentations and materials for the Convening; participating in or supporting the Convening in any capacity (including providing support services); and communicating about the Convening or its Participants—whether during the Convening or in the general timeframe of the Convening (i.e., in planning, preparation or set-up before, in activities during, during the timeframe of, and/or soon after, the Convening), whether or not the activities are supervised by the Societies Consortium, EducationCounsel LLC, the American Geophysical Union, or AAAS, or use any of their facilities, technology, or resources.

DO...

- **Demonstrate respect and consideration for all people** and don’t dominate airtime;
- **Listen well to others.** Make room for a diversity of voices in group discussions, on panels, and the like. Welcome all voices, regardless of whether they participate by video/audio, audio or other means. Facilitators, invite but be sensitive not to pressure those who have not communicated to do so;
- **Be collaborative.** Be mindful not to exert dominance over others. Consider the effect of relationship, position, experience, identity and privilege power differentials, ease of communicating by video/audio vs. audio or other means, and other factors to avoid dominance;
- **Demonstrate that differing perspectives are valued**—critique ideas (not people);
- **Demonstrate welcome for a diversity of individuals and their identities**—pay attention to whether individuals of many identities and roles are included on panels, leading sessions, being called on when they raise their hands or use the chat function, and having their points considered;
- **Act to avoid invading personal privacy of individuals.** Assume that a person who is being viewed at times or in places where people can reasonably expect privacy (e.g., bathrooms, breastfeeding rooms, etc.) via the Virtual Convening platform does not realize it and notify a Meeting Contact right away to help the person;
- **Report conduct concerns to a Meeting Contact** so that concerns can be addressed responsibly and timely. **Respect and maintain confidentiality of the identities of any individuals involved in a conduct concern;**
- **Answer questions about conduct concerns in a forthright and complete manner** (e.g., when registering or during a review of concerns); and
- **If any leader or facilitator of an activity/session, any official of the platform, or any Meeting Official directs a Participant to stop a behavior or comment, immediately comply.** Directions are made to implement this Policy or the platform’s policies.
 - After Participants comply, they may raise any questions or concerns to a Meeting Official.

DO NOT...

- **Intentionally talk over or interrupt others; favor those participating by video/audio over audio or other means;**
- **Engage in biased, demeaning, intimidating, coercive, or harassing/hostile conduct or commentary, whether seriously or in jest** (e.g., based on power differential, gender [sex, identity, expression], sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, marital status, veteran status, age, body size or other physical appearance, disability, or other identities); this is the opposite of respectful and welcoming conduct;
- **Engage in personal attacks;**
- **Comment on personal appearance or assumed or known reasons why a person chooses to participate via video/audio, audio, or other means**—seriously or in jest;
- **Retaliate against or disadvantage anyone for reporting a conduct concern or assisting in its resolution. Do not make bad faith accusations;**
- **Disrupt the Convening (e.g., “zoom-bombing”) or engage in harm or threats of harm of any kind.** Do not create/contribute to a safety threat or unsafe or exclusionary situation;
- **Make audio or visual recordings of the Convening in any medium—and do not distribute audio or visual recordings of the Convening** (via social media or any other means). Only the Consortium’s agents may do so, after warning Participants to give them an opportunity to opt out;
- **Take or distribute pictures of or copy research posters or presentation materials;** and
- **Engage in any of these bad acts at the Convening** (including, e.g., via public or private chat)—**or on social media or other means in any way associated with the Convening.**

Note About Differences of Opinion and Offense. To achieve the purposes of the Convening in the limited time provided, with the universal benefit of all Participants’ being fully engaged, discussions should be focused on the topics at hand and all Participants must be able and welcome to equitably and effectively participate. It is not a violation of this In-Person Convening Conduct Policy to express an opinion, raise research or describe an experience (“statement”) that is at odds with the opinions of or is offensive to others—if the statement is part of an on-point discussion of the Convening topic at hand and is offered in a manner that does not interfere with others’ reasonable ability and welcome to participate fully. That means expressing differing positions with respect and consideration for all, in a manner that reflects intellectual rigor and is demonstrably mindful of minimizing, as reasonably possible, its potential adverse effect on others’ ability to participate. Offering an advance warning of the potential for impact on others is one way to demonstrate such respect and consideration for all. It also means not making a statement that is reasonably expected to cause offense gratuitously (i.e., unrelated or unnecessary for the work). It means not directing the statement as a personal attack or put-down of an individual, and not dominating the discussion. It further means demonstrating consideration for anyone who appears to be in distress by promptly stopping the cause and demonstrating caring, while still pursuing a way to share pertinent information, with the Convening facilitator’s assistance if needed.

What to do if you have a conduct concern

- Keep safe by having the contact information below handy before joining the Convening virtually.
- Act if you have, or identify someone else who has, a conduct concern by:
 - Alerting the Meeting Contact: **Felice Levine by text 202-262-7189 or email at societiesconsortium1@gmail.com or [TBD] by email at societiesconsortium2@gmail.com.**
- **Confidentiality.** If the person raising the concern, any identified individual target,³ or the accused (each an “individual most directly involved”) or a particular witness asks the Meeting Contact for confidentiality of their identity while the concern is being addressed, reasonable steps will be taken to do so. But the Societies Consortium’s agents will not maintain confidentiality, if in their judgment and discretion, safety or law, an investigation, determination of a violation, or disconnecting a virtual Participant from the Convening (which will have the effect of also prohibiting them to participate in the Convening in person) requires otherwise. Anyone who receives information during an investigation, however, must maintain its confidentiality; failure to do so is a serious violation of this Policy, as is retaliation against any identified individual target, witness, or anyone who raises or helps resolve a conduct concern.

Determining a violation

When a conduct concern under this Policy is raised to Meeting Contact(s),⁴ the Meeting Contact(s) will determine whether the situation can (and should) be diffused by communicating remotely, privately and separately with the individuals most directly involved and, possibly, particular witness(es) (“simple resolution”). **A simple resolution is appropriate when a Meeting Contact provides a warning and clear conduct instructions to a person accused of a violation of this Policy, the accused Participant complies, and it is apparent that:** misunderstandings occurred and are corrected or lessons have been learned by those in need of learning; there is an authentic commitment to avoid a repetition of the cause of the conduct concern (and no reason to think a repetition is likely); and (considering all of this and the nature of the conduct concern and harm) a sense of safety and inclusion has been restored without the need for further action, and any identified individual target and accused Participant agree without coercion. Meeting Contract(s) will inform a Meeting Official(s),⁵ in any event.

When a simple resolution does not apply, a Meeting Official(s) may determine,⁶ based on the Meeting Contact’s fact-finding and any submissions (referenced next), whether a violation of this Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy occurred and will notify the individuals most directly involved by email or text. Before making a determination, a Meeting Official(s) will give the known/available individuals most directly involved an opportunity to provide (but will not require them to

provide) in writing any additional facts relevant to the decision; will give a copy of each one's submission (if any) to the other(s); and will give each an opportunity to briefly respond in writing to the other(s)' submission(s) (if any). A Meeting Official(s) will set submission deadlines in their sole discretion but taking into account the nature of the conduct concern, timing and logistics.⁷ If a Meeting Official(s) does not make a determination during the Virtual Convening (e.g., due to the nature of the conduct concern, time constraints or logistics), the determination will be made and any consequences imposed by a Meeting Official(s) after the Virtual Convening, who may direct the Meeting Contact(s) to conduct further factfinding. Meeting Official(s) and Meeting Contacts may handle a person's alleged misconduct under this Virtual Convening Conduct Policy and under the In-Person Convening Conduct Policy in a single or separate process(es) at their discretion.

³ In a Virtual Meeting, misconduct is likely to target and affect all or many Participants. An "identified individual target" exists when one or more specific individuals are targeted.

⁴ Meeting Contacts alert Meeting Officials of conduct concerns raised by Participants, find relevant facts, and conduct simple resolutions. Meeting Contacts (fact-finder) and Meeting Officials (decision-maker) also may raise conduct concerns on their own initiative. They will be different individuals/teams.

⁵ "Meeting Officials" are one or more of the Co-Chairs or Vice Chairs of the Societies Consortium Executive Committee. Any Meeting Official may decide: (a) whether a violation of the In-Person Convening Conduct Policy occurred and/or (b) in any event, whether (and what) interim measures and/or consequences should be imposed or other action should be taken during the Convening Period to address a conduct concern (including any need to take further action beyond a simple resolution). "Convening Period" means during the Convening and during any activities associated with the Convening before, during, during the timeframe of, or after it.

⁶ A determination is made based on the preponderance of the evidence standard (>50% likelihood).

⁷ Timing factors include whether a Meeting Official(s) is making a decision during the Virtual Convening, in which event the schedule for the Convening (and its virtual components) will inform timing. Generally, response time for determinations made after the virtual aspects of the Convening will not exceed 14 days for the first submission deadline, less for subsequent responses; however, a Meeting Official(s) may in their sole discretion extend the time if they determine a need under the circumstances.

Consequences that may be imposed

- If a Meeting Official(s) determines a violation of this Policy during the Convening, a Meeting Official(s) may, upon notice, disconnect and require the virtual Participant to leave the Convening, at the virtual Participant's own cost, if any. In such event, the Participant is also automatically prohibited to participate in the Convening in person. A Meeting Official(s) will make the determination, in that Official's sole discretion to serve the best interests of the Societies Consortium's membership and mission as reflected in this Policy. A Meeting Official(s) also may notify a senior official of the virtual Participant's home (employing) institution of the violation if, in the Meeting Official's sole discretion, the nature of the violation causes concern about safety or disruption in other settings (beyond the Convening). When giving any notice to the virtual Participant's home institution, the Societies Consortium will include a copy of this Policy and will copy the Participant on the notice.
- A Meeting Official(s) may exercise the same discretion and impose any of the above-listed consequences on an accused virtual Participant, prior to determining whether a violation occurred, if the Meeting Official decides, in that official's sole discretion based on those facts known, that a credible question⁸ of a violation exists and such action is needed in short order to avoid disruption or to advance inclusion or safety at the Convening. Any notice of an allegation to the Participant's home institution will state:
 - "The Societies Consortium received an allegation that [**Participant's name**] violated the Consortium's Virtual Convening Conduct Policy and required [**Participant's name**] to leave the Convening to avoid disruption or as a safety precaution, but no determination (one way or the other) has been made about the allegation. In requiring the Participant to leave the Convening or notifying you based on an allegation, **the Societies Consortium is not making a judgment that the accused Participant violated this Policy. Any statement or action to the contrary is not authorized by the Societies Consortium. In these circumstances, the Societies Consortium prioritizes preventative non-disruption and safety measures in the interest of the Societies Consortium's mission and of many Participants, over the interests of one or a few, if the two must be weighed. It is not always feasible during the Virtual Convening (given the available time and logistics) to timely conduct and complete fact-finding or take other steps needed to reach a conclusion. You will be**

notified of any determination when made.”

- The Societies Consortium will be clear about these points (but will not state the accused Participant’s name) in any communication that may become necessary about the matter.
- Other/additional consequences for violation of the Virtual Convening Conduct Policy, to be determined after the Convening, may include, without limitation, being banned or suspended from participation in Societies Consortium’s activities in the future.
- Whether or not a violation is found—and instead of or in addition to any other consequences for a violation—the Societies Consortium may pursue a restorative or other community-building practice. Such practices can elevate understanding of a conduct concern, enhance ownership of the Societies Consortium’s conduct standards, prevent recurrence of a conduct concern, and repair relationships.⁹ Community building is pursued if a Meeting Official(s) or other authorized Societies Consortium official determines in its sole discretion that it is in the best interests of the Societies Consortium’s mission under the circumstances, and the individuals most directly involved consent without coercion.

⁸ See The Model Glossary of Key Terms which provides a definition, and considerations for determining the existence, of “credible questions” at: <https://societiesconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/9.26.19-Model-Glossary-of-Terms-.pdf>.

⁹ “Restorative and Community Building Practices” is defined in the Model Glossary of Key Terms available at <https://societiesconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/9.26.19-Model-Glossary-of-Terms-.pdf>.

Appeal of a determination

- **An appeal of a decision** on whether a violation of this Virtual Convening Policy occurred, or regarding the consequences imposed, may be pursued by the Participant who is found in violation or by an identified individual target after the Convening. An appeal may be filed at societiesconsortium@educationcounsel.com and will be handled by a member or subgroup of the Executive Committee or its appointed agent that has not been involved in fact-finding or decision-making in the matter and does not otherwise have a material professional, personal or financial conflict of interest.
- **An appeal is available only** due to newly surfaced, consequential facts that were not previously available when the decision was made; consequences grossly disproportionate (in leniency or stringency) to the violation found, considering how similar situations were handled, if any, under the current Virtual Convening Conduct Policy (i.e., not under prior policies); lack of any facts to support the decision; a material conflict of interest by the decision-maker; or a failure to fulfill process requirements with consequential effects on the appealing person’s ability to address important considerations.
- **However, the only remedy** for an accused virtual Participant or target who disagrees with the determination of a violation and/or any final or interim consequences imposed is to file an appeal if available. The only remedy provided by a successful appeal is the Consortium representative providing a copy of the finding on appeal to the Consortium’s records and to the accused’s employing institution as an update if the institution was previously notified of the issue.