

# **Code of Ethics & Business Conduct for Personnel**

**Effective Date: 4 June 2025** 

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# **Document Management**

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Related Policies and Procedures	<ul> <li>Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination</li> <li>Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct,</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Exploitation and Abuse, and Human Trafficking.</li> <li>Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation</li> <li>Staff Management Policy</li> <li>AfricaRice Ethics &amp; Business Conduct Escalation Framework</li> <li>AfricaRice Manual of Procedures for General Services Staff</li> <li>AfricaRice Internationally Recruited Staff Manual of Procedures</li> <li>CGIAR Integrated Partnership Code of Ethics &amp; Business Conduct for Personnel</li> <li>CGIAR Integrated Partnership Anti-harassment and Discrimination Policy</li> <li>CGIAR Integrated Partnership Ethics &amp; Business Conduct Escalation Framework</li> </ul>
History of versions	Version 2 (Replacing AfricaRice Code of Conduct -2020)
Key points	<ul> <li>Draft developed and aligned to the CGIAR Integrated Partnership Code of Ethics &amp; Business Conduct for Personnel</li> <li>Replaces AfricaRice Code of Conduct -2020</li> <li>Approval by the Board of Trustees engraved (2020 Code approved by EMC)</li> <li>Key Areas:- <ul> <li>Clear definitions of terminologies relating to Ethics and Business Conduct</li> <li>Identifying the Guiding Ethical Principles</li> <li>Compliance and Reporting well established</li> <li>Specific sections linked to the supporting AfricaRice Policies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### 1. Introduction

The Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) is an autonomous intergovernmental research association of African member countries. It is also a leading pan-African research organization with a mission to contribute to poverty alleviation and food security in Africa through research, development and partnership activities. It is one of 12 Centers and Alliance under One CGIAR supported by the CGIAR Fund. The Center was created in 1971 by 11 African countries. Today its membership comprises 28 countries, covering West, Central, East and North African regions.

AfricaRice is today recognized as a pan-African Center of Excellence for rice research, development and capacity building. It contributes to reducing poverty, achieving food and nutrition security and improving livelihoods of farmers and other rice value-chain actors in Africa by increasing the productivity and profitability of rice-based agri-food systems, while ensuring the sustainability of natural resources.

The success achieved by the institution over the years could be attributed largely to its reputation for honesty, integrity and excellence in the conduct of its research activities. As the environment in which AfricaRice operates becomes more complex, the institution recognizes the need to clearly state the principles that guide decision-making, the conduct of its employees, and which also assist its employees in maintaining its reputation. This is presented in the form of this Code of Ethics and Business Conduct of Personnel, which outlines the standards that guide the actions of AfricaRice and its employees.

### 2. Purpose and Application

- 2.1. AfricaRice Code of Ethics and Business Conduct for Personnel outlines the ethical principles and conduct standards expected of all AfricaRice' Staff. This Code establishes expectations for professional behavior to foster trust, respect, and accountability within the diverse AfricaRice network
- **2.2.** The definitions and terms in this document do not alter, change, or modify the terms and conditions or privileges and immunities of AfricaRice contained with Host Country Agreements.
- 2.3. The Code provides a framework to ensure that all Staff act in a way that upholds AfricaRice' reputation for ethical integrity and scientific excellence. It applies broadly to all categories of Staff, including full-time and temporary staff, consultants, interns, service providers, and affiliated partners working within or for any CGIAR member organization. The broad use of the term 'Staff' under this policy shall not be construed to create an employer-employee relationship between any category of person indicated above with AfricaRice.
- 2.4. In their actions and decisions, Staff contribute to AfricaRice and the CGIAR global mission to deliver science and innovation that advance the transformation of food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. Adhering to this Code fosters an ethical environment that strengthens public confidence and supports AfricaRice and the CGIAR efforts towards a world free of poverty, hunger and environmental degradation.
- **2.5.** This Code has been written to complement and coexist with policies of sponsors and funding agencies and will be interpreted consistently where possible, with guidance sought internally from the ethics advisor, legal office, or other designated representative within AfricaRice.

### 3. Guiding Ethical Principles

**3.1. Integrity & Honesty:** Staff shall demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and act in good faith, with intellectual honesty and fairness.

- **3.2. Impartiality & Objectivity:** Staff shall a void any bias arising from personal, financial, or political relationships and shall not allow personal views to interfere with their professional duties.
- **3.3. Respect & Inclusion**: Staff shall maintain a work environment that respects diversity, fosters inclusivity, and upholds the dignity of all colleagues.
- **3.4.** Accountability & Responsibility: Staff shall take responsibility for their actions, ensuring transparency in decision-making and the proper use of resources, and accurately reporting all financial information.

#### 4. Definitions

- 4.1. Confidential Information: All information disclosed, conveyed or otherwise made accessible to Staff, either directly or indirectly, in any form, whether in writing, oral, visual, electronic or otherwise, that is designated "confidential", or that the Staff knows, or has reason to know, is confidential or sensitive or not generally available to the public, including the fact that such information has been delivered to AfricaRice. It includes, but is not limited to, records relating to internal deliberative processes, such as internal notes, memoranda, and correspondence (including e-mails) among Staff.
- **4.2. Intellectual Property:** The right to patents, copyrights, trademarks and any other form of legally protected intellectual property with respect to goods and/or services and other materials which bear a direct relation to or are produced, prepared, or collected in consequence of or in the course of work.
- **4.3. Privileges and Immunities:** Employees may be granted certain immunities and/or privileges related to their organizational position or duty station in accordance with the agreement between AfricaRice and the government of the host country to which they are assigned.
- **4.4. Conflict of Interest:** A situation in which Staff have an actual, perceived or potential personal interest (whether financial, personal or otherwise) that may affect, or be affected by, the conduct of their duties and responsibilities with respect to AfricaRice. A conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest may arise when: -
  - **4.4.1.** Staffs private interests interfere or appear to interfere with the interests of AfricaRice.
  - **4.4.2.** Staff acts or has interests that make it difficult to discharge his/her functions impartially and effectively and to discharge his/her official duties with only AfricaRice' interests in mind.
  - **4.4.3.** Staff receive improper personal benefits because of his/her status or affiliation with AfricaRice.
  - **4.4.4.** Conflicts of interest can be of a financial nature, arise from personal relationships/ family members, take the form of intellectual bias, or generate unfair or competitive advantage.
- **4.5. Abuse of Authority:** The improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual towards others, whether through a one-time incident or series of incidents. It is particularly serious when the alleged offender uses influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, e.g., through decisions on assignments, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion.
- **4.6. Bullying:** Repeated offensive, cruel, intimidating, insulting or humiliating behavior that undermines an individual or a group of individuals. Bullying may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

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- 4.7. Discrimination: Any unjustifiable differentiation between individuals or groups or the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of Personnel, based on such grounds as a staffs race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, or any other protected characteristic under applicable law. It may constitute a series of events or a one-time incident.
- Harassment: Refers to any unwelcome or offensive conduct that has had, or might 4.8. reasonably be expected to have, the effect of:
  - **4.8.1.** offending, humiliating, embarrassing, or intimidating a n o t h e r person(s),
  - **4.8.2.** creating an intimidating or hostile work environment and/or unreasonably interfering with another person(s)' ability to carry out their functions at work.
- 4.9. Sexual harassment: Any unwelcome and unwanted behavior of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, that is offensive or creates a hostile or intimidating work environment. Sexual harassment may include unwanted sexual advances, unsolicited requests for sexual favors, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or perceived to intimidate, cause offense or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work or is made a condition of employment.
- Sexual exploitation: Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability. differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- Sexual Abuse: refers to the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. This definition includes sexual relations with a child, defined as a "human being below the age of eighteen years" in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Any person of any gender identity may be the victim of sexual exploitation.
- Fraud: Obtaining a benefit or causing a loss by dishonest or other intentionally improper means through the knowing misrepresentation of the trust or concealment of a material fact to induce another to act to his or her detriment; this term applies to activities relating to AfricaRice as well as commercial fraud.
- **4.13.** Corruption: The abuse or perversion of entrusted authority for private or unlawful gain.
- Bribery: Bribery" or "bribe" means to directly or indirectly offer, promise, or provide a financial or other advantage (including hospitality or gifts and other expressions of appreciation more than a de minimum value) to another person or receive such an advantage in order: -
  - **4.14.1.** To induce or encourage the recipient to perform a function improperly.
  - **4.14.2.** To induce or encourage the recipient to expedite the performance of routine government action.
  - **4.14.3.** To reward the recipient for the improper performance of a function
- **4.15.** Money Laundering: Includes, without limitation, the following types of actions: -
  - **4.15.1.** the conversion or transfer of property, knowing that such property is derived from crime, for the purpose of concealing or disguising the illicit origin of the property or of assisting any person who is involved in the commission of the crime to evade the legal consequences of his/her actions.
  - 4.15.2. the concealment or disguise of the true nature, source, location, disposition, movement, rights with respect to, or ownership of property, with the knowledge that such property was derived from a criminal offense.
  - 4.15.3. the acquisition, possession or use of property with the knowledge that such property was derived from a criminal offense.
- **4.16.** Financing of Terrorism: Refers to the act of providing, collecting, or managing funds or resources with the intention, knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that they will be used to Effective: 4-Jun-25

- support terrorist activities. This financing can involve legal or illicit funds and may directly or indirectly benefit individuals, groups, or organizations engaged in terrorism.
- **4.17. Disciplinary action:** Refers to a formal response or measure taken by an employer to address behavior or actions by an individual that violates established rules, policies, or standards. The purpose of discipline is typically to correct undesirable behavior, ensure accountability, and maintain a respectful and productive environment. Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to; verbal warnings, performance improvement plans, written warnings, suspension, demotion, and/ortermination of employment.

#### 5. Workplace Conduct

- **5.1. Civility & Respect**: Staff shall ensure an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding, appreciating the multicultural and international nature of AfricaRice.
- **5.2. Confidentiality:** The protection of confidential and sensitive information is essential to the integrity of AfricaRice. Staff shall manage all information and proprietary and classified data responsibly and in accordance with the applicable policies of AfricaRice for which they work.
- **5.3. Exercise of Authority**: Managers and supervisors shall use their positions responsibly, fostering a supportive and non-coercive environment, and role model and champion ethical behaviors.
- **5.4. Drug-free Workplace:** It is prohibited to possess, manufacture, distribute, dispense, acquire, or gain access to any prohibited or controlled substances, including stimulants, antidepressants, narcotics, tranquillizers, hallucinogens, steroids or any local drug. Access to any such substance must be through proper, documented, medical advice and recommendations or strictly for scientific experiment.
- 5.5. Health and Safety: Any Staff concerned about the infectious nature of a serious disease of another Staff or other person working with or associated with AfricaRice' work should convey this concern to the appropriate supervisor or Human Resource Manager or Medical Advisor. Staff who refuse to work with or perform services for a person known or suspected to have a serious disease without first discussing their concerns with supervisor or Human Resources Office will be subject to disciplinary action as guided by AfricaRice' Staff Management Policies and manuals.
- **5.6. Conflicts of Interest**: Staff shall avoid all situations where personal or financial interest conflict with the interests of AfricaRice and its role as a member of the CGIAR. Staff shall promptly disclose any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest in accordance with their organization's applicable policies and procedures, and act, as advised, to mitigate conflicts, such as recusal from decision-making where conflicts exist. (See AfricaRice Staff Policy on Conflict of Interest)
- 5.7. Improper Use of Centre' Assets: All Staff are expected to take due care of and utilize the Center's assets assigned to them and/or are in their department, appropriately. The Center's scientific equipment, computer hardware and software, networks and databases, vehicles and other instruments, are the property of the AfricaRice. Any abuse of assets or improper manipulation, alteration or other interference, especially with the computer systems and scientific equipment and the information held therein, is prohibited. Use of AfricaRice' equipment for personal gain is prohibited. All incidences of misuse of the institution's assets must be reported to management
- **5.8. No Tolerance for Harassment, Discrimination, or Violence**: Any form of harassment, discrimination, bullying, or abusive behavior is strictly prohibited. Personnel shall be vigilant and proactive in maintaining a workplace free from such conduct. (see AfricaRice Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination)

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- **5.9. Prohibition of sexual exploitation or abuse and Human Trafficking:** Any act of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual violence, or other acts of a similar nature are prohibited. Personnel shall not engage in transactions with, or the provision of support to individuals or organizations associated with human trafficking.
- 5.10. Intimate or romantic relationships: Intimate or romantic relationships between colleagues shall not interfere with work or create an environment in which other colleagues may reasonably be expected to feel uncomfortable or professionally disadvantaged because of the relationship. In cases where there is a hierarchical or supervisory relationship or function/role between two people engaged in an intimate or romantic relationship, they shall notify their respective supervisors and the human resource manager so that appropriate steps can be taken to avoid or mitigate an actual or perceived conflict of interest. In addition, there may be heightened risks or considerations under AfricaRice Policy on Protection and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination when there are intimate or romantic relationships among colleagues.
- **5.11. Anticorruption, bribery, and misappropriation**: To uphold AfricaRice' commitment to transparency, integrity and fairness in its operations, Staff shall not engage in any type of illegal or unethical act. Such acts include, but are not limited to, the receipt or solicitation of a bribe; for gery or unauthorized alteration of any document; extortion; corruption; theft; conspiracy; embezzlement; misappropriation of funds, property or resources; false representation; concealment of material facts; and collusion. Staff must not take improper advantage of anyone through manipulation, concealment, a buse of privileged information, misrepresentation of facts, or any other illegal or unethical trade practice.
- **5.12. Prohibition of financing of terrorism and money laundering:** Staff shall use their best efforts, and AfricaRice' shall establish and maintain appropriate preventative measures in place to ensure, that no direct or indirect support or resources are provided to individuals or entities involved in the financing or support of terrorism or money laundering.

#### 6. External Activities and Conduct

- 6.1. Outside Employment: Any external employment or board membership shall be disclosed and approved in accordance with the AfricaRice Staff Management Policy and procedures to avoid potential or perceived conflicts of interest. This includes services rendered as a consultant, an external examiner, an agent, a student advisor, or an officer, director or trustee of an outside agency, institution or government. This, however, does not extend to posts in religious or social organizations or assignments connected to AfricaRice' research activities as well as activities involved in the supervision of students assigned to AfricaRice. All approvals will be made by the Director General.
- **6.2.** AfricaRice Staff shall not engage in activities that directly compete with the Center's beliefs and practices at any level of its operations. Should a Staff engage in or have interests in an organization whose activities compete directly with those of AfricaRice, that Staff shall be duly informed and be requested to relinquish the position held with the organization or relinquish his or her position with AfricaRice.
- **Gifts and Honors:** The customary exchange of gifts or tokens of modest value is permitted if in accordance with the AfricaRice Staff Management Policy and may be a reasonable aspect of developing and maintaining business relationships. Personnel shall not attempt to influence external parties through payments, gifts, offers of employment, or otherwise

unlawful conduct. Staff are expected to follow all applicable procurement policies, processes and procedures. Staff's offer or acceptance of hospitality, such as meals during the normal course of business or other reasonable business expenditure, is permissible provided it has the principal aim of establishing cordial business relations, provided it is also permissible under other AfricaRice policies and local law. Staff should seek approval in accordance with AfricaRice' policies or procedures before accepting any gifts, awards, or honors that could reflect poorly on AfricaRice or influence, or be perceived as influencing, fair, and objective decision making. (see AfricaRice' Staff Policy on Conflict of Interest)

- **6.4. Political Neutrality**: Staff may engage in personal political activities responsibly, such as voting or belonging to political parties, without implying AfricaRice' endorsement, or creating conflicts with their professional responsibilities. Staff may not engage in any partisan political activity that may interfere with or conflict with their professional duties, or reflect adversely on the integrity, independence, or impartiality of AfricaRice.
- **6.5. Post-employment Obligations:** Upon separating from service with AfricaRice, a Staff's obligation of discretion and confidentiality about official matters does not cease.
  - **6.5.1.** Staff should not communicate to any person any information known by them because of their former position and it is not available in public domain; nor shall they in any way use such information to their private advantage. This would include the use of such information to influence the decisions of the institution, or the decisions of any external partners.
  - **6.5.2.** Former employees of AfricaRice who make public statements about AfricaRice in the media or publish as former employees of AfricaRice, need to seek authorization from AfricaRice. This would include the publication of research data undertaken while working at AfricaRice

#### 7. Integrity in Science & Research

- **7.1.** Staff shall demonstrate the highest standards of scientific and research integrity in any scientific research they undertake at AfricaRice, as further elaborated in AfricaRice Human Research Ethics Policy and other applicable policies.
- 7.2. Staff shall avoid any action that would involve the unethical use of intellectual property.
- **7.3.** Staff must also ensure that there are no actual or perceived conflicts of interest that might call into question the validity or accuracy of their work.
- **7.4.** Plagiarism is strictly prohibited, data manipulation, ghost authorship or gift authorship.

#### 8. Privileges, Immunities & Compliance

- **8.1.** Staff must always observe the laws and regulations of the jurisdiction of the country to which they are assigned. They are required to inform the institution's Human Resource Office, if they have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence or are engaged in a civil suit related in any way to AfricaRice' functions, regardless of whether the offence relates directly to the duties in the Centre.
- **8.2.** The privileges and immunities that may be enjoyed by Staff are conferred solely in the interest of AfricaRice through which they are employed, and do not exempt Staff from observing applicable laws in the countries in which they are present in the performance of their duties.

- **8.3.** AfricaRice prohibits the abuse of such privileges and/or immunities. It has the right and the duty to waive the immunity of any Staff, without prejudice, in the interests of the Center and especially in instances where it is determined that the immunity would impede the course of justice.
- **8.4.** AfricaRice encourages Staff to access appropriate advisory support, should they be in doubt about what circumstances might create an abuse of privileges and/or immunities.
- **8.5.** AfricaRice' Staff must report any actual or suspected unethical behavior related to the abuse of privileges and/or immunities.

#### 9. Intellectual Assets (IA) & Intellectual Property Rights (IP)

- **9.1.** All Staff have an obligation to protect the Intellectual Assets, Rights and Interests of AfricaRice.
- **9.2.** Use or reproduction of such assets, except as required in day-to-day activities, may not take place without the prior written consent of the Director General, who will review them and provide guidelines on a case-by-case basis.
- 9.3. All IP rights, including patents and copyrights, in any work, invention and/or scientific discovery developed while in the service of AfricaRice by Staff as well as all Centers' images, publications, audio recordings and videos are owned by AfricaRice. Given that research by the Staff of AfricaRice is made possible by public funds, employees will have no personal rights to intellectual property arising out of their work at AfricaRice.

### 10. Reporting

- **10.1. Duty to Report**: Staff shall promptly report any known or suspected violations of this Code, misuse of resources, abuse of authority, or unethical conduct in accordance with the misconduct reporting procedures of AfricaRice.
- **10.2. Good Faith Reporting:** Reports should be made in good faith in accordance with relevant procedures for reporting misconduct and contain sufficient detail to allow for proper assessment. Anyone who files a complaint that is known to be false or malicious, or with a reckless disregard for the truth of the statements made, may be subject to administrative or disciplinary action.
- **10.3. Protection Against Retaliation**: AfricaRice shall maintain a whistleblower and protection from retaliation policy that protects individuals reporting misconduct in good faith from retaliation.
- **10.4.** Consequences of non-compliance: Staff's non-compliance with this code or any other policy, procedure, or rule may be considered as misconduct and may result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable policies.
- **10.5. Confidentiality**: All reports will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, with information shared on a need-to-know basis, ensuring the protection of due process, adherence to applicable law, and the rights of all parties involved, subject to the immunities and privileges accorded to AfricaRice by host countries.
- **10.6. Reporting Escalation Framework**: AfricaRice EBC Escalation Framework establishes a consistent guideline for escalation of ethics and business conduct cases across AfricaRice and the CGIAR Integrated Partnership, ensuring that reports of concerns about unethical

conduct and other ethical breaches are consistently managed, reported, and addressed responsibly and effectively at appropriate levels across AfricaRice as specified in Annex 2 to this document.

#### 11. Code Implementation

- **11.1.** This Code of Ethics and Business Conduct has been approved by the Board of Trustees of AfricaRice.
- **11.2.** It supersedes and supplements existing AfricaRice policies and procedures consistent with this Code of Ethics and Business Conduct. If there is apparent inconsistency, this Code prevails.

#### 12. Review

**12.1.** This Code will be reviewed and updated every five years or earlier if required by the Human Resources Office.

#### 13. Related Documentation

- **13.1.** Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination
- **13.2.** Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation and Abuse, and Human Trafficking.
- **13.3.** Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation
- **13.4.** Staff Management Policy
- 13.5. AfricaRice Ethics & Business Conduct Escalation Procedures/Framework
- **13.6.** Manual of Procedures for General Services Staff
- **13.7.** Internationally Recruited Staff Manual of Procedures
- **13.8.** CGIAR Integrated Partnership Code of Ethics & Business Conduct for Personnel
- **13.9.** CGIAR Integrated Partnership Anti-harassment and Discrimination Policy
- **13.10.** CGIAR Integrated Partnership Ethics & Business Conduct Escalation Framework

#### 14. Annexes

**14.1.** Annex 1 Staff Declaration

#### **Annex 1 Staff Declaration**



## **Declaration of Understanding and Adherence**

	Ethics and Business Conduct—is used in conjunction with the signed Terms and Employment in the Staff's contract letter and the policies in the Staff Management nent.
undersigned	the do hereby confirm that I have read and fully understood this Code of Ethics and agree to abide by all the conditions herein and to be bound by the same.
Name:	
Date:	
Signature:	