

# The Blue Hand Group



# CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....



## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE BHG ANNUAL CONFERENCE, EVENTS, ETC.**

All BHG events should be a safe, welcoming, and respectful space. The Blue Hand Group (BHG) values the diversity of views, expertise, opinions, backgrounds, and experiences reflected among BHG members and the broader ecology community.

To this end, BHG is committed to providing a safe, productive and welcoming environment for all participants at BHG meetings and events, to enable an effective forum to consider and debate science-relevant and professional viewpoints in a professional, fair and respectful, and fair manner.

This Code of Conduct is important to promoting diversity and creating an inclusive, supportive and collaborative environment for everyone and aligns with BHG's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy available via our About webpage: <https://thebluehandgroup.org/about>

All BHG meetings and events participants – including, but not limited to, delegates, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, BHG staff, members of the media, vendors, and service providers (hereinafter “participants”) – are expected to abide by this BHG Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct applies to activities including, but not restricted to, professional gatherings organized by BHG, such as conferences and workshops; social occasions organized by BHG; communications relating to BHG or with BHG members, such as presentations, messages, conversations (including on-line platforms) and communications relating to BHG conferences and events.

### **EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR**

With respect to any behaviour or performing activities associated with BHG, as an BHG member and/or participant, you are expected to: treat all participants with kindness, respect, and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions (including those you may not share); communicate openly, with respect for other participants, being mindful to critique ideas rather than individuals, using discretion to ensure respect is communicated; refrain from demeaning, discriminatory or harassing behaviour and speech directed toward other participants; be an active bystander, be mindful of your surroundings and your fellow participants, including alerting BHG staff or representatives if you notice a dangerous situation, unacceptable behaviour or someone in distress; respect the rules and policies of meeting and event venues, accommodation, or any other venue associated with BHG meetings and events, including public spaces, visited with fellow participants.

## UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Harassment includes speech or behaviour that is not welcome by others or is personally offensive. Behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another – harassment intended in a joking manner can still constitute unacceptable behaviour.

In communications and/or performing activities associated with BHG, BHG does not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, discrimination or any other form of unacceptable behaviour.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- physical or verbal abuse of any participant;
- exclusionary behaviour or unwelcome, discriminatory or offensive comments, for example, or exclusionary behaviour. This includes but is not limited to comments related to age, appearance or body size, employment status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, physical or cognitive ability, political affiliation, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, sexual orientation, race or religion;
- inappropriate or unwanted physical contact;
- unwanted sexual attention;
- use of sexual or discriminatory images in public spaces, social media or in presentations;
- deliberate intimidation or stalking, or harassment;
- harassing photography or recording, including taking photographs or recording of another individual's oral presentation or poster where the presenter has withdrawn permission;
- sustained disruption of talks or other events;
- bullying behaviour, including using perceived superior status or rank to embarrass, belittle or humiliate;
- retaliation for reporting unacceptable behaviour.

## IMMEDIATE SERIOUS THREAT TO PUBLIC SAFETY

Anyone experiencing or witnessing behaviour that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety at any time should contact local law enforcement (by calling 000) and immediately notifying facility security.

## REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

If you are not in immediate danger but feel that you are the subject of unacceptable behaviour, have witnessed any such behaviour, or have other concerns, please notify a BHG staff member or representative as soon as possible.

Appropriate action will be taken through BHG leadership. All reports will be treated seriously and responded to promptly. To report incidents of any sort during or following a BHG event, please contact BHG at [info@thebluehandgroup.org](mailto:info@thebluehandgroup.org). All reports will be taken seriously and treated confidentially. This does not preclude seeking third-party medical support if deemed necessary.

## CONSEQUENCES

BHG members and participants are accountable for ensuring that their actions and behaviour align with the BHG Code of Conduct. Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behaviour is expected to comply immediately.

If the behaviour continues:

- BHG staff (or their representative) or venue security may take any immediate action deemed necessary and appropriate, including removal from the meeting or event without warning or refund;
- the matter will be referred to the BHG Board for consideration of further consequences, which may include prohibition from attending future meetings and events, or membership renewal;
- the matter will be dealt with under BHG's dispute resolution process outlined in the Constitution. For any questions or feedback about this policy, or the dispute resolution process, please contact BHG at [info@thebluehandgroup.org](mailto:info@thebluehandgroup.org)

## CODE OF CONDUCT DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Reporting: A breach of the BHG Code of Conduct can be reported by emailing or by verbal reporting to a BHG staff member.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION AT AN BHG MEETING OR EVENT

Dispute resolution needs to align with the BHG Constitution Part 2, Section 10-11.

When a complaint is received during an BHG meeting or event:

- Immediate action will be taken to investigate the reported behaviour, including contact with both the complainant and nominated perpetrator and witnesses. Investigations will be undertaken within a fair and unbiased perspective.
- Privacy of all parties will be protected where possible and as appropriate at all times, with consideration given to consent being given by the complainant.

- Where necessary, immediate action will be taken to ensure the unsatisfactory behaviour ceases and ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant and other participants.
- The matter will then be referred to the Equity & Diversity Working Group to determine appropriate and timely action.
- Where appropriate, a Conflict and Dispute Resolution panel chaired by the CEO and board will be convened to investigate and make recommendations.
- Recommended actions may include mediation, behaviour education, withdrawal of conference registration, cancellation of membership, or other actions as deemed suitable to the individual case.
- A de-identified report of all Code of Conduct breaches will be provided to the CEO and the BHG Board.

## **DISPUTE RESOLUTION OUTSIDE OF AN BHG MEETING OR EVENT**

When a complaint has been received it will be acknowledged within 24 business days, or as soon as possible where possible.

- The matter will be referred to the Equity & Diversity Working Group to determine appropriate and timely action.
- Where appropriate, a Conflict and Dispute Resolution panel chaired by the CEO and board will be convened to investigate and make recommendations.
- Recommended actions may include mediation, behaviour education, withdrawal of conference registration, cancellation of membership or other actions as deemed suitable to the individual case.
- All matters will be treated confidentially.
- The complainant will be kept informed of progress and outcomes.
- A de-identified report of all Code of Conduct breaches will be provided to the Conference Working Group and the BHG Board.

This document was developed 23/10/2022 and will be updated as needed.