

# The Artists' Agreement

By Composition Chrysalis, LLC

## **Article I – Statement of Intent**

*As members of the creative community founded by Composition Chrysalis, we vow to uphold a supportive environment conducive to creating and sharing creative works of art, such as poetry. Collectively, we agree that our actions toward one another—both publicly and privately—and all original compositions we share will remain Safe, Accepting, Inclusive, and Dignified (S.A.I.D.).*

*Furthermore, we acknowledge it is our responsibility to speak upwards to designated persons of authority (and not outwards to other members) should any actions or creative works not align with the values of S.A.I.D., being ever conscientious of the betterment of all and harm to none. We understand that not adhering to this collective practice will result in consequences ranging from probation to expulsion from both in-person and online spaces, each committing to the following principle for the duration of our membership:*

***“If it is not S.A.I.D., say something.”***

## **Article II – Definitions**

**Active Member:** A member who participates in at least one in-person Composition Chrysalis gathering or event per calendar year. Online participation (such as virtual workshops or forums) is recognized and encouraged, but it is considered secondary; an in-person presence at least once annually is required to maintain active status. Active Members are the core of the community, consistently contributing and engaging with others.

**Inactive Member:** A member who has not participated in person for over a year. Inactive Members may still engage online and are welcome to return to in-person events at any time. However, prolonged absence from physical gatherings means they are not counted as active until they resume in-person participation. There are no penalties for being inactive; this status is simply used to understand community involvement levels.

**Membership:** The state of belonging to the Composition Chrysalis community. There are no formal dues, fees, or paperwork required to be a member—**participation is the defining criterion**. Membership is open to all individuals who write or appreciate creative writing and agree to uphold the values in this Agreement. All members, by participating, agree to abide by The Artists' Agreement and its policies (see Article III). “Membership” in this context implies both in-person and online community spaces provided by Composition Chrysalis.

**Safe:** Free from harm, threat, or danger. A *safe* environment means that members feel secure both physically and emotionally. This includes freedom from physical violence, intimidation, bullying, and any form of verbal or psychological abuse. Unsafe behavior, including actions causing harm to oneself or others, or creating an environment of fear, has no place in our community. We strive to ensure everyone can share their creative works and express themselves without fear of ridicule, harassment, or danger.

**Accepting:** Open and welcoming to people of all backgrounds, identities, and perspectives. An *accepting* community embraces differences and encourages members to be their authentic selves. Discrimination or judgment based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability, or any other personal characteristic is not tolerated. Being accepting also means giving each creative work and voice a fair and respectful hearing, even if it is different from one's own style or perspective.

**Inclusive:** Actively ensuring that *everyone* is included, valued, and able to participate fully. An *inclusive* environment means no one is deliberately left out or marginalized. All members have equal opportunity to share and participate in events or discussions. We recognize the importance of diverse voices and make efforts to accommodate different needs. This can include providing content warnings when appropriate, respecting personal boundaries, and being mindful of making venues and online spaces accessible to those with disabilities. Inclusivity is about fostering a sense of belonging for all members.

**Dignified:** Characterized by respect, honor, and courtesy towards one another. A *dignified* atmosphere means all individuals are treated as persons of worth. Even when offering critique or engaging in debate, members do so respectfully and constructively. Dignity involves refraining from belittling, shaming, or demeaning others. Each member's creative work is given thoughtful consideration, and feedback is offered in a manner that upholds the creator's dignity. We uphold each other's right to be treated with basic decency and respect at all times.

**Persons of Authority:** Individuals designated to have leadership and enforcement responsibilities within Composition Chrysalis. This includes, firstly, the sole proprietor of Composition Chrysalis, LLC (the founder/owner of the organization). Additionally, any event-partner business owners or managers present during official events are considered persons of authority for the duration of those events (since they have authority over their venue and a vested interest in a safe event). Persons of Authority are responsible for receiving reports of misconduct (see Article V), addressing concerns, and implementing the provisions of this Agreement. They are expected to act fairly and uphold S.A.I.D. values in all decisions.

**Trusted Third-Party Representatives:** On occasion, a Person of Authority may designate a trusted third-party (such as a host, co-host, or moderator) to assist in overseeing an event or mediating a conflict. These representatives are held to the same standards of confidentiality, neutrality, and commitment to this Agreement.

**Creative Works:** Any original content or artistic creations produced by members of Composition Chrysalis. This primarily refers to literary works (such as poems, short stories, scripts, essays, etc.), but can also include spoken word performances or other creative expressions shared within the community. Creative Works are the intellectual property of their creators (see Article III, Content and Media Clause) and are subject to community guidelines. Members are encouraged to share Creative Works that enrich the community and align with S.A.I.D. values. If a Creative Work contains graphic, sensitive, or potentially triggering content, creators are expected to provide appropriate content warnings as a courtesy to others.

**Written Works of Art:** A subset of Creative Works that refers specifically to original written literary pieces, such as poems, stories, prose, or any piece of writing intended as art. Composition Chrysalis is centered on such written works. All Written Works of Art shared in the community should reflect respect for the values of the group. While creative freedom is strongly supported, works that directly violate S.A.I.D. principles (for instance, a piece containing hate speech or personal attacks) may be subject to review by Persons of Authority.

**Compositions:** For the purposes of this Agreement, *compositions* refer to any pieces of creative writing or art that members create and share (essentially synonymous with Creative Works in our context). The term “Composition” highlights the act of creation, aligning with our organization’s name, Composition Chrysalis. Compositions can be written works of art, collaborative pieces, or other creative projects presented within the group. Members’ compositions are to be respected by others. Just as members must behave with respect, the content of what they share should not be used to harass or attack others. If a member’s composition is found to violate our guidelines (e.g., plagiarized material or harmful content), it may be withdrawn from group forums and could trigger consequences for the author similar to those for misconduct in actions.

**Probation:** A conditional membership status and disciplinary measure resulting from a serious violation or repeated violations of this Agreement. When a member is placed on *probation*, they are officially warned and may have certain restrictions on their participation. For example, a member on probation might be required to check in regularly with a Person of Authority, might be barred from attending certain events for a period, or might lose access to online forums temporarily. The specific terms of probation will be communicated in writing to the member. Probation is intended as an opportunity for the member to reflect, correct their behavior, and demonstrate a renewed commitment to S.A.I.D. values. Successful completion of a probation period (with no further incidents) allows the member to return to good standing.

**Expulsion:** The removal of an individual from the Composition Chrysalis community and a revocation of membership due to severe or repeated violations. An *expelled* member is barred from attending any in-person events and removed from all online spaces and forums of the group. Expulsion is considered a last resort, used in cases such as harassment that continues despite warnings, a single act of egregious misconduct, or any behavior that severely harms

another member or the community's integrity. Expulsion may be temporary or permanent depending on circumstances; however, permanent expulsion is the norm for violent, predatory, or seriously harmful behavior. An expelled individual may only be considered for re-entry into the community at the sole discretion of the Persons of Authority, and only if sufficient evidence of change or remediation is provided (see Article V on possible appeals or remediation).

## **Article III – Membership and Participation Terms**

**3.1 Participation Equals Agreement:** By participating in Composition Chrysalis in any capacity—whether attending an in-person event, workshop, meetup, or reading; or engaging in online discussions, groups, or forums—you are indicating your acceptance of The Artists' Agreement and all its terms. In other words, participation in our community constitutes a binding agreement to abide by the policies and values outlined here. Members are expected to have read and understood this Agreement. If anyone does not accept these terms, they should refrain from participating in Composition Chrysalis events or platforms.

**3.2 No Dues or Fees:** Composition Chrysalis is a community-driven organization. There are no membership dues or financial obligations required from members. All regular events and general participation are free of charge. (If occasional special workshops or events require a fee, those will be clearly noted, but such participation is optional.) The absence of dues underscores that membership is defined by engagement and commitment to our values, not by payment. This ensures our community remains accessible to all who share a passion for creative writing.

**3.3 Active Membership Status:** As defined in Article II, an Active Member is one who participates in at least one in-person gathering per year. We encourage regular involvement, as the more you participate, the more vibrant our creative community becomes. Online participation (via social media groups, online workshops, or virtual meetings) is certainly welcomed; however, online-only participants may be considered “inactive” for the purposes of headcounts or certain decision-making processes. There is no punishment or shame in being inactive. We understand life gets busy, still active participation helps keep our community S.A.I.D. (Safe, Accepting, Inclusive, Dignified) through the building of real, supportive relationships. Ergo, showing up, even occasionally, matters. If a year or more has passed without in-person involvement, we may reach out to check in, but you will always be welcomed back.

**3.4 Creative Ownership:** Members retain full ownership and copyright of their original creative works. Composition Chrysalis makes no claim of ownership over any poems, stories, compositions, or other creative works that you create. What you write and share is entirely yours. By sharing your work in this community, you are not giving up any intellectual property rights. If the organization wishes to feature a member's work in any publication, anthology, website, or promotional material beyond simply sharing event recaps or photos, it will be done with the

creator's permission. This clause ensures that artists can collaborate and share freely, knowing their creations remain their own.

**3.5 Media and Recording Consent:** Composition Chrysalis often documents its events with photographs or short video clips, in order to celebrate our community and promote future activities. We reserve the right to share group photos or general event footage on our website, social media, or newsletters, unless a participant explicitly opts out in writing. By attending our events, you acknowledge that your image might appear in such photos/videos. ***Participation implies permission for the use of images taken at events.*** If you prefer not to be photographed or recorded, that is absolutely respected: you can inform us in writing (an email or a signed note) or tell an event organizer, and we will make every effort to avoid capturing or using your image. Composition Chrysalis will never post identifying information (such as names or personal details) along with event photos without explicit consent. We do not provide any compensation for appearances in these materials, and we do not individually notify members if their image is used. These media are used solely to showcase the positive, creative atmosphere of our gatherings.

**3.6 Youth Participation:** Composition Chrysalis is primarily an adult community (ages 18 and over). Our events and content are geared toward adults, and we prioritize creating a space where adults can freely express themselves. Minors (under 18) are not regular members of the community; however, we recognize that young writers may be interested in participating. A minor may attend or participate only under special conditions: (1) Written Parental/Guardian Consent – a parent or legal guardian must provide written permission for the minor to attend specific event(s), and (2) Supervision – the minor must either be accompanied by that parent/guardian at the event or an adult chaperone designated in writing by the parent/guardian. In practice, this means a minor should come with a parent/guardian present, unless explicit arrangements have been made and approved by the Persons of Authority. We reserve the right to refuse the participation of minors in any event if we believe the content or environment is not suitable for them. This youth clause is in place to protect younger individuals and ensure that all members are comfortable. Adults in the group should also be mindful if a minor is present, but the responsibility for minors rests with their guardians. Composition Chrysalis and its event partners do not assume babysitting or caretaking duties. Any minor attending with permission is expected to abide by the same S.A.I.D. values, and their guardian is expected to ensure the minor understands and follows the community rules.

*(Note: Events specifically organized for youth, follow the same guidelines with consideration to the involvement of a consenting parent or guardian. Nevertheless, the above clause applies to general Composition Chrysalis events where the presence of minors is an exception rather than the norm.)*

## Article IV – Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Harassment Policy

*Composition Chrysalis is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for everyone, regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability, background, or creed.*

*All members, participants, guests, and Persons of Authority are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect and professionalism in their interactions.*

*We have a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or abusive conduct of any kind. This policy applies equally to all members and participants, including the leadership team and any event partners or venue hosts. No one has special exemptions from these standards.*

**4.1 Harassment Definition:** *Harassment* is generally defined as any behavior that alarms, threatens, demeans, or seriously discomforts another person. It can be *sexual, physical, verbal, emotional, or psychological*. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following —

- **Verbal or Written Harassment:** Offensive, derogatory, or unwelcome comments, slurs, or jokes targeting a person or group, especially those based on traits such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, appearance, or disability. This also covers insults, taunting, or threats of violence. (For example, belittling someone’s creative work with hateful language or using stereotypes in critique is not acceptable.)
- **Physical Harassment or Assault:** Any unwanted physical contact, violent or intimidating behavior. This ranges from unwelcome touching, grabbing, or shoving, to outright physical attacks. Even “playful” physical contact can be harassing if the other person does not welcome it. No one should ever be touched without consent.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include lewd or inappropriate comments about someone’s body, unwanted flirting after being told to stop, sexually suggestive touching, or exposing others to sexual content without consent. It also includes creating an environment that is sexually hostile or uncomfortable. This includes persistent sexual jokes or sharing explicit material that is not appropriate to the context. ***Any behavior of a sexual nature that makes another person feel unsafe or disrespected is prohibited and will result in immediate expulsion from the community.***
- **Bullying and Intimidation:** Deliberate behavior intended to belittle, humiliate, or frighten someone. This could be aggressive shouting at a member, using one’s influence to sabotage someone’s participation, or repeatedly singling someone out for harsh

criticism in a non-constructive way. Online bullying (such as disparaging someone in group chats individually or collaboratively) is equally unacceptable.

- **Stalking or Invasion of Privacy:** Following someone or contacting them incessantly against their wishes. This might include inappropriate private messages to another member, tracking someone’s whereabouts at events in a disturbing way, or leveraging personal information inappropriately. Everyone has the right to personal boundaries.
- **Disruptive Behavior:** Sustained interruption of events, talks, or readings; derailing group discussions with aggressive or off-topic interjections; or behaving in a manner that significantly detracts from the positive experience of others. While we encourage open dialogue, repeatedly disrupting others’ opportunities to speak or perform crosses into harassing behavior.
- **Other Unacceptable Behaviors:** Encouraging or advocating any of the above actions is also a violation. Additionally, retaliating against anyone who reports a concern (discussed below) is strictly prohibited and considered a serious form of misconduct on its own.

All members are expected to immediately cease any behavior if someone indicates that it is unwelcome or makes them uncomfortable. If you are told “no,” or “please stop,” or otherwise warned that your words or actions are crossing a line—you must stop immediately. Continuing such behavior after a clear warning is a blatant violation of this Agreement. In short: Consent and respect are paramount.

It is important to note that *harassment can be contextual*. An action that might be acceptable in a different setting could be harassing in our community context if it violates S.A.I.D. values or targets someone in a harmful way. Jokes or creative works that *punch down* (i.e. ridicule or marginalize a vulnerable group) are not in the spirit of our community. Constructive critique of writing is welcome, but personal attacks are not. Each member is responsible for understanding the difference.

**4.2 Safe Creative Space:** Our zero tolerance policy extends to the content of creative works shared within Composition Chrysalis. While we do not censor art, we do hold that creative expression must not be used as a cover for harassment or hate. For example, sharing a poem that explicitly insults another member, or a story that propagates hate speech against a real-world group, would be a violation. If a Creative Work contains potentially offensive or triggering material (violence, abuse, extreme profanity, etc.), authors are expected to use discretion and offer a content warning to maintain a safe and dignified space for all. The Persons of Authority reserve the right to intervene if a composition shared publicly in the group is egregiously outside the bounds of our community standards. This might include asking the author to pause and discuss the content privately, or in extreme cases, ending the reading/sharing of that piece. Such

interventions would be handled sensitively, focusing on education and alignment with S.A.I.D. values rather than censorship of ideas. We simply ask that all creative contributions are made in the spirit of mutual respect.

## **Article V – Reporting, Confidentiality, and Disciplinary Procedure**

*Even in a community built on trust and respect, conflicts or violations may occur. Composition Chrysalis takes any reports of harassment or misconduct very seriously. This section outlines what to do if an issue arises and how it will be handled, in a fair and confidential manner.*

**5.1 Reporting an Incident:** If you experience or witness behavior that you believe violates this Agreement or the S.A.I.D. values, please report it as soon as possible to a Person of Authority. You can report issues directly to the sole proprietor (the organizer) or to an event host/partner present. We offer multiple channels for reporting: in person (by pulling aside an organizer privately), via email or messaging (if after the fact or if you feel more comfortable writing it out), or through a designated anonymous form if one has been provided. When reporting, provide as much detail as you feel comfortable sharing—what happened, when and where, who was involved, and any witnesses. All reports will be handled with care and discretion. We understand it can be difficult to come forward, but know that our community cannot address what it is not aware of. Even if something seems minor, if it *bothers you and violates S.A.I.D.*, we want to know. There will be absolutely no retaliation permitted against anyone who in good faith reports a concern or participates in an investigation. Retaliation itself is a violation of this Agreement, equal in seriousness to the original misconduct.

If the person you need to report is themselves a Person of Authority (for example, if an event host or the organizer is the one behaving inappropriately), you should report to an alternate authority. In such cases, if available, you might approach a different event partner or a trusted third-party representative. We are committed to ensuring that no one is above the rules—even leadership. In the unlikely event that an incident involves the highest level of leadership with no alternate internal avenue, members may consider seeking an external mediator or legal authority as appropriate. However, we hope and expect that our leadership will model the best behavior.

**5.2 Confidentiality:** When a report is made, Composition Chrysalis will make every reasonable effort to protect the privacy of all individuals involved. This means that details of the incident and the identities of the people reporting or affected will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Typically, this might involve the Persons of Authority and, if needed, a trusted third-party advisor for guidance. Complete secrecy cannot be guaranteed. For instance, if an investigation leads to disciplinary action, the person being accused will need to know the nature of the allegations in order to respond. However, information will not be spread beyond those necessary to resolve the issue. We ask that all parties involved also refrain from gossip or public discussion of the matter, out of respect for everyone’s dignity. Confidentiality protects both the person who

came forward and the person accused until things are fully resolved. Our aim is to handle matters discreetly, minimizing embarrassment or reputational harm while we determine facts and appropriate action.

**5.3 Investigation and Interim Measures:** Upon receiving a report, the Persons of Authority will promptly initiate an inquiry into the matter. This may involve speaking separately with the person who made the report, the individual(s) accused of misconduct, and any witnesses who might have information. Investigations will be conducted as swiftly as possible, while ensuring thoroughness and fairness. During this process, interim measures may be taken for safety. For example, a member accused of serious harassment might be asked not to attend events until the investigation is concluded, or specific individuals could be temporarily separated in online forums. These measures are not a presumption of guilt; they are precautionary to ensure that the community remains safe while fact-finding is underway.

The investigation will seek to gather facts and understand context. Both the complainant and the respondent (the accused individual) will have the opportunity to share their perspective. We approach this with an open mind, knowing that misunderstandings can occur—but also with a firm stance that if a violation is substantiated, action will be taken. Evidence such as messages, emails, or recordings (if any) may be reviewed if relevant. Throughout, the focus is on truth, fairness, and restoring a safe, respectful environment.

**5.4 Resolution – Mediation and Remediation:** Not every incident requires a punitive outcome. In some cases, conflicts or minor issues can be resolved through mediation, a facilitated conversation between the parties involved, overseen by a neutral third party (which could be a Person of Authority or an agreed-upon mediator). Mediation is appropriate, for instance, when two members have a personal disagreement or misunderstanding that escalated, but both are willing to work it out. The goal is to restore goodwill and clarity about expected behavior going forward. Mediation discussions remain private, and any agreements (for example, an apology or a commitment to certain boundaries) will be documented.

In cases where a violation did occur, remediation steps might be offered or required in addition to or in lieu of discipline. Remediation could include actions like: the offending member issuing a sincere apology to affected parties; attending a relevant workshop or counseling (for example, on harassment awareness or anger management) if such resources are available; or performing a service to the community (if appropriate) to rebuild trust. The intention is to educate and rehabilitate rather than simply punish, whenever possible. However, remediation is not a substitute for consequences in serious cases, it is usually complementary. For example, someone might be put on probation (consequence) and as a remedial step be asked to write a letter of apology or participate in a community-building activity with all persons affected.

**5.5 Disciplinary Actions (Two-Strike System with Probation and Mediation):** Composition Chrysalis operates primarily under a **two-strike disciplinary action policy**, with a focus on

reflection, mediated resolution, and community restoration. However, depending on severity, the sole proprietor reserves the right to enact immediate and customized consequences, including expulsion, when necessary. Below are the typical stages:

- **First Offense – Immediate Online Removal & In-Person Probation:** Upon a confirmed first offense, the member will be **automatically removed from one or all online spaces** of Composition Chrysalis. However, the member will be permitted to attend **at least one in-person event within a 30-day probationary period**, which will be designated at the sole discretion of the proprietor. During this probationary event, the member’s participation may be observed, and they are expected to demonstrate conduct in full alignment with S.A.I.D. values.
- **Mediated Conversation:** Following this 30-day period, the member is **encouraged to schedule a mediated conversation** with the proprietor and a designated Person of Authority. This conversation is intended to offer reflection, mutual understanding, and reaffirmation of shared values. If this conversation is completed in good faith, the member will be permitted to **return to full in-person event participation** in the community, though removal from any or all online spaces remains final unless otherwise noted within the context of the mediated conversation.
- **Second Offense – Expulsion:** Should any additional reports surface, or if problematic behavior continues after reinstatement, the member may be subject to **expulsion from all community happenings entirely**, including online forums, in-person events, and affiliated workshops. Expulsion will be enacted at the discretion of the proprietor, following a review of the circumstances and in consideration of community safety and values.

**Special Circumstances and Proprietor Authority:** While the above steps serve as the standard process, **the sole proprietor of Composition Chrysalis retains the right to determine disciplinary outcomes on a case-by-case basis.** This includes enacting stricter or more lenient measures based on the severity, context, and impact of the behavior. Situations may arise that require **disciplinary responses not explicitly listed in this Agreement**, and the proprietor is empowered to act in alignment with the safety, dignity, and well-being of the community.

In all stages above, the person subject to discipline will have an opportunity to be heard and to present their side of the story before final decisions are made (**except** in urgent situations requiring immediate action, in which case later opportunity may be provided, at the discretion of the sole proprietor).

***Our aim is to be fair, transparent, and consistent in enforcement.***

**5.6 Appeals:** If a member believes a disciplinary decision (warning, probation, or expulsion) was unjust or based on incomplete information, they may submit an appeal. An appeal should be made in writing to a Person of Authority not directly involved in the incident (if available) or to

the community's leadership as a whole. The appeal must clearly state why the decision should be reconsidered and can include any new evidence or context. Appeals will be reviewed by at least two Persons of Authority or an appointed committee to ensure objectivity. They may uphold the decision, modify it, or overturn it, depending on the findings. Only one appeal per case is permitted, and during the appeal review, the original disciplinary status remains in effect. The outcome of an appeal is final. The appeal process is there to ensure that discipline is not only fair but seen to be fair by all parties.

**5.7 Law Enforcement and Legal Action:** While we hope to resolve issues internally, certain behaviors (for example, physical assault, stalking, or other unlawful activities) may also warrant involvement of law enforcement. The zero tolerance policy means that if a situation is dangerous or criminal, we will not hesitate to contact the police or appropriate authorities to ensure the safety of our members. If any member feels threatened or in immediate danger, they are urged to call 911 (or local emergency number) first and inform an organizer as soon as is safely possible. Composition Chrysalis will cooperate with law enforcement investigations as required. Separately, the organization reserves the right to pursue legal action (such as trespassing bans or restraining orders) against individuals who violate laws or pose continuing threats to the community, independent of this Agreement's procedures.

## Article VI – Amendments

**This Agreement is a living document.** Composition Chrysalis reserves the right to amend this Artists' Agreement at any time. As our community grows and evolves, new situations may arise or new ideas may surface that require updates to our policies. When changes are made, we will inform all members through official channels (such as email or an announcement at events and on our online group). Whenever possible, we will also invite feedback from the community on major changes, in the collaborative spirit of our group, but final decisions on policy rest with the leadership of Composition Chrysalis (the Persons of Authority). Once an amendment is adopted and communicated, continued participation in the community will constitute acceptance of the revised terms. We encourage members to periodically review the Agreement, and we will always keep the latest version available (e.g., on our website or as a document link in our online forum). Commitment to S.A.I.D. is an ongoing journey, and this Agreement may grow over time, always in service of a safer, more inclusive, and supportive creative space.

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***This Artists' Agreement has been accepted by all members of Composition Chrysalis as a condition of participation. It is effective as of August 1st, 2025, and reviewed yearly.***

***For the continued safety of all its members, by participating in any Composition Chrysalis event or forum after this date, you are agreeing to the above terms.***