

## JEF Europe Code of Conduct

- ❖ Noting the increased professionalisation of the network's activities;
- ❖ Affirming that a Code of Conduct is to contain a set of principles and values, as well as rules and procedures regarding participants' behaviour and treatment of others, and contributes to the safety and inclusion of all involved;
- ❖ Acknowledging that discrimination, harassment and violence are still very present in our society and that JEF is not immune to those kinds of behaviours;
- ❖ Considering the diversity represented by or embodied by JEF's members (JEFers);
- ❖ Aiming for an ever more safe, inclusive, diverse, and equal participation and working environment across JEF Europe activities; and
- ❖ Underlining JEF Europe's zero-tolerance policy towards any kind of discrimination or threatening behaviour, and recognising the need for action to ensure this policy is implemented.

JEF Europe,

- ❖ Adopts the following text as its Code of Conduct, applicable, as explained, in all activities of JEF Europe, whether official or unofficial.

## **1. Introduction**

JEF Europe is committed to maintaining and further developing a culture based on mutual respect, human dignity, safety, and equality as preconditions to ensure full access and active participation, reflecting the right to an empowering space for safe and inclusive participation in its activities.

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that every individual feels safe, heard, included, and respected in JEF Europe; that every individual has the means to actively participate in JEF; and that JEF as an organization continuously strives for further inclusiveness, diversity, and safety in all its activities.

The Code outlines the social and ethical responsibilities of individuals and groups, and binds JEF Europe to implement the Code. The Code comprises a set of substantive and procedural rules, such as the use of contact persons, to ensure safe participation and an empowering space, inclusion, equity, and respect of all individuals involved with JEF activities.

## **2. To whom this Code applies**

This document binds everyone involved in JEF Europe activities, throughout its formal and informal activities, during the activities referred to in Section 3 of the Code. People fulfilling an elected role in the organisation, facilitators of activities and staff play a significant role in upholding the Code of Conduct and should be especially mindful of their role in creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

National, regional and local sections of JEF Europe are expected to apply specific Code of Conduct documents for their own events and operations in general. In any case, the minimum protections, responsibilities and principles outlined in this document are expected to be fulfilled in any activity organized by the membership of JEF Europe as a network organisation.

When registering for or participating in a JEF event, each participant accepts and commits to these rules by default.

JEF Europe requires that the behaviour of an individual participating in any offline or online activity of JEF Europe, or representing the organization externally, must be consistent with and follow these rules.

All participants in JEF activities are encouraged to step in or support others when witnessing challenging situations or problematic behaviour, including but not limited to, reporting.

As a participant in JEF Europe activities, you are expected to understand and follow the Code, as well as your obligations under the law applicable wherever you are. JEF Europe recognises that its network is conducting activities that also involve the participation of minors on occasion. The Protection Guidelines for Minors of JEF Europe<sup>1</sup> detail the additional safeguarding measures to be applied in case of the participation of minors.

If you are ever in doubt about how to follow the rules set in the Code of Conduct, you are encouraged to ask for guidance from any of the Contact Persons (as defined in Section 8).

### **3. Where and when this Code applies**

The Code of Conduct applies during both online and offline activities of JEF Europe, in both formal and informal settings. The Code applies also between JEF Europe events, including in all communication channels affiliated with JEF Europe as well as in communications with the staff of the JEF Europe Secretariat.

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<sup>1</sup> The Protection Guidelines for Minors of JEF Europe, 2023, available on the internal area of JEF Europe website, [www.https://jef.eu/member-login/](https://jef.eu/member-login/)

This Code may apply or act as a guide, at the discretion of the organisers, within events hosted by more than one JEF section where no similar document has been adopted. When collaborating with other organisations with their Codes of Conduct or comparable documents, the organising parties will decide which document shall apply but the JEF party involved needs to ensure that the minimum standards set in this document are a reality also in the given collaboration.

A formal setting shall be understood as including any part of the working programme of an event, Task Force or Political Commission meetings, and statutory bodies' meetings.

Informal settings shall be understood as including any activities happening in connection to a formal meeting or any other JEF Europe event, or other informal get-together clearly linked to JEF Europe activities. Activities surrounding the working programme, including, but not limited to, social events and online communication, shall be considered as informal settings.

#### **4. On making assumptions**

JEF Europe is an inclusive and empowering space for young people from all walks of life, committed to actively engage in the pursuit of a free and united Europe. As such, JEFers and participants in JEF activities are encouraged to work on overcoming their prejudices and unconscious biases, which are socially inherited and the root of systemic discrimination.

Accordingly, JEFers and participants in JEF activities should consistently strive not to:

1. make assumptions about a person, their background or opinion based on their skin colour, other external features, or the way they speak;
2. assume another person's religious or political affiliation or non-affiliation, other convictions, or beliefs;

3. assume a person's gender identity or sexual orientation;
4. assume someone's ability to do the same things as someone else;
5. assume everyone to be in good health, physical or otherwise.

## **5. On acting in accordance with the Code of Conduct**

The following rules shall be interpreted broadly to include any conduct considered inappropriate and inconsistent with the ideals of JEF Europe as expressed in the Statutes. Any breach of these rules shall lead to action as defined in the procedures in section 7.

Participants in JEF activities commit to adopt and promote appropriate behavior, which includes:

- A. respecting others and not denigrating or undermining them;
- B. not discriminating on the basis of any personal characteristics, physical or otherwise;
- C. respecting another person's turn to speak;
- D. discussing sensitive topics in a respectful manner, and remembering that they may be personal to others;
- E. creating an environment where it is easy for anyone to speak up and express their opinion;
- F. supporting and enabling the participation and inclusion of others, for example by explaining abbreviations, terms, and difficult concepts;
- G. avoiding commenting on another person's looks in a way that makes them uncomfortable or objectifies them;
- H. not using language that emphasises the thought that basic health and ability is expected;
- I. not judging or commenting negatively on another person's culture;
- J. not feeding racist stereotypes in their speech, actions, or behaviour, even as a joke or ironically;

- K. not physically touching others without consent and respecting their personal space;
- L. not peer pressuring others in taking part in voluntary activities which may make them feel uncomfortable or do something they may not feel comfortable to do;
- M. not bullying, making fun of or putting down others, or laughing at others' mistakes unless laughing together with them;
- N. not in any way harass or abuse fellow JEFers and participants in JEF activities.

## **6. On consent**

It is necessary for the parties involved to be familiar with the concept of consent and sexual and emotional harassment.

Consent is the agreement between participants to engage in activities together, including but not limited to, sexual activities. Consent is not always given or denied through verbal confirmation. Non-verbal communication and body language play important roles in understanding whether there is consent or not. It is good to ask for verbal confirmation and be sure there is consent from all the parties involved. If the situation is not clear, due to different personal boundaries and personalities, the activity should stop. Consent is not static and can be withdrawn at any stage of the activity. If at any moment the consent ceases to exist, the activity must stop, or it will be considered and treated as harassment.

Consent cannot be given by individuals who are intoxicated or incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, or asleep or unconscious, or for another reason under unequal physical or mental decision-making capacity. If someone agrees to an activity under pressure of intimidation or threat, that is not considered consent because it was not given freely.

## **7. On power relations**

As a member of any statutory body of JEF Europe (Executive Board, Federal Committee, Arbitration Board, Auditors Committee), as Permanent Contact Persons,

as members of the European Secretariat and as Pool of Trainers members or facilitators of JEF Europe activities, one possesses a power position in the organisation and therefore a special position of trust.

This implies that the words one speaks, the actions you take and the environment you create around yourself can often carry a bigger weight and potential pressure than other members of the group might have. Anyone who fulfils elected, appointed or professional positions in the organisation has to therefore pay extra attention to how they behave in the organisation.

In their activities, a person holding an elected role needs to ensure that they are always fostering a fair and safe environment for all; that they are not initiating or engaging in any personal relations or intimate interaction that has the chance of lacking consent or being a result of pressure.

Anyone in these positions should practise regular self-reflection and check-in with their environment and be open to feedback on their behaviour. Being a member of any of these groups does not remove any responsibilities under the Code of Conduct from the person.

## **8. On relations and cooperation with the Secretariat**

JEF Europe is in a privileged position to currently be able to employ paid professional staff supporting its day-to-day work. The Secretariat of JEF works with set working hours ranging between 9.00-18.30 CET/CEST, which need to be respected when conducting communications. Meetings outside of these hours are exceptionally organised upon previous agreements.

The Secretariat should not be contacted via their personal phone number or other contact (e.g. social media) for work related purposes.

The relationship between sections and Secretariat should be one based on mutual respect and trust.

In case of issues with the relationship between sections and the Secretariat, the Secretary General and the Executive Board are meant to take care of the situation. If the situation cannot be resolved by the leadership of the organisation, the Permanent Contact Persons can be contacted for further procedure.

## **9. Reporting**

The Code of Conduct applies to every member of JEF Europe and every participant in a JEF activity, no matter their role in the organisation. If you observe or experience behaviour that concerns you, or that may represent a violation of our Code, please raise the issue with one of the Contact Persons promptly, provided you feel comfortable doing so. You can choose to do this anonymously or together with someone you trust. This will allow JEF Europe an opportunity to deal with the issue and correct it, ideally before it becomes a violation of law or a risk to health or security.

Situations can be reported to the contact persons of the event up to two weeks after the event and the anonymous form will stay open for two weeks after the event. After this, the permanent contact persons can be contacted.

Inappropriate or unwanted behaviour or action can be reported through:

- a) One or more of the Contact Persons presented at the beginning of the activity, in person or online
- b) A Code of conduct form that can be used to report anonymously;
- c) Other means mentioned in the beginning of the event or activity.



## **10. Procedure in case of inappropriate behaviour**

In case of any breach from the Code of Conduct, the dedicated contact persons at the event or activity are required to, on their best judgement and with the consent of the person affected by the conduct, in successive order and depending on the severity of the action:

- A. Remind participants of their obligation to act in accordance with the present Code of Conduct and give them advice on how to do so;
- B. b. Engage in a one to one conversation with the person in breach of the Code to make sure that there is a mutual understanding of the nature of the inappropriate action, including clarifying and explaining possible misunderstandings and intercultural differences;
- C. Inform, only when necessary, the other organisers of the event or the meeting chairs about the problematic behaviour or the violation of the Code;
- D. Facilitate a structured conversation between parties to resolve the situation, should the affected party in the situation consent to such conversation;
- E. In consultation with the organising team and the facilitators of the activity, suspend the session and/or ban the person in breach of the Code from attending the remainder of the event or activity;
- F. In consultation with the organising team and the facilitators of the activity and the Arbitration Board, the Executive Board may impose sanctions up to and including restrict or ban participation in future JEF Europe activities.

In the case of violent or other potentially illegal behaviour, contact the police in consultation with the person affected in accordance with the national law.

The Executive Board in consultation with organisers and contact persons of the event may decide to suspend or permanently ban the attendance of the person in breach of the Code from future JEF events or activities. The decision shall be taken within a month after the report is received.

In situations where the person reporting is known, they should be communicated with as soon as practical about reception of their report. In any case, the action agreed on by the contact persons and the person reporting should be taken as soon as possible and when possible, during the event. The case is closed when all of the agreed on steps have been taken to resolve the situation and all the parties involved in the report have been made aware of the steps taken and of the closure.

When applicable and the reporting person is known, the Contact Persons may encourage them to seek professional advice or help.

## **11. Obligations of JEF Europe, organisers and facilitators of JEF Europe activities**

### **Presenting the Code of Conduct**

- A. The Code shall be circulated ahead of and presented in at length the beginning of every JEF Europe event and activity where the Code applies, especially during the first day when it may be presented multiple times a day, and more briefly at least every other day in multiple day events or activities;
- B. The Code shall be introduced using the Code of Conduct presentation;
- C. The presentation of the Code of Conduct shall:
  - a. ensure that participants understand its content and obligations;
  - b. be appropriate to the purpose of the document;
  - c. keep in mind the type and duration of the event.
  - d. The Code shall be presented by one of the organisers, facilitators, or the Contact Persons, and the means to report to the Contact Persons shall be presented at the same time; and
  - e. The Code shall be accessible for reference throughout the event or activity.

## **Permanent Contact Persons**

- A. Permanent Contact Persons are dedicated to ensuring safety and feeling of safety across the association and can be contacted online at anytime;
- B. At least two (2) Contact Persons shall be elected by the upcoming Federal Committee and have a two-year mandate;
- C. The Permanent Contact Persons shall represent different gender identities;
- D. The Permanent Contact Persons shall be familiar with the Code of Conduct and charged to interpret and act in accordance;
- E. In case the Permanent Contact Person is unable to continue in the role or resigns, a new Permanent Contact person shall be elected by the Federal Committee for the remainder of the term.

## **Contact persons**

- A. Contact Persons are dedicated to ensuring safety and feeling of safety and being available for participants in person and online;
- B. At least two (2) Contact Persons shall be appointed by the organisers for every event and activity of JEF Europe ;
- C. For online meetings of task forces, political committees and other similar groups, the chair(s) act as contact persons.
- D. The Contact Persons shall be selected so that they are available throughout the event or activity and they cannot hold a position of President, Vice President or a Member of FC Presidium.
- E. The organising team of an event where this Code of Conduct applies must ensure that there are Contact Persons who represent different gender identities;
  - a. In exceptional cases when people of multiple gender are not directly available e.g. in the organising team, contact person can be one of the participants in the event or one of the permanent contact persons can assist remotely. If there is a contact person assisting remotely, there shall be two contact persons on site.

- F. The Contact Persons shall be trained by persons familiar with the Code of Conduct in interpreting and acting in accordance with it, as well as in facilitating the follow-up of a breach;
- G. The Contact Persons shall be appointed and trained ahead of the event or activity in question;
- H. If you do not feel comfortable reporting to the Contact Person, if you do not feel your rights have been ensured, or if you have any complaints, please contact one of the Permanent Contact Persons;
- I. When multiple organisations are collaborating in organisation of an event or other activity covered by this Code, the Contact Persons should represent multiple organising parties.

### **Code of Conduct form**

- A. A specific form is made for each individual event or activity and is only accessible by the Contact Persons and shall be monitored by the Contact Persons actively at all times;
- B. The event or activity specific form shall be monitored by the Contact Persons for two (2) weeks after the event or activity that is intended for;
- C. The form shall provide the possibility to state what happened and what they wish that the next steps are;
- D. The form shall have the possibility to provide one's contact details or opt for anonymity;
- E. There shall be a permanent form available on JEF website through which the Permanent Contact Persons can be contacted anonymously.

## **12. Legal steps**

JEF Europe representatives and all participants at JEF Europe events and activities are subject to the local laws. They are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct as well as all applicable laws, rules and regulations. In a case where the provision of the Code of Conduct should conflict with applicable law, the law prevails.

In the case of violent or discriminatory behaviour, conduct or discourse that is physical in nature, the Contact Person has an obligation to contact the police authority if mandated and possible according to the laws of the country. These measures do not interfere with the affected person's or group's legal rights to bring legal action against the person in breach of the law.

### **13. Privacy**

To protect the privacy of all parties concerned, the Contact Persons and other persons involved in the process are bound to silence and discretion about any facts they come to know during the reporting process, except if any legal procedure requires it or for the safety of the individual.

The Contact Persons and other persons involved in the process shall not disclose the identities of the parties concerned without their prior consent.

Any written material that contains information about the incident, the people involved, or the process should not be stored longer than the purpose and time of solving the issue of the case, and shall be deleted from all devices, databases, and other locations at the moment of closing the case.

In the cases where the Executive Board may decide to ban or suspend someone from attending further JEF events, the decision may be reflected in the minutes of that meeting in a way so as to guarantee the anonymity of the persons involved in that Code of Conduct breach.