

# Code of Conduct for AEC events

One of the three pillars of AEC's mission at the time this document was first developed was **promoting participation, inclusiveness, and diversity**. AEC has always been strongly committed to fostering the diversity of approaches in Higher Music Education (HME) by encouraging its member institutions to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or other opinions, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

This includes shaping and implementing fair, inclusive, diverse, and gender-equal frameworks in HME institutions, and empowering them to address issues related to power dynamics. Under the current AEC Strategy 2030, these principles continue to guide our work in diversity, equity and inclusion.<sup>1</sup>

## Part 1: Introduction

The Code of Conduct was developed within the frame of the [AEC - Empowering Artists as Makers in Society](#) project (ARTEMIS, 2022-2025), co-funded by the European Union, through the [Gender Equality and Non-discrimination Mainstreaming Task Force \(TF3\)](#). Over the past years, the document was regularly complemented by insights and contributions collected from AEC member institutions. In particular, participants attending AEC events were encouraged to comment on the Code of Conduct, share their feedback, and point out any behaviour that did not comply with the document in *Safe Space* sessions, which continues to be scheduled at all AEC events.

The Code of Conduct has now been **finalised**. While it is not subject to formal review, participants attending AEC events are still encouraged to share feedback or raise concerns in the *Safe Space* discussion groups, facilitated by members of the [AEC DEI Allies network](#). Comments shared in these sessions may inform future adjustments to the Code. Participants are invited to send contributions, comments, or concerns to the facilitators at [moderator@aec-music.eu](mailto:moderator@aec-music.eu).

## Part 2: Standard of conduct

AEC events aim to provide a safe, welcoming, accessible, and inclusive space for learning and sharing, guided by the values of diversity, inclusion, gender equality, and non-discrimination. These values can only thrive in an environment free from harassment, sexual harassment, and discriminatory behaviour.

All in-person and online participants, as well as those involved in organising AEC events, are expected to comply immediately with any request to cease behaviour that violates this Code. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour may result in removal from the event or its online spaces.

### 1. Encouraged behaviour

- a) Be polite and courteous, respecting colleagues, students, speakers, moderators, organisers, local staff, and AEC office members;
- b) Be respectful, inclusive and accepting of others. Actively seek to challenge your personal biases, assumptions and preconceived stereotypes;
- c) Be conscious of how your words and actions might harm others (even unintentionally). Be open to feedback on how to be more inclusive;
- d) Be aware of privilege and power dynamics. Consider stepping back to leave more space for others to ask questions, talk and comment. If you share other's work or ideas, give credit where it is due;

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<sup>1</sup> [AEC Strategy 2030](#).

- e) Be considerate of privacy and personal boundaries. Give others a chance to opt-in to personal interactions, and respect limits when they are set;
- f) Be constructive in offering and accepting criticism. Consider “calling in” rather than “calling out,” and direct critiques toward ideas rather than people;
- g) Be honest and provide your true professional identity and affiliation at registration, and throughout sessions and networking activities, both in-person and online;
- h) Be accountable: when organisers, participants or others fail to meet these guidelines, work together to identify problems and adjust policies and practices;
- i) Be respectful towards health and safety protocols in place by the hosting institution, and understand why they are required.

## 2. Unaccepted behaviour

- a) Discrimination, including unfavourable or different treatment to others because of any aspect of their identity, appearance, or professional affiliation;
- b) Harassment and harassing behaviour, including bullying, insulting remarks, misplaced jokes, threats, and unwanted attention;<sup>2</sup>
- c) Sexual harassment, including use of images and jokes of a sexual or gendered nature, or any unwelcome contact of a sexual nature in any medium;
- d) Unwanted sexual comments and attention, including including verbal and non-verbal, inappropriate advances or physical contact (no touching without consent);
- e) Displaying sexually explicit or violent material, including in presented materials (e.g., slides, presentations, talks) or in informal settings or on personal devices;
- f) Language that implies exclusion or derogation of a person on the basis of their immutable characteristics;<sup>3</sup>
- g) Abuse of (position of) power is not tolerated.

## 3. What can we do?

It is important for us all to feel safe in discussing behaviour that breaches the above standards at a professional and informal level. To encourage this openness and learning, AEC encourages:

- i) Letting someone know if you have directly experienced or observed behaviour on their part which falls short of the encouraged behaviour outlined above;
- ii) Listening to feedback in a positive way if someone approaches you with concerns about your behaviour.

If you are subject to or witness unacceptable behaviour, or have any other concerns, please notify the AEC Office at [moderator@aec-music.eu](mailto:moderator@aec-music.eu), or enquire at the registration desk. The organisers will work with the person engaging in the unacceptable behaviour to either correct the situation or end their participation in the event.

Anyone not meeting expected, collaborative, respectful behaviour can be immediately removed from the current online or in-person event, and may be banned from future AEC meetings. Further sanctions, depending on the specifics of the unwelcomed disruptive behaviour, may apply.

If you feel you have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating this Code of Conduct, you should notify conference organisers with a concise description.

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: verbal comments related to gender, geographical origin, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religious and political beliefs.

<sup>3</sup> For example, asking a participant where they are “really from”; assuming a person’s partner is of the opposite gender; deliberately using the wrong pronoun to refer to an individual.