



Association of Applied Biologists Code of Conduct

Updated March 2026

The Association of Applied Biologists (AAB) supports open scientific discussion and free speech in the expression of scientific opinions. However, we expect all parties engaging with the activities of the AAB to treat colleagues with respect.

This code of conduct and policy on conference behaviour applies to all trustees, employees, members, and event attendees of the AAB events. We also expect anyone who is using a social media platform to communicate about or on behalf of the AAB to adhere to this policy.

Core Values

- All AAB trustees, employees, members, event attendees and other stakeholders are essential in promoting the success of the Association and for being an advocate for the importance of applied biology.
- Individuals and groups should always conduct themselves in a professional and respectful way, ensuring that both their behaviour and science is performed in an ethical and inclusive manner.
- If commenting on matters publicly, ensure that it is clear when the AAB is being represented or when the comments are personal opinion alone.
- Individuals and groups should foster an inclusive environment within the Association, at all times refraining from actions or statements towards members, prospective members, staff and trustees that might be construed as discrimination on the basis of their gender, sex, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, religious or political beliefs, marital status, family circumstances or socio-economic status and also from discrimination based upon other features such as physical appearance and level of intellectual/professional achievement.

If you see evidence of any deviation from these Core Values then please report this to the AAB Executive Officer (geraint@aab.org.uk, +44 (0)7411967414).

The Executive Officer will contact the offender, outlining the nature of the complaint and ask for a response.

The EO will then discuss this response with AAB Council who together will decide on a course of action.



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The course of action might involve but not limited to asking the offender to publicly apologise for their actions, inability to attend AAB events or remove AAB membership for the decided time period (which would include a total ban).

AAB staff and Council will respond to any relevant individual or to the entire community to address the particular issue.

Code of Conduct at AAB-organised events

The AAB and the organisers of all our events are committed to ensuring that our conferences are a welcoming and inclusive space for sharing of ideas, knowledge exchange and for developing collaborative opportunities for everyone who attends.

To this end, AAB events will provide a safe and productive environment that promotes equal opportunity and treatment for all participants and that is free of harassment and discrimination.

This code of conduct applies to all registered attendees, speakers, exhibitors, staff, contractors, volunteers, and guests; and it applies both within conference venues and in associated events and locations where AAB conference delegates are present.

Harassment

What is Harassment?

All forms of harassment, physical, mental, or otherwise and intimidation are prohibited. This refers to both in-person and online participants. Among the behaviours that will not be tolerated are the following:

- Speech that is not welcome or that is personally offensive, whether it is based on ethnicity, race, gender, age, body size, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other reason unrelated to scientific merit. Any scientific disagreements must be conducted in a calm, respectful manner.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome attention.

Behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so we ask that you use discretion to be sure that respect is communicated. Harassment intended in a joking manner nevertheless constitutes unacceptable behaviour.

Retaliation for reporting harassment is also a violation of this policy, as is reporting an incident in bad faith.

Reporting Harassment

Any harassment, whether experienced directly or witnessed, should be reported promptly to any AAB member of staff who is attending the event.

If the situation feels or seems imminently unsafe, please approach a member of the venue security team either in person or using a venue phone. All complaints will be taken seriously and responded to as promptly as possible by AAB staff.

Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others.

What We Will Do

Once we have received a harassment complaint, AAB staff will promptly:

- Meet privately with the complainant to discuss the details of the situation they encountered. This initial meeting will determine whether additional action is required.
 - Meet with the alleged offender, outlining the nature of the complaint and asking for a response.
 - Members of the AAB staff will contact the AAB Executive Officer (if appropriate) and together they will decide upon the course of action.
 - Consult with both complainant and alleged offender before taking any action.
 - If appropriate inform the appropriate authorities and take legal counsel
- The organisers of AAB events reserve the right to remove an individual from the conference without warning or refund, prohibit attendance at future conferences, and notify the individual's employer.

If you do not wish or feel you cannot report to staff at the event, you can send a confidential email to AAB Executive Officer Dr Geraint Parry (geraint@aab.org.uk). All emails will be responded to as a matter of priority.

Video/Photography of oral or poster presentations

An important aspect of all AAB events is to promote a supportive atmosphere in which delegates can present their unpublished findings without fear of the inappropriate sharing of the experimental details of their work.

- We encourage delegates to report and describe conference findings using Bluesky, Instagram, WeChat or other forms of social media using a #hashtag suggested by the conference organisers.
- The sharing over social media of unpublished data slides or images that are



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presented in talks or posters is prohibited unless following the express permission of the presenter.

- If you are uncertain as to whether presented data is unpublished do not share it until you have verified this with the presenter.
- If you are uncomfortable with the inappropriate sharing of unpublished data then please inform the AAB staff who will approach the person who has shared the information, asking them to remove the posts and desist from this type of activity.
- If you are uncomfortable with other delegates taking pictures of your slides or poster then the organisers support your right to ask them to stop either directly during your presentation or at other times during the conference. Please contact AAB staff if you would like them to approach another delegate on your behalf.
- If this type of activity persists then AAB staff reserve the right to remove an individual from the conference without warning or refund as described above.

For any questions about any aspects of the Code of Conduct, please contact the AAB Executive officer Dr Geraint Parry (geraint@aab.org.uk, +44 (0) 7411967414).