

Safe space policy for ECSA 2020 conference

To ensure this conference is an enjoyable and productive event for all participants, we want it to become a safe space¹ for everyone to come together and express themselves freely. We note this is only possible when we set some agreed basic practices². We would like to call your attention to the following policies; please take a moment to read them and help us create a welcoming experience for everyone.

Safe space without harassment policy

The ECSA conference aims to provide a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age or religion. Harassment of participants in any form will not be tolerated. Anyone violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the conference at the discretion of the organizers.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal comments that reinforce social structures of domination related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, and/or religion;
- sexual images in public spaces;
- deliberate intimidation, stalking or following;
- photography or recording without the consent of the subject;
- sustained disruption of talks or other events;
- inappropriate physical contact;
- unwelcome sexual attention;
- advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behaviours.

Participants asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately. If a participant engages in harassing behaviour, event organizers retain the right to take actions to keep the event a welcoming environment for all participants. This includes warning the offender or expulsion from the conference. Event organizers may take action to redress anything designed to, or with the clear impact of, disrupting the event or making the environment hostile for any participants.

We expect participants to follow these rules at all conference venues and during all conference-related social activities.

If a participant is being harassed, notices that someone else is being harassed or has any other relevant concerns, they are encouraged to approach one of the dedicated contact persons or the alternative reporting procedures, which we will specify prior to the conference.

¹ Upon discussions within ECSA and the conference committee, we have agreed to call this a “safe space policy” rather than an “anti-harassment policy” in order to outline what we strive for. We hope that this very small step can be among the first ones to come together as a community in more inclusive and equitable ways and define the common values we hold for that.

² Some good explanations for why having a code of conduct for a conference is important can be found here <https://www.ashedryden.com/blog/codes-of-conduct-101-faq> and here <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2016.00103/full>.

When receiving a personal report, event organizers will work to find a space that is private and comfortable for the person sharing the report. They will document the incident, taking special care to ensure they understand what happened and what the person or people affected need in response.

The person or people affected will not be asked to confront anyone. With the consent of the affected individual(s), advisors may be contacted for support, but details will be kept need-to-know and confidential. The organizers will also be available to help access local support services, provide escorts, or otherwise assist in obtaining relevant resources.

Status of this policy

For the upcoming conference in September 2020, ECSA decided to start with the minimum version of a safe space policy to counter harassment and offer an open and safe(r) space for our community. A broader Code of Conduct with values from the community regarding how we want to relate to each other will follow. This will also be adopted for all future ECSA events.

Discussions on these topics in general and work for the [ECSA conference in 2020 in particular](#) are held regularly in the [ECSA Working Group on Empowerment, Inclusiveness and Equity](#). It is part of a process to make ECSA infrastructures and meetings more inclusive, diverse and open. This safe space policy represents the first step to address these questions. ECSA aims to build on these measures for the future finding good processes and taking the time that this needs.