

AIBS Ethics Policy

At the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), we are dedicated to promoting the use of science to inform decision making for the benefit of science and society. The AIBS Ethics Policy is key to successfully executing this mission and reflects the high standard of professional conduct that is the hallmark of our organization. Our Ethics Policy helps define our commitment to support a culture of openness, trust, and integrity in all we do.

As employees, members, and volunteers we must be committed to conducting all AIBS affairs and activities with the highest ethical standards. We all have an obligation to adhere to this policy and encourage others to do the same. We must dedicate ourselves to pursuing our mission with honesty, fairness, and respect for the individual, ever mindful that there is no “right way” to do the “wrong thing.” As such, we acknowledge our individual responsibility to ensure our collective success by practicing and promoting values that reflect a shared view of how we want to operate and be seen by others. The AIBS reputation for integrity and honesty must be upheld.

We are committed to the responsible use of AIBS assets; to provide accurate, complete, and objective information; to respect the confidentiality of financial and other information; to act in good faith and exercise due care in all we do; to comply with all rules and regulations; and to proactively promote ethical behavior.

The Ethics Policy makes clear that AIBS expects all affiliated with our work to understand the importance and emphasis AIBS places on ethical considerations associated with each individual’s actions. Our Ethics Policy affirms our vigilant commitment to not merely obey the law but also to conduct our business with integrity and without deception.

The Ethics Policy is comprised of an ethical code, professional standards, values, as well as key personnel and resource practices.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics includes the below provisions. AIBS employees, members, and volunteers must:

- Be honest and ethical in all of their conduct.
- Deal fairly with all involved in the work of AIBS (employees, members, volunteers, clients, suppliers, competitors, etc.).
- Commit to promote and maintain a work environment free from discrimination or harassment (see Personnel Practices for further detail).
- Maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to them by AIBS or affiliated parties except when authorized or otherwise legally obligated to disclose (see Information and Resource Practices for further detail).
- Must appropriately manage actual or apparent conflicts of interest between personal and professional relationships (see Information and Resource Practices for further detail).

- Accept responsibility for preventing, detecting, and reporting all manner of fraud; protect and ensure the proper use of company assets (see Information and Resource Practices for further detail).
- Comply with applicable government laws, rules and regulations.

Professional Standards

AIBS employees, members, and volunteers shall conduct their professional lives in accordance with following the Professional Standards:

- Conduct research and teaching in a manner that is consistent with accepted scientific and teaching methods, maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all professional endeavors.
- Provide information that is accurate, completely objective, relevant, timely, and understandable.
- Comply with all laws and regulations that apply to the treatment of study organisms and other aspects of professional conduct.
- Renounce scientific fraud and other forms of professional misconduct whenever it is found.
- Be civil and respectful in professional interactions, avoiding discrimination in all forms. Treat colleagues, students, and employees fairly.
- Be constructive and professional in evaluating the work of colleagues, students, and employees.
- Provide recognition of past and present contributions of others to science, and present one's professional opinions only on those topics for which one has training and knowledge.
- Promote the free and open exchange of information, not withholding information to substantiate a personal or scientific point of view.
- Be candid about potential conflicts of interest in the conduct of professional duties.

Values

These Values provide AIBS employees, members, and volunteers a framework of aspects and attributes that are key to adhering to our Ethics Policy. They are:

- **Scientifically Informed Decisions-** We promote the use of peer-reviewed research, empirical evidence (that possesses scientific rigor and integrity, transparency, honesty, and objectivity), and rigorous scientific synthesis and integration as the basis to inform decisions made by researchers, educators, and any other knowledge consumer.
- **Scientific Advocacy-** We promote the use of scientific information to guide science policy and science-informed public policy.
- **Agility and Innovation-** We swiftly adapt as conditions change and new tools become available to facilitate demonstrative impact.
- **Collaboration-** We partner with and solicit information from individuals and groups within our community and beyond to advance our goals and galvanize unified action.
- **Diversity and Inclusion-** We embrace and leverage the benefits of opinions and perspectives of people with diverse backgrounds and experiences to achieve our mission.

- **Stewardship**- We promote an organization grounded in ethics, stewardship, sustainability, accountability, integrity, and good governance.

Personnel Practices

AIBS is committed to providing a work environment that values diversity among its employees, members, and volunteers. All policies and activities are intended to create a respectful workplace, without discrimination or harassment, where every individual has the opportunity to reach their highest potential.

Employees, members, and volunteers are not to suffer discrimination or harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Employees, members, and volunteers are provided opportunities regardless of any of the above characteristics. These policies apply to both applicants and employees in all phases of employment including, recruiting, hiring, placement, training, development, transfer, promotion, demotion, performance reviews, compensation, benefits, and separation from employment.

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is AIBS policy that all AIBS programs and activities shall be designed and conducted without any discrimination in regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Anti-Harassment Policy

AIBS is committed to maintaining a working environment free from harassment, whether based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or any other characteristic protected by law. It is a violation of law, and expressly against AIBS company policy, for any employee, or other person over whom the AIBS company has control, to engage in any conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or any other characteristic protected by law that: (i) has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile working environment; (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or (iii) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities or working relationships with AIBS.

Sexual Harassment Specifically

AIBS prohibits all forms of sexual harassment, including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when it may reasonably be perceived that:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions, including, but not limited to, discharge or performance evaluation.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of materially and adversely interfering with an individual's ability to perform a job by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive working environment.

Examples of improper conduct may include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances, sexual remarks or jokes, inappropriate touching, gesturing or physical interference that impedes or blocks another's movement, or demeaning posters, cartoons, photographs, videos, graffiti or drawings. In general, conduct of a sexual nature that materially and adversely interferes with an individual's work performance constitutes sexual harassment.

These Personnel Practices apply to everyone affiliated with AIBS and no one is exempt. All employees, members, and volunteers are to be treated with dignity and respect at all times. We strongly encourage anyone who is subjected to discrimination or harassment of any kind, or to retaliation for complaining of discrimination or harassment, to immediately report it to his or her supervisor, any member of the leadership team, or HR. You may also report via email to conduct@aibs.org. **This email account is confidential and is maintained by Cheryl Bikowski at Burk and Associates.** All reports of harassment will be promptly investigated. AIBS treats complaints about and reports of possible discrimination seriously and investigates them as required by our procedures and any applicable laws. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may be taken against any employee engaging in this type of behavior either implicitly or explicitly.

Information and Resource Practices

AIBS is committed to ethical use of information and resources by all employees, members, and volunteers. Specific areas of concern are detailed below.

Fraud

Fraud is defined as any intentional act or omission designed to deceive others, resulting in the victim suffering a loss and/or the perpetrator achieving a gain. All affiliated with AIBS have responsibility for preventing, detecting, and reporting fraud.

In addition to the definition of fraud set out above, this policy covers any dishonest or fraudulent act, including but not limited to:

- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies or other assets.

- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money or financial transactions.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of company plans or activities.
- Disclosing confidential and proprietary information to outside parties.
- Intentional false representation or concealment of a material fact for the purpose of inducing another to act upon it to procure an advantage, benefit, or gain.
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or persons providing services/materials to AIBS.
- Destruction, removal, or unauthorized use of records, furniture, fixtures, and equipment.
- Any similar or related irregularity.

Each member of management is familiar with the types of improprieties that might occur within his or her area of responsibility and be alert for any indication of irregularity.

Conflict of Interest

(Reference AIBS Policies for Board and Staff: 1) Conflict of Interest for Members of the Board of Directors; and 2) Conflict of Interest for Employees)

Confidentially

(Reference AIBS policies for Board, Staff, and Consultants)

AIBS Property and Information

Employees, members, and volunteers are expected to protect the AIBS property at all times; including cash, equipment, records, employee, and customer information. This also requires maintaining confidentiality regarding AIBS records, and employee and customer information.

An employee, member, volunteer, consultant, vendor, contractor, or outside agency doing business with AIBS shall immediately report any irregularity that is detected or suspected. Any suspected or known violations of these Information and Resource Practices should be immediately reported to his or her supervisor, any member of the leadership team, or HR. You may also report via email to conduct@aibs.org. **This email account is confidential and is maintained by Cheryl Bikowski at Burk and Associates.** Any employee or person who suspects or reports dishonest or fraudulent activity shall not attempt to personally conduct investigations or interviews related to any suspected fraudulent act. Investigations will be coordinated with legal consult and other affected groups, both internal and external.

Reporting Ethics Policy Violations/Whistleblower Policy

The AIBS Whistleblower Policy encourages employees, members, volunteers, and anyone else affiliated with AIBS work to come forward with credible information on illegal practices or serious violations of adopted policies of AIBS; specifies that AIBS will protect the person from retaliation; and identifies where such information can be reported.

Encouragement of reporting: AIBS encourages complaints, reports, or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of AIBS's policies, including illegal or improper conduct by AIBS itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy would include ethical violations, instances of discrimination or harassment, financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. Other subjects for which AIBS has existing complaint mechanisms should be addressed under those mechanisms, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment via proper reporting mechanism. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

Protection from retaliation: AIBS prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of AIBS against any person for making good faith complaints, reports, or inquiries under this policy or for participating in a review or investigation under this policy. This protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. AIBS reserves the right to discipline persons who make bad faith, knowingly false, or vexatious complaints, reports, or inquiries or who otherwise abuse this policy.

Where to report: If you have questions or concerns about compliance with any of the policies listed above, or are unsure about what is the "right thing" to do, we strongly encourage you to first talk with your supervisor, any member of the leadership team, or HR. If for any reason you are uncomfortable talking to any of these individuals, send an email to conduct@aibs.org with details of your question or concern. **This email account is confidential and is maintained by Cheryl Bikowski at Burk and Associates.**

Complaints, reports, or inquiries may also be made under this policy on a confidential or anonymous basis. They should include as much detail and specific facts as possible. They should be directed to conduct@aibs.org. **This email account is confidential and is maintained by Cheryl Bikowski at Burk and Associates.**

AIBS will conduct a prompt, objective review or investigation of the facts and circumstances reported and take appropriate corrective action as needed. AIBS may be unable to fully evaluate a vague or general complaint, report, or inquiry that is made anonymously but will review/investigate the matter to the fullest extent possible.