



July 2019

IFAJ Code of Conduct

1. About the IFAJ

The International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) is a global, multicultural, non-partisan, not-for-profit professional association whose members are agricultural journalist guilds or associations. The IFAJ is governed by a constitution and supporting rules.

One of the IFAJ's objectives is to create opportunities for agricultural journalists and communicators around the world to network, make professional and personal contacts and forge relationships. To this end the IFAJ convenes an annual congress which is hosted by a member guild or association, as well as press tours, meetings and other events. These initiatives, and the online conversations surrounding them, are a perfect platform for building positive relationships across countries, cultures and sectors.

2. Summary

This IFAJ Code of Conduct sets out the standards of personal and professional behaviour expected from those who take part in IFAJ events and related online communication, and the sanctions that may be applied if those standards are not respected. Our overall aim is to ensure a collegial, respectful and harassment-free experience for everyone and professional and culturally aware behaviour at all times.

3. IFAJ events and online communication

The IFAJ hosts congresses, meeting, press trips, workshops, social events and other activities ("IFAJ events"). It also works with third-party hosts, sponsors and other partners to develop IFAJ-endorsed events. It sends out news and information to mailing lists, it publishes blogs and engages in and encourages online communication in relation to IFAJ events, IFAJ-endorsed events and matters of interest to IFAJ members.

Whatever the activity or communication channel, the IFAJ does not discriminate against individuals based on nationality, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, ethnicity or religion.

The IFAJ will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour or harassment of others by anyone taking part in IFAJ events or IFAJ-endorsed events. Taking part means attending events as a delegate or a guest of delegate, organizing, hosting, sponsoring, speaking, exhibiting or volunteering at events.

The IFAJ will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour or harassment of others by participants on social media or in other online forums connected to the IFAJ.

Discrimination includes making offensive remarks about or otherwise treating a person less favourably than someone else based on their nationality, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, ethnicity or religion.

Harassment includes the use of abusive, degrading or offensive language, intimidation (including online bullying and stalking), inappropriate physical contact, photography or recording and unwelcome sexual advances or innuendo.

Everyone taking part in IFAJ events and IFAJ-endorsed events must always act in a responsible, non-disruptive and professional manner including on social media.

The IFAJ relies on the generosity of a wide range of hosts and commercial partners. It respects the time and energy given by its volunteers. All those taking part in IFAJ events and IFAJ-endorsed events must always be respectful of hosts, organizers, volunteers, representatives of sponsors and organizational partners including on social media.

4. Copyright and misleading statements

IFAJ members, and individual members of IFAJ guilds and associations, must not copy the work of fellow agricultural journalists and communicators without authorization.

IFAJ members, and individual members of IFAJ guilds and associations, must not defame or knowingly make misleading statements about fellow agricultural journalists and communicators.

5. Complaints

Alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct may be reported in person to the on-site organizing team at an IFAJ event or an IFAJ-endorsed event. Alternatively, they may be reported to the named IFAJ Code of Conduct liaison officers identified on the IFAJ website via e-mail (report@ifaj.org) or through an anonymous submission form on the Code of Conduct page of the IFAJ website.

If an anonymous complaint is made, the IFAJ Code of Conduct liaison officers will respond as soon as possible to the complainant and ensure their safety before consulting with them about how they wish the complaint to be dealt with. If the complainant requests continued anonymity, the Code of Conduct liaison officers will explain the impact of that request on any investigation into the complaint.

Subject to clause 6 below, complaints will remain confidential. The on-site organizers and/or Code of Conduct liaison officers will evaluate the complaint with a priority focus on the safety of the complainant and fairness for both parties. It will be for those investigating the complaint to decide how to proceed and any follow-up actions, considering the circumstances of the case. If an on-site organizer is implicated in the complaint, they must not handle the investigation. The person who is the subject of the complaint will be notified as soon as reasonably possible and will be informed about the investigation process. They will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

The outcome of the investigation will determine the follow-up actions. If the on-site organizers or the IFAJ Code of Conduct liaison officers consider that the complaint is serious enough to warrant a ban from future IFAJ events and IFAJ-endorsed events they must notify the IFAJ Executive Committee in writing as soon as possible following their investigation, setting out the reason for their recommendation.

6. Follow-up actions

If a complaint is upheld, actions may include:

a verbal warning;

a letter of reprimand to the person against whom the complaint is upheld and a letter to the president of his or her guild or association;

immediate expulsion from the event without refund;

a ban from taking part in future IFAJ events;

any other action considered appropriate by those investigating the complaint.

No ban from taking part in future IFAJ events or IFAJ-endorsed events will be imposed without approval by the IFAJ Executive Committee.

7. Call to action

All those taking part in IFAJ events, IFAJ-endorsed events or online conversations should actively discourage harassment or inappropriate conduct if such actions are observed and should promptly report any concerns if they see someone being treated inappropriately or harassed.

Together, we can ensure that the IFAJ network and IFAJ events are welcoming, productive and safe for all.