

Employee Code of Ethics
of the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics of the
Czech Academy of Sciences (IAPG CAS)

IAPG CAS

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Annexes:2

Introduction

This Code of Ethics aims at summarizing the ground ethical rules pertaining to the scientific and research work and the resulting requirements applicable to the IAPG CAS employees and their activities within as well as outside their employment. The selected rules are based on generally applicable moral principles and adjusted to scientific work, postgraduate education as well as to foster genuine interpersonal relations at the workplace. All this also goes hand in hand with the requirements for ground rules of ethical conduct, which should not only be non-discriminatory, transparent and open, but also it should stimulate a creative and hardworking atmosphere.

Education, research and innovation form the fundamental pillars of the development of contemporary society. Trust in science rests on the trust in the integrity of the researchers when obtaining new results. Both the results as well as their interpretation may be verified by the scientific community, but not so much by the general public, for which such new knowledge is primarily intended. Therefore, if science is to remain trustworthy, the researchers must adhere to basic moral principles in the course of their work, such as integrity and honesty. In its clauses I. - VII., this Code of Ethics sums up the framework principles of good scientific practice, seeking to support desirable moral standards in academic research.

The following documents were used to prepare this Code:

- Current *European Charter for Researchers, 2005/251/EC, Official Journal of the European Union of 22 March 2005;*
- Updated version of the *Code of Ethics for Researchers of the Czech Academy of Sciences* from January 2012;
- *Act No. 246/1992 Sb., on Protection of Animals from Cruelty, of 29 May 1992;*
- *Regulation No. 419/2012 Sb., on Protection of Experimental Animals, as amended, of 4 December 2012;*
- *Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes of 22 September 2010;*
- *Recommendation of the European Commission 2007/526/EC on guidelines for the accommodation and care of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes of 18 June 2007;*
- *Act No. 78/2004 Sb., on Management of Genetically Modified Organisms and Genetic Products, of 25 February 2014.*

I.

Guiding principles

A researcher:

- a) Adheres to basic human moral principles and precepts formulated in this Code;
- b) Obeys the laws as well as the IAPG's internal regulations and rules;

- Shall not allow a conflict of interest resulting from their position at the workplace;
- c) Carries out research activities with utter professional as well as personal dedication. The total of his contractual workload shall usually not exceed 1.5 time of his workload;
 - d) Demands that his colleagues act in compliance with these principles;
 - e) Does neither defend nor conceal any conduct contrary to the principles formulated in this Code, not even by referring to essential obedience or loyalty;
 - f) Considers science and research as an integral part of culture and a source of innovations and defends them against being questioned;
 - g) Speaks out against unethical and inappropriate exploitation of scientific findings;
 - h) Broadens and deepens his knowledge and strives to improve his professional skills;
 - i) Maintains a critical approach to his own findings and results as well as to the results of his colleagues, and is open to discussion and objective arguments;
 - j) Defends scientific freedom in thought, expression, exchange of opinions and information;
 - k) Refuses to use a non-scientific approach as well as racist, religious, nationalist and political views in science;
 - l) Adheres to the principles of impartiality and neutrality in terms of both ideological and political pressures as well as the interests of various pressure groups;
 - m) Recognizes and dispenses within the scientific community the principles of reliable and trustworthy scientific work and refuses any scientific dishonesty whatsoever as well as any violation of the principles specified in this Code;
 - n) Notifies the relevant authorities of any and all alleged violations of scientific integrity without any hesitation.

II.

Principles of research work

A researcher:

- a) Focuses his research efforts on expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge and seeks to ensure that his materially usable results benefit the society;
- b) Carries out research so as not to jeopardise the society, environment or cultural values;
- c) Adheres to the guiding principles (Article I) when obtaining, selecting and assessing data, while taking into account the specifics of his field of study;
- d) Is open to team work, constantly improves his professional knowledge and skills and makes his work available to the academic community;
- e) Accounts for the precision and objectivity of his research and acknowledges the limits

- of the research methods used;
- f) Is responsible for the completeness and verifiability of the findings and results published in relation to a certain matter and interprets them in an undistorted manner;
 - g) Preserves primary data and documentation of all substantial published results for a standard period of time in the respective field in so far as it is not precluded by other obligations or regulations;
 - h) Accounts for the purposeful and effective use of research funds and abstains from duplicating research previously carried out elsewhere, unless it is necessary for the verification, supplementation or comparison of the results obtained;
 - i) Discloses those results of his research, which are not subject to confidentiality, to the experts and, after careful consideration, presents such results to the general public only after they have been published in the scholarly press.

III.

Principles of publishing scientific findings and results

A researcher:

- a) May be listed as the author or co-author of a publication if he contributed to its origin in a creative manner, e.g., to the design of the studies and experiments and their performance, to the analysis, interpretation, theoretical processing or modelling of data, or to the preparation of the publication, as long as the researcher agrees with his co-authorship;
- b) Acknowledges within the publication the scientific contribution of his predecessors and colleagues to the studied matter, which he directly refers to, and when citing findings and results achieved by other authors, he makes a clear reference to the respective source;
- c) Cites also those substantial scientific papers that are contrary to his own results and conclusions;
- d) Takes appropriate action if he notices a material error in his published data, e.g., publishes an erratum or other correction;
- e) Avoids pointless partitioning of results and findings into multiple publications so as to artificially increase the number of his works;
- f) Refrains from drafting publications in an ethically questionable manner and from taking advantage of ethically dubious publishing platforms;
- g) Publishes his works with the aim to pass on the obtained results and findings to the professional public, rather than solely for the purpose of making his papers count as scientific outputs.

IV.

Principles regulating the relations with students and co-workers

A researcher:

- a) Admits students and research co-workers pursuant to an objective evaluation of their intellectual, ethical and personal characteristics;
- b) When leading a research team, pays attention to correctness and openness in the mutual communication and
- c) Avoids using unjustifiably autocratic methods of leadership;
- d) Assesses his students and co-workers based on the results they achieved and treats them fairly, not requiring them to fulfil his own duties or imposing demands that go beyond their abilities and potential;
- e) Conveys his knowledge, skills and principles of good scientific practice by his word and personal example to his students and co-workers;
- f) Is devoted to teaching his students and develops their independent and critical thinking as well as

a responsible approach to work and their right to freely express their opinions about research;
- g) Promotes the career development of his students and subordinate researchers as well as their scientific and publishing activities and lists them as authors of a publication, to which they contributed in a creative manner;
- h) Applies the principle of non-discrimination in terms of ethnicity, race, social standing, origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religion;
- i) Deduces consequences from an alleged unethical conduct of his co-workers.

V.

Principles regulating the assessment, evaluation, opponent and expert activities

A researcher:

- a) Performs the assigned assessment or other evaluation activity himself personally;
- b) Protects the intellectual property rights of the authors of the assessed manuscripts, project proposals and reports; refrains from using the data contained in the evaluated materials for purposes other than to draw up an expert review as well as from providing them to any third party;
- c) Refrains from intentionally protracting the evaluation of the assessed work so as to achieve personal advantage or for the benefit of a third party;
- d) Refuses to prepare an expert opinion, the conclusions of which could be influenced by

his own personal interest, or clearly draws attention to this fact in advance, and avoids any other deliberate conflicts of interest as well;

- e) Prepares the expert opinions responsibly and only in his own area of expertise resisting any potential external pressures likely to influence the actual perception of such opinion;
- f) Relies on objective criteria in the course of evaluation and opponent procedures, follows the sponsor's rules and requires the same from other parties to the procedure as well.

VI.

Ethics behind working with laboratory animals

- a) A worker working with animals adheres to the applicable legislation, i.e., including, but not limited to the acts on the protection of animals against cruelty and protection of experimental animals, the directive of the European Parliament on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes as well as the recommendation of the European Commission on guidelines for the accommodation of animals used for experimental purposes and on management of genetically modified organisms and genetic products. An employee working with animals shall become familiar with the anti-cruelty laws, observe them thoroughly and engage in ongoing self-education.
- b) The IAPG operations department ensures that employees are properly informed and trained in the area of laboratory animal welfare. IAPG further makes sure that a sufficient number of employees dealing with animal husbandry possesses a certificate of professional competence.

VII.

Ethics behind handling sensitive data and communication

- a) The employees treat the information they obtain when performing their job in a confidential manner and protect such information in compliance with the applicable legislation. At the same time, they take into account the right of the public to have access to information under the relevant laws.
- b) The employee shall maintain confidentiality of new information and discoveries even after the termination of his employment.
- c) The person providing the media with information and making statements on behalf of the IAPG is either the person authorised by the Director, or the press secretary. This is without prejudice to the right to hold a professional discussion during public appearances.

VIII.

Ethics Committee

Non-compliance with the principles of ethical scientific conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: fraud, forgery, plagiarism, tampering, distortion, deliberate deception and theft, regardless of the stage of the scientific research work, i.e., be it at the stage of a research plan or when publishing the obtained results. For such purposes, the IAPG establishes its own Ethics Committee to deal with violations of the principles of good practice.

1. The Ethics Committee of the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences (hereinafter as the "IAPG Ethics Committee") is set up to address issues related to compliance with this Code of Ethics.
2. The establishment of the IAPG Ethics Committee and the description of its workload is covered by the Rules of Procedure of the IAPG Ethics Committee and includes the process of receiving referrals as well as rules governing the meetings and decision making.
3. The Rules of Procedure of the IAPG Ethics Committee form a part of the IAPG's regulations.

After having been approved by the Council of IAPG, the IAPG Code of Ethics becomes effective upon its execution by the Director.

Method of resolving violations of the principles of good practice

An alleged violation of the principles of good scientific practice is to be resolved:

- a) Directly at the IAPG workplace within its organisational structure at a level which is one level higher than that at which the dispute occurred. A Director appointed mediator may be invited to resolve the dispute.
- b) By the IAPG Ethics Committee pursuant to its Rules of Procedure.
- c) By the Committee for Scientific Integrity of the Czech Academy of Sciences if the resolution of a dispute goes beyond the competence of any of the workplaces of the Czech Academy of Sciences, or if the parties to the dispute do not agree with the conclusions adopted at the workplace;
- d) In cooperation with all parties involved, while observing the highest possible level of protection of privacy. The conclusions of the final resolution must be communicated to all parties involved and contain remedial measures to compensate for an identified violation of scientific integrity. Where justified, this may involve applying Section 65 of

the Statutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences or the Labour Code, as applicable.

This IAPG Employee Code of Ethics was approved by the Council of IAPG on 12 November 2020 and becomes effective upon its execution.

In Liběchov on 13 November 2020

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