

FASEB Volunteer Code of Conduct

Adopted by the Federation Board June 1, 2023

Article I: Introduction and Purpose

FASEB's mission is to advance health and well-being by promoting research and education in the biological and biomedical sciences through collaborative advocacy and service to FASEB societies and their members. This policy's overarching objective is to advance excellence of both the Federation and the biological and biomedical research community. The Federation can flourish only with:

- high-quality work that has credibility and integrity;
- high standards of climate, culture, and associated conduct that foster full participation for all talent in FASEB;
- authentic openness to and welcome of a diversity of people and ideas to advance the biological and biomedical sciences;
- a safe environment for all talent and those supporting or providing services to FASEB; and
- an enterprise that engenders trust of current and future FASEB stakeholders, the public and funders.

This document works in conjunction/concert with other policies that govern volunteer conduct, including, but not limited to, FASEB's [Conference Code of Conduct](#) and [Fiduciary Conflict-of-Interest Policy](#).

Article II: Coverage

- A. This document applies to all FASEB volunteers, including, but not limited to, FASEB volunteer fiduciary leaders; other volunteers; officers; editors; and advisory board members in connection with their FASEB associated activities.
- B. Fiduciaries, including, but not limited to, FASEB Board members, Finance Committee members, and officers have additional legal responsibilities, disclosure requirements, and ethical and conduct expectations.
- C. FASEB associated activity means:
 1. all activities and events sponsored, funded, or conducted in whole or in part by, or otherwise involving, FASEB, wherever located;
 2. any use of FASEB property, funding or other resources, whether otherwise involving the FASEB or not; and

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3. performance of, or holding, any FASEB role, responsibility, privilege, function, contract, or other affiliation.
- D. This Policy may also apply to non-FASEB professional activities and roles, when:
- a. A finding by another entity or authority that the volunteer violated another entity's or authority's policy addressing ethics, conduct or harassment.
 - b. A volunteer commits or is alleged to have committed an illegal act of violence or dishonesty in any personal or professional role that may impact the volunteer's or others' ability to perform or participate in any FASEB activity.

Article III: Overarching Volunteer Conduct Standards

FASEB values high-quality research, education, professional practice, and service combined with highly professional, ethical, and inclusive conduct. That requires the following volunteer standards of conduct:

- A. respectful, equitable and inclusive conduct and treatment of all those engaged or contemplating engagement in FASEB's community, including—actively rejecting (and not practicing) sexual, intersecting, and other bases of harassment and discrimination (i.e., on the basis of, e.g., gender, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, identity and expression, disability, ideology, and other identities);
- B. not retaliating against any person(s) who raise a conduct concern, or who assist in any way to investigate or resolve it;
- C. attention to the safety of FASEB volunteers and staff, both physical and emotional;
- D. honesty in the conduct and attribution of the work;
- E. respect of confidentiality regarding sharing, copying, reproducing, transmitting, divulging or otherwise disclosing any confidential information related to the FASEB's affairs without approval from the Federation Board.
- F. absence of the influence of conflicts of interest in the work of the volunteer, achieved through avoidance or disclosure and satisfaction of approved management; and
- G. demonstration of knowledge and respect for the requirements of applicable law, regulations, policies, and funders' and other authorities' requirements (including, but not limited to, those relating to discrimination and harassment).

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Article IV: Annual Disclosure

- A. All volunteers are required annually to sign a statement affirming that the volunteers has:
 - 1. Received a copy of the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
 - 2. Read and understood the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
 - 3. Agreed to comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

- B. Failure to timely submit a required disclosure, or failure to submit a complete and truthful disclosure, is on its own a violation of this code of conduct. A volunteer's failure to make required disclosures does not diminish application of this code of conduct to that volunteer.

Article V: Conflicts-of-Interest

- A. A conflict-of-interest occurs when a volunteer's personal, professional, or financial interests could compromise their judgment, decisions, or participation in a FASEB activity.

- B. Financial conflicts shall be handled in accordance with FASEB's [Fiduciary Conflict-of-Interest Policy](#).

- C. Procedures**
 - 1. **Duty To Disclose** – when a volunteer is faced with any potential conflict of interest, they must disclose the conflict with the relevant volunteer leader and staff liaison.

 - 2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists** – After a conflict is disclosed, the relevant governance body involved shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

 - 3. Upon determination of a conflict, the interested volunteer may make a presentation, but shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the conflict of interest.

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Article VI: Process

FASEB provides the following ways to raise volunteer conduct concerns:

- A. To express a concern with a volunteer's conduct, contact any FASEB Officer, member of the Executive Committee, or FASEB's Executive Director/CEO.

- B. When a volunteer's conduct merits a formal resolution process, the following information should be gathered:
 1. name of the accused(s) and contact information and affiliation with FASEB;
 2. if the conduct concern is of a type that involves a target, the name of the identified target and contact information, if known;
 3. name and contact information of the person raising the concern and how the person became aware of the concern;
 4. names of any witnesses or others with pertinent information, and contact information, if known;
 5. description of the conduct concern, with the date, approximate time, location/setting/activity, and all known relevant facts and circumstances;
 6. the provision(s) of this Policy that may have been violated, if known (optional);
 7. a clear statement of any facts that may indicate any ongoing concern of imminent threat to safety of any person(s) or safety or condition of property, and the sources of such facts, with contact information if known;
 8. any relevant documents available to the person filing the complaint;
 9. any other information that would help FASEB understand the full nature of the conduct concern; who was involved and who and what may be affected; who may have pertinent information and related context; and what responses FASEB may want to consider; and
 10. any request for confidentiality.

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- C. Investigation and Decision** – The FASEB Executive Committee will oversee the administration of reports received about a volunteer under this Code of Conduct. The FASEB President and Executive Director/CEO will serve, or designate others to serve, as “Fact-finders” to investigate each report. If any member of the Executive Committee is a subject of the report, they must be completely recused from any discussion, vote, or adjudication of the reported violation.

The FASEB Executive Committee will also be the “Decision-makers” who determine whether a violation of this Code of Conduct was violated and the appropriate resolution, including disciplinary action, though they may involve additional Board members in that decision. Any process or approval requirement set forth in the Bylaws regarding disciplinary action shall be followed. A volunteer who is the subject of a report shall, prior to a final decision by the Fact-finders, be provided with notice of the report and an opportunity to respond.

- D. Confidential action** – If an “individual most directly involved” asks for confidentiality of that person’s identity or that of others most directly involved, reasonable steps will be taken to maintain confidentiality by the FASEB “Fact-finder” who investigates, and “Decision-maker” who makes decisions regarding conduct concerns. They may not maintain confidentiality if, in the Fact-finder’s or Decision-Maker’s judgment and discretion, safety or law requires otherwise. Disclosure of the identity of individuals most directly involved may also be needed for the Society to carry out various options to resolve a conduct concern.
- E. Duty to respect confidentiality** – FASEB staff and volunteers are required to respect confidentiality of the identities of each individual most directly involved in a conduct concern while it is being reviewed and resolved, as possible without impeding an investigation or resolution. Failure to do so is a serious violation of this policy. If an accused is determined to have violated this Code of Conduct, the FASEB Board of Directors or its authorized designee, may make that disclosure at its discretion.
- F. Anonymous and oral reports** – If an anonymous report is made, communications to confirm the accuracy of the FASEB’s understanding of an anonymously reported conduct concern will, if possible, be made in writing via anonymous means. If an oral report of a conduct concern is made, the individual making the report will be able to choose to (a) sign off on a written summary of the concern, prepared by FASEB’s Fact-finder who receives the report, or (b) consent to being recorded when making the report, or (c) have the report treated as an informal report that FASEB may not be able to investigate unless adequate information is clearly provided.

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Article VII: Potential Consequences

When a violation is found, consequences may include (including combinations):

- a. private reprimand;
- b. public reprimand or statement;
- c. revocation or denial of volunteer privileges;
- d. permanent denial of serving as a FASEB volunteer (for egregious misconduct in severity or frequency);
- e. removal or suspension from a volunteer position, including those that are appointed by member societies;
- f. removal or suspension from a leadership position (whether employee or volunteer);
- g. denial or revocation of honors or awards;
- h. temporary or fixed-term no-contact requirements for the accused and identified target;
- i. notification by the Decision-maker of the determination of a violation (the allegations, facts and conclusion) to the home society or institution (employing, visiting, educating or where there is another appointment);

