

Procedures for Addressing Violations of the Code of Conduct for Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP) Events and Activities

Effective August 3, 2022

I. SSP Right To Oversee and Restrict Participation in SSP Events and Activities

SSP reserves the right to remove any participant from any SSP event or activity whose social attentions become unwelcome to another and who persists in such attentions after their unwelcome nature has been communicated. SSP also reserves the right to remove any participant or attendee who engages in conduct that interferes with the ability of other participants or attendees to participate in and enjoy the event or activity, including, but not limited to persons who appear inebriated. SSP may remove any individual from attendance or other participation in any SSP-sponsored event or activity without prior warning or refund. If SSP, in its reasonable judgment, determines that an individual has violated the *Code of Conduct for SSP Events and Activities*, SSP may also prohibit the individual from attending or participating in future SSP events activities.

II. Procedures (after an incident occurs or is reported):

Allegations regarding misconduct by anyone attending or participating in the SSP events or activities are taken very seriously. These include but are not limited to all SSP registrants, speakers, members, exhibitors, vendors, and guests participating at conferences or engaging in other SSP activities, in-person or virtually. SSP encourages prompt reporting of violations so immediate action can be taken to address the concern. Complaints may also be raised after the SSP event or activity has concluded, according to the following procedures. SSP may also initiate a review of an individual's actions or behavior without the filing of a formal complaint.

- Any person who believes they have been subjected to or have witnessed harassment or other unacceptable behavior in connection with an SSP event or activity, or has experienced or witnessed violations of the *Code of Conduct for SSP Events and Activities* should contact the SSP Executive Director at violations@sspnet.org or 913-486-4185. Reports may not be submitted anonymously as that would preclude an adequate investigation. The report should include contact information for the person submitting the complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint, complete confidentiality cannot be

guaranteed, but all complaints will be handled with discretion and with the aim of preserving confidentiality to the extent compatible with conducting an appropriate investigation.

- Once an allegation is received, the incident will be reviewed promptly and confidentially by the SSP Executive Director. If the SSP Executive Director is named in an allegation or has a conflict of interest, the incident will be reviewed by a member of the SSP Executive Committee.
- Based on this initial information, SSP will review the allegation and, if necessary, communicate back with the complainant to clarify or request more information as needed, or to provide support. The complainant may be asked to provide their views on what they would like to have happen next and if they want to be kept informed of the outcome of any investigation. Based on the sole assessment of the SSP Executive Director or Executive Committee representative, the Society may determine a range of next steps.
- If, based on the preliminary review of the complaint, the allegation does not indicate a violation of the *Code of Conduct for SSP Events and Activities* (e.g., because it relates to matters outside the scope of this policy or the conduct does not rise to the level of a violation), SSP may administratively close the complaint without further action. The complainant will be notified of this closure. In this instance, the alleged offender is not notified. The complainant has the right to appeal the staff's decision to SSP in writing at exco@sspnet.org, within ten (10) days of notification of closure. In that event, SSP's President will conduct an independent review of the matter and determine whether to uphold the dismissal of the complaint or return the matter to the SSP Executive Director for initiation of a full investigation. If the President has a conflict of interest or was involved in the original complaint, the President shall refer the matter to a committee of three Board members without a conflict of interest.
- If the allegation is pursued, representatives of the SSP Executive Committee will raise the complaint with the alleged offender, who will be given a chance to respond in writing within ten (10) days. The individual should provide a full statement of relevant facts and verifiable supporting documentation. If facts are not in dispute or the individual does not respond, action will be taken by SSP based on its assessment of the level of misconduct.
- SSP may, as an interim measure, bar any individual from participation in SSP events or activities during the pendency of an investigation.

- In some cases, a conversation—including a request to understand the negative impact of the behavior and to cease the inappropriate behavior—may be sufficient and deemed to be a satisfactory resolution by the complainant and SSP. However, SSP reserves the right to take additional steps.
- SSP will notify an individual found to have violated the *Code of Conduct for SSP Events and Activities* of the decision in writing. The individual has the right to appeal the decision or the sanction in accordance with the Appeals procedures.
- If the severity of the allegation is high, it is a possible repeat offense, or it is determined that the case is beyond SSP's capacity to assess claims and views on either side, SSP may, in lieu of or in addition to any sanction, refer the case to the alleged offender's home institution, employer, licensing board, or law enforcement for their sole investigation and decision. If SSP defers action, it may take up a case again if there is a third-party finding.
- The SSP Executive Director, Executive Committee members, Board members, and SSP staff will recuse themselves from all discussions and decisions surrounding a complaint if they are involved in material allegations of the complaint or have any conflict of interest with respect to any of the parties involved.
- SSP will keep a record of complaints received under this policy, of what determination was made, and of any sanctions. SSP may review that record in making credibility determinations and/or determining sanctions in connection with any later complaint relating to the same individual(s).

III. Sanctions

If SSP determines that a violation has occurred, SSP may bar the violator from continued participation in or attendance at some or all SSP events and activities (live or virtual), without refund of any fees paid, or impose other sanctions short of suspension or revocation of membership, at SSP's sole discretion. Suspension or revocation of membership or removal from the Board or an officer position of the Board will be handled in accordance with the Bylaws. SSP may also in appropriate circumstances bar violators from participation or attendance at future SSP-sponsored events and activities and may also notify the individual's employer or others of SSP's finding of a violation. SSP will also report on the outcome of any

investigation to individuals who have reported a violation of the *Code of Conduct for SSP Events and Activities*.

Other sanctions may include one or more of the following, or other measures, at SSP's sole discretion:

- warning a violator that any further reports will result in sanctions;
- not publishing an offensive presentation in any format (print, video, or otherwise);
- completion of education or training before being permitted to participate in future SSP activities.
- requiring a violator to avoid any interaction with, and physical proximity to, the complainant at SSP events and activities, either indefinitely or for a period of time;
- banning the violator from attending and/or speaking at future events/activities (either indefinitely or for a specified time period).
- banning the violator from writing for SSP publications (either indefinitely or for a specified time period).
- reporting the incident to the violator's employer;
- ending any volunteer responsibilities and privileges the violator holds (which will be handled according to the bylaws if the violator is a Board member or officer);

IV. Appeals Process

Where sanctions are imposed other than suspension or revocation of membership or removal from a Board position or an officer role, the party against whom the sanctions are directed may appeal the nature and scope of the sanctions within 30 days in writing to the SSP President at exco@sspnet.org. The SSP Board will appoint an Appeals Panel to consider the appeal within 60 days of receipt. Any Board members with a conflict of interest or involved in the original complaint shall be recused from selecting Appeals Panel members.

The Appeals Panel shall consist of three members of the Board. One staff member not party to the original sanctions and two members of the SSP DEIA Committee shall

participate in a non-voting, advisory capacity. All panelists, including advisory members and staff, should confirm they do not have a potential conflict of interest with any parties involved.

The decision of the Appeals Panel on such matters shall be binding upon the party undertaking such appeal. The appeal must be based on new evidence, an identified basis for reconsideration of existing evidence, or procedural error, and must include a written narrative justification for the appeal identifying the specific error or grounds for appeal.

One member of the Appeals Panel will contact the original complainant(s) to make the fact known that an appeal has been filed. The complainant will then have up to fifteen (15) days to provide a written response, if they so choose, but is not required to respond for the appeal to proceed.

The Appeals Panel will review all documentation from the original complaint and the appeal process, and may uphold, modify, or void the finding of violation and/or the sanction imposed. The Appeals Panel will provide a written statement of its decision and the basis for its decision.

Once the appeal process is concluded, the Executive Director will promptly share the Appeals Panel decision with the complainant, any victim of a violation who participated in the investigation, the alleged violator, and the SSP Board.

V. Confidentiality and Reporting

During the pendency of an investigation, any communication or information gathered regarding any incident will be dealt with confidentially except to the extent that disclosure is necessary to (1) implement this policy, (2) conduct the investigation, or (3) undertake disciplinary or remedial steps arising from the complaint. All of those involved should treat all documents and details with the highest degree of confidentiality throughout and after the complaint process.

After a final determination of a violation, SSP, in its discretion, may report the violation, its findings, and any sanctions to any interested person or third party.