



Code of conduct

Joint Meeting of the Austrian, German, Italian, and Swiss Paleontological Societies

1. Purpose

PALEO4ALPS is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all participants. The conference promotes open scientific exchange where everyone can participate without fear of harassment, discrimination, or intimidation.

All participants share responsibility for maintaining a collegial atmosphere that supports scientific discussion, collaboration, and mutual respect.

This Code of Conduct applies to all conference activities, including scientific sessions, poster sessions, workshops, field excursions, social events, and online communication related to the meeting.

2. Scope

This Code applies to all participants, including researchers, students, invited speakers, organizers, volunteers, sponsors, exhibitors, fieldtrip leaders, and staff of hosting institutions.

Participation in PALEO4ALPS implies acceptance of this Code of Conduct.

3. Expected behaviour

Participants are expected to:

- Treat all individuals with respect and professionalism.
- Foster constructive and respectful scientific discussions.
- Respect differences in background, identity, career stage, and perspectives.
- Respect intellectual property and unpublished research.
- Follow policies of the conference venues and excursion locations.
- Obtain permission before photographing or recording presentations or posters.

Questions and debate should focus on scientific ideas and evidence, not individuals.

4. Unacceptable behaviour

PALEO4ALPS does not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or discrimination.

Examples include:

- Harassment related to gender, identity, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, or appearance
- Sexual harassment or unwanted sexual attention
- Verbal abuse or hostile behaviour
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Bullying or deliberate exclusion
- Threats or stalking
- Disruption of talks or events
- Recording or distributing presentations without permission
- Retaliation against individuals who report concerns

Participants asked to stop unacceptable behaviour must comply immediately.

5. Reporting Concerns

If you experience or witness behaviour that violates this Code of Conduct, please report it as soon as possible.

Reports can be made to:

- Conference Safety Officers
- Members of the Organizing Committee
- Session Chairs or Fieldtrip Leaders

Reports may be made in person, by email, or by phone.

Participants may request a confidential conversation before deciding whether to submit a formal report.

6. What to Include in a Report

Reports should include when possible:

- Name of the person submitting the report (anonymous reports may be considered but may limit investigation)

- Name(s) of individuals involved
- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Description of the incident
- Names of witnesses, if available
- Supporting documentation if available

7. Response procedure

Reports will be reviewed by the Conference Ethics and Safety Committee. All reasonable efforts will be made to protect the privacy of those involved.

The process includes:

1. Initial assessment of the report
2. Confidential discussion with the reporting person
3. Opportunity for the accused individual to respond
4. Decision on appropriate measures

8. Possible Actions

Depending on severity, organizers may take one or more of the following actions:

- Informal mediation or warning
- Removal from a session or event
- Removal from the conference without refund
- Notification of the participant's institution or society
- Restriction from future conferences

9. Protection from Retaliation

The goal is to protect participants and maintain a respectful scientific environment. Retaliation against individuals who report misconduct or participate in an investigation is strictly prohibited and will itself be treated as a violation of this Code of Conduct.

10. Emergency Situations

If there is an immediate threat to safety:

1. Ensure your own safety.
2. Contact local emergency services.
3. Inform a member of the organizing committee as soon as possible.