



**International  
Federation of  
Library  
Associations and Institutions**

# IFLA Code of Ethics and Conduct for the Members of the Governing Board (2023)

## Preamble

This *Code of Ethics and Conduct (Code)* has been drawn up for members of the Governing Board within the context of approved Statutes, Rules of Procedure, and Core Values.

The objective of this Code is to ensure that high standards of behavior are observed by all IFLA Governing Board members in their roles as directors of IFLA.

Governing Board members shall have an awareness that they are associated with IFLA at both IFLA aligned events and activities, and that association may also extend more broadly to other events and activities. This conduct applies to in-person events such as meetings and conferences, but also across all forms of communication channels, including social media.

The Code outlines a set of fundamental principles to help the Governing Board define what is right, fair, just and good for IFLA in meeting its mission and purpose. Adherence to this Code will support the achievement of good governance and public trust.

As directors of IFLA, the Governing Board members should familiarise themselves with this Code and take reasonable action to clarify any matters.

Upon appointment to the Governing Board, directors shall be required to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the Code and agree to conform with this Code.

IFLA is a federation of library and information associations and institutions from every part of the world. Many of these members have formal [professional codes of ethics](#).

## General objectives for IFLA's governance

IFLA shall be governed fairly, impartially and responsibly by its Governing Board, to ensure that the best interests of the federation are upheld and advanced;

IFLA shall have an active, conscientious, and informed Governing Board whose members serve as directors, without compensation or material profit, to the best of their ability;

As an organisation based in The Netherlands, IFLA is bound by Dutch Law, including General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Directors need to ensure compliance with relevant laws and policies.

To achieve these objectives Governing Board members as directors of IFLA shall:

1. agree to endorse and promote the mission, purpose, policies, statements, and core values of IFLA and contribute to its strategic directions;
2. ensure that regular reports are provided to members and stakeholders on the results of IFLA's programmes and services and their range, scope and impact; and following every formal meeting of

the Governing Board.

3. act with honesty, respect, integrity and trust; be open and transparent in their work but also maintaining the confidentiality within the Board and between Board members, recognising the need to protect personal and privileged information;
4. strive to achieve consensus in decision-making and publicly support decisions that are made;
5. act fairly and with respect and responsiveness with others;
6. ensure that its Statutes, Rules of Procedure, Policies and Statements are accessible to all members; and are current, clear and inclusive of all matters related to good governance, transparency, accountability, human rights and public trust;
7. use their position appropriately and ensure any direct or indirect conflicts of interest are declared;
8. demonstrate a commitment to full and open discussion regarding its goals, plans, programmes, finances and governance, and demonstrate accountability for decisions;
9. act in a financially responsible manner by ensuring they understand financial reports, audit reports and other financial documents that are considered by the Board, and actively enquire into these reports;
10. approve and implement policies related directly to good governance and the sound management of its fiscal responsibilities and to ethical conduct in fundraising;
11. recognise the importance of the staff and volunteers to accomplish its desired results and place a high value on providing the training, tools and current information necessary for them to excel in their work;
12. ensure that all board members have access to a comprehensive induction to their role and responsibilities and the appropriate ongoing training to fulfil their role;
13. approve policies and plans that work toward increased diversity of participation and the greater use of all the IFLA languages in conferences and communication;
14. periodically reassess its respective mission, policies and operations considering the changing world environment through ongoing planning, monitoring and assessment processes;
15. develop processes for the regular self-evaluation of its effectiveness and the timely review and application of policies and statements, such as this Code.

## Implementation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct

This *Code* shall be an element in the induction of new Governing Board members as directors of IFLA.

Every member of the Governing Board is required to sign a statement that certifies that they have read and understood the *Code* and agree to conform with this *Code*.

In accordance with Rule 16.2 the Governing Board shall appoint an independent person who is an expert on the rules and methods of the conduct of business by boards and committees to assist the President in ensuring compliance with good decision-making and meeting procedure. This independent person, known as the Parliamentarian, assists the President or Chair of the General Assembly under Rule 11.1.4 and the President (as Chair of the Governing Board) for the Governing Board under Rule 16.2. The advice of the Parliamentarian may be sought before, during or after a meeting.

The Governing Board will ensure that non-compliance with the *Code* is addressed in accordance with Article 15.14 and Rule 29. Under Rule 29.2 if an individual who is elected or appointed to the Governing Board fails to act in accordance with Rule 29.1, the General Assembly may suspend or dismiss them in accordance with Article 15.14 and Rule 15.14.

The *Code* will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure its relevance and its support of good governance and public trust.

*Approved by the Governing Board of IFLA, February 2023*