



# CODE OF CONDUCT

**The mission of the Institute of Experimental Medicine is based on ethical principles, honesty, fairness, observance of human rights, and adherence to the law in the conduct of scientific research into human health.**

## Article 1

### Preamble

The purpose of the Code of Conduct ("Code") is to establish and maintain a creative environment and conditions of mutual tolerance and cooperation within the Institute of Experimental Medicine ("IEM") as well as in interactions with the public and the media.

Furthermore, the purpose of the existence of the Code and conformity to its provisions is to prevent unethical and unlawful actions at all levels of civil and legal interactions in the framework of work performed by the IEM's staff and management.

The scope of the Code extends to all of the persons constituting the IEM's human resources ("*IEM employees*"), including the management, scientific staff, technical staff, students, and members of the IEM's oversight and consultative bodies.

#### **The IEM's fundamental ethical principles include:**

- Good character, fairness, honesty, and productive approach to the performance of all tasks;
- Responsibility, loyalty, and mutual respect toward coworkers, the scientific and academic community, students, and society as a whole;
- Personal improvement and professional growth;
- Transparency in distributing information that is substantiated, accurate, and verifiable.

#### **The purpose of the Code includes:**

- Laying down and developing rules and principles for professional, ethical, and responsible conduct;
- Preventing employees' personal failures relating to work-related ethics;
- Cultivating the domain of science and research as well as the society of which the IEM forms part.





The Code comprises the following values and ethical principles:

## Article 2

### General Ethical Principles

**Every IEM employee must act in accordance with the Code**, which includes:

- Observing Czech laws, regulations, standards, treaties applicable to the IEM's operations, the IEM's internal regulations, *the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the Czech Academy of Sciences*, and *the Charter & Code for Researchers*;
  - Protecting the IEM and placing the IEM's mission ahead of personal ambitions;
  - Adhering to moral rules and principles as well as elementary rules of civility;
  - Observing human rights and fundamental freedoms, most importantly the right to life and health, inviolability of person and his/her privacy, right to human dignity, personal honor and good repute, freedom of thought, conscience, religious belief and practice, freedom of scientific research, creative work, and protection of intellectual property;
  - Recognizing freedom of speech, critical thinking, independent research, open-minded exchange of opinions and information;
  - Respecting alternative standpoints and, where applicable, accepting criticism in a fair manner;
  - Refraining from using the IEM's operation to promote religious interests, the interests of political parties and movements, to disseminate their ideologies, and to carry out own or third-party commercial activities;
  - Caring for the IEM's property and refraining from using it for private interests and personal or third-party benefit;
  - Maintaining confidentiality regarding personal and remuneration data and security measures the disclosure whereof is liable to jeopardize the system protecting such data;
  - Refraining from accepting gifts or other benefits in excess of the customary framework, where considered such gifts are goods and services the value whereof is in excess of the customary symbolic value and courtesy;
  - Issuing a warning of an impending conflict of interest and, where applicable, declaring a conflict of interest that occurs;
  - Promoting a positive attitude to persons with specific needs (disabled persons, persons with an alternative work arrangement aimed at balancing private and professional life, persons caring for a close person, persons undergoing transformation of sexual identity, etc.) and improving conditions for their activities in the academic domain;
  - Paying attention to the adequacy and feasibility of his/her work-related, educational, and academic obligations;
- Acting in a proper, honest, reliable manner, knowing that higher competences entail higher responsibility and social obligation to observe ethical rules. Employees must motivate one another through their everyday actions to adhere to ethical rules and principles.





## Article 3

### **Ethical Principles in Scientific and Research Work**

In the framework of research and work activities, **IEM employees** must:

- Promote cooperation within teams and the individual creativity of team members;
- Be open to an expert discussion that is based on fair argumentation and respect for the scientific opinions of others;
- Treat colleagues with an appropriate degree of criticism and apply a critical attitude to their own scientific and creative endeavors;
- Follow the most recent developments in their field of expertise;
- Strive to publish and popularize the results of their research and development activities;
- Bear full responsibility for the content, quality, and validity of results of their research and development activities, which must be achieved based on objective scientific procedures and methods, where attention must be paid to preventing such results from being misrepresented and to permitting the results to be verified;
- Preserve and archive their primary research data and protect such data from impairment and unauthorized third-party use;
- Refrain from appropriating the results of other people's work;
- Perform assessments and evaluations in a factual, objective, and impartial manner, and have arguments substantiating their conclusions.

## Article 4

### **Ethical Principles in Educational and Academic Work**

**Scientific workers** carrying out teaching activities at the IEM are responsible for the quality of teaching and the training of young scientists. Scientific workers who engage in teaching must:

- Benevolently share general knowledge and their own expertise with students and young scientists, and set an example for them in adhering to moral principles in education, research, and development;
- Deliver education by explicitly demonstrating standpoints and actions allowing the relationship between the teacher and the student to be built based on mutual respect and trust;





- Conduct teaching and communicate with students in a way demonstrating the correct approach to academic freedom, and support the development of independent critical thinking in students, their personal growth, and motivate them for professional advance;
- Refrain from misusing their authority for demanding tasks that go beyond the relationship between the teacher and the student.

## Article 5

### **Ethical Principles for Anticorruption Conduct and Prevention of Conflict of Interest**

In connection with principles aimed at preventing corruption, **IEM employees** must:

- Avoid pressuring and influencing in an inadequate manner public officials, representatives of grant organizations, government authorities, and other similar persons with a view to obtaining benefits for the IEM, which includes refraining from offering extraordinary gifts or benefits to representatives of such bodies and organizations;
- Avoid actions liable to result in personal benefits for themselves or close persons to the detriment of the IEM or another entity;
- Refrain from accepting gifts that may ultimately serve for advancing the donor and the donor's interests;
- Carry out any and all actions in a transparent manner, in accordance with the law and the IEM's internal regulations.

## Article 6

### **Ethical Principles for Communication with the Media and the Public**

**The IEM's employees** must:

- Uphold and defend the IEM's interests and act so as to refrain from damaging the IEM's good repute;
- Remain aware that their actions, conduct, and behavior represent the IEM in the public domain.

## Article 7

### **Ethical Principles for Environmental Protection**





The IEM and its employees are aware of their corporate social responsibility as regards the environmental impact of the IEM's operations, and do utmost to act so as to minimize any adverse environmental impact of their actions.

## Article 8

### **Miscellaneous Provisions**

The body responsible for reviewing violations of this Code is the IEM Ethics Committee. Likewise, the IEM Ethics Committee is the body wherewith the IEM's employees consult ethically disputable issues, and to which any conflict of interest, ethical misconduct, and potential violations are reported.

This Code of Conduct was reviewed by the IEM Board on 25 November 2021 based on a proposal of the Ethics Committee.

