



## Code of Conduct and Community Collaboration Guidelines

The Environmental Data Science Innovation & Impact Lab (ESIL) is committed to building, maintaining, and fostering an open, kind, collaborative and broad transdisciplinary environmental data science community, whose members feel connected, supported, and safe to contribute ideas and knowledge.

All ESIL community members are responsible for creating this culture, embodying our values, welcoming broad perspectives and ways of knowing, creating space for all, and conducting ethical science as guided by [FAIR \(Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable\)](#) and [CARE \(Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics\)](#) principles for scientific data sovereignty, management, governance, and stewardship.

### Our values

ESIL's vision is grounded in the conviction that innovation and breakthroughs in environmental data science will be precipitated by a broad, collaborative, curious, and welcoming research community that utilizes open data and infrastructure, cross-sector and community partnerships, team science, and engaged learning.

As such, our core values center people through broad invitation, kindness, respect, collaboration, and genuine relationships. They also center innovation, driven by collaborative, cross-sector science and synthesis, open, accessible data and tools, and fun, interdisciplinary teams. Finally, they center learning propelled by curiosity and accessible training and education opportunities.

### When and how to use these guidelines

These guidelines outline behavior expectations for ESIL community members. Your participation in the ESIL network is contingent upon following these guidelines in all ESIL activities, including, but not limited to, participating in meetings, webinars, hackathons, or working groups hosted or funded by ESIL, as well as in email lists and online forums such as GitHub, Slack, and LinkedIn. These guidelines have been adapted from those of the [International Arctic Research Policy Committee](#), the [Geological Society of America](#), the [American Geophysical Union](#), the [University Corporation for Atmospheric Research](#), [The Carpentries](#), and others. We encourage other organizations to adapt these guidelines for use in their own meetings.

Note: Working groups and hackathon teams are encouraged to discuss these guidelines and what they mean to them, and they will have the opportunity to add to them to specifically support their team.

The ESIL collaboration and behavior guidelines complement data use, management, authorship and access plans grounded in CARE and FAIR principles.

### Behavior Agreements

ESIL community members are expected to act professionally and respectfully in all activities, such

that each person, regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, body size, race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, level of experience, language fluency, political affiliation, veteran status, pregnancy, country of origin, and any other characteristic protected under state or federal law, feels safe and welcome in our activities and community.

In order to garner community benefits and reach the full potential of our mission, ESIL participants must be allowed to develop trust within a respectful and collaborative culture. Guiding behaviors that contribute to this culture include, but are not limited to:

### Showing Respect

*Listen carefully* – we each bring our own styles of communication, language, and ideas, and we must do our best to accommodate differences. Do not interrupt when someone is speaking and maintain an open mind when others have ideas that are different from yours.

*Be present* – when engaging with others, give them your full attention. If you need to respond to outside needs, please step away from the group quietly.

*Be kind* – offer positive, supportive comments and constructive feedback. Critique ideas, not people.

**Harassment, discrimination, bullying, aggression - including offensive comments, jokes, and imagery - are unacceptable regardless of intent, and will not be tolerated.**

*Be punctual* - respect the schedule provided by the organizers and avoid disruptive behavior during presentations, trainings, or working sessions.

*Respect privacy* - be mindful of the confidentiality of others. Always obtain explicit consent before recording, sharing, or using someone else's personal information, photos, or recordings.

Practice good digital etiquette (netiquette) when communicating online, whether in emails, messages, or social media - think before posting online and consider the potential impact on others. Do not share or distribute content generated by, or involving others, without their explicit consent.

### Being Welcoming

ESIL participants come from a wide range of skill levels, career stages, backgrounds, and cultures. Demonstrate that you value these different perspectives and identities through your words and actions, including through correct use of names, titles, and pronouns.

*Create space for everyone to participate* – be thoughtful about who is at the table; openly address accessibility needs, and provide multiple ways to contribute. This is essential for respectful interaction and for synthesizing the many ways of understanding.

*Be self-aware* – recognize that positionality and upbringing affect how words and behaviors are

perceived. Ensure that your words and behavior make others feel welcome.

*Commit to ongoing learning* – the move toward fair and just environmental data science is a collective journey. Continue to learn about different perspectives and ways of thinking. None of us is perfect; all of us will, from time to time, fail to live up to our own high standards. Being perfect is not what matters; owning our mistakes and committing to clear and persistent efforts to grow and improve is what matters most.

### Being Curious

*Check your presumptions* – we each bring our own ideas and assumptions about how the world should and does work – what are yours, and how do they affect how you interact with others? How do they shape your perception of new ideas?

*Ask questions* – one of the strengths of interdisciplinary teams is that we all bring different knowledge and viewpoints; no one person is expected to know everything. So don't be afraid to ask, to learn, and to share.

*Be bold* – significant innovations don't come from incremental efforts. Be brave in proposing and testing new ideas. When things don't work, learn from the experience.

*Invite feedback* – new ideas and improvements can emerge from many places when we're open to hearing them. Check your defensiveness and listen; accept feedback as a gift toward improving our work and ourselves.

### Being Collaborative

*Recognize that everyone is bringing something different to the table* – take the time to get to know each other. Keep an open mind, encourage ideas that are different from yours, and learn from each other's expertise and experience.

*Be accountable* - great team science depends on trust, communication, respect, and delivering on your commitments. Be clear about your needs, as both a requester and a responder, be realistic about your time and capacity commitments, and communicate timelines and standards in advance.

*Make assumptions explicit and provide context wherever possible* - misunderstandings are common on transdisciplinary and cross-cultural teams and can best be managed with intentionality. Check in about assumptions, and be willing to share and correct misunderstandings or mistakes when they happen. Make use of collaboration agreements, communicate clearly, and avoid jargon wherever possible.

*Discuss use of technologies* - adoption and use of technologies such as artificial intelligence varies widely between disciplines and practitioners. Please describe the ways you would like to use AI in your work as part of the team beforehand so that discussions can be had as a team.

*Respect intellectual property and data sovereignty* – ESIL recognizes the extractive and abusive history of scientific engagement with Native peoples, and is committed to doing better. Traditional knowledge holders are under no obligation to share their data, stories, or knowledge. Their work should always be credited, and only shared with permission. Follow guidelines for authorship, data sovereignty, and CARE principles. Acknowledge and credit the ideas and work of others.

*Recognize contributions* - Solutions to complex problems require contributions across a broad set of perspectives and disciplines. ESIL provides an authorship agreement template and contributions table worksheet to help teams attribute ideas and share credit. Err on the side of generosity and including all.

*Use the resources that we provide* - take advantage of the cyberinfrastructure and data at your disposal, but do not use them for unrelated tasks, as it could disrupt the event, introduce security risks, undermine the spirit of collaboration and fair play, and erode trust within the event community.

*Be safe* - never share sensitive personal information; use strong passwords for your CyVerse and GitHub accounts and do not share them with other participants; be cautious of unsolicited emails, messages, or links; and verify online contacts. If you encounter any illegal or harmful activities online related to this event, report them to Susan Sullivan (susan.sullivan@colorado.edu).

**Finally, speak up if you experience or notice a dangerous situation, or someone in distress!**

ESIL takes all concerns seriously. We will follow up on every report and take all appropriate steps to keep our community safe, respectful, and welcoming. See our “Reporting Process and Consequences” section below.

### **Code of Conduct: Unacceptable behaviors**

We adopt the full Code of Conduct of our home institution, the University of Colorado, details of which are found [here](#). To summarize, examples of unacceptable and reportable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- [Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination](#) in any form
- Physical or verbal abuse by anyone to anyone, including but not limited to a participant, member of the public, guest, member of any institution or sponsor
- [Unwelcome sexual attention or advances](#)
- Personal attacks directed at other guests, members, participants, etc.
- Alarming, intimidating, threatening, or hostile comments or conduct
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations
- Threatening or [stalking](#) anyone
- Unauthorized use or sharing of personal or confidential information or private communication
- Continuing interactions, including but not limited to conversations, photographs, recordings, instant messages, and emails, after being asked to stop
- [Ethical and scientific misconduct](#), including failing to credit contributions or respect intellectual property

- Engaging in any illegal activities, including hacking, cheating, or unauthorized access to systems or data
- Using the cyberinfrastructure provided by the organizers for activities unrelated to this event
- Other conduct which could reasonably be considered inappropriate in a professional setting

The University of Colorado recognizes all Federal and State protected classes. Mistreatment or harassment not related to protected class also has a negative impact and will be addressed by the ESIL team.

**Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.**

If there is a clear violation of the code of conduct during an ESIL event—for example, a meeting is Zoom bombed or a team member is verbally abusing another participant during a workshop— ESIL leaders, facilitators (or their designee), or campus/local police may take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including expelling the violator, or immediate removal of the violator from any online or in-person event or platform without warning or refund. If such actions are necessary, there will be follow up with the ESIL Access and Cultural Innovation (ACI) team to determine what further action is needed (see Reporting Process and Consequences below).

**Addressing Behavior Directly:** For smaller incidents that might be settled with a brief conversation, you may choose to contact the person in question or set up a (video) conversation to discuss how the behavior affected you. Please use this approach only if you feel comfortable; you do not have to carry the weight of addressing these issues yourself. If you are interested in this option but unsure how to go about it, please contact the ESIL ACI lead, Susan Sullivan ([susan.sullivan@colorado.edu](mailto:susan.sullivan@colorado.edu)), first—she will have advice on how to make the conversation happen and is available to join you in a conversation as requested.

## **Reporting Process and Consequences**

We take any reports of Code of Conduct violations seriously, and aim to support those who are impacted and ensure that problematic behavior doesn't happen again.

Where there has been a potentially serious policy or Code of Conduct violation, we will work with the [University of Colorado Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#) or other campus resources to address the issue, including notifying supervisors and/or the offender's home institution as required.

The process for ESIL leadership, facilitators and community members to report a Code of Conduct violation after it has occurred is as follows:

## **Making a Report**

If you believe you're experiencing or have experienced unacceptable behavior that is counter to this

Code of Conduct, or you are witness to this behavior happening to someone else, we encourage you to contact our ACI lead, Susan Sullivan (susan.sullivan@colorado.edu). You may also choose to anonymously report behavior to ESIL using [this form](#).

The ACI team will keep reports as confidential as possible. However, as [mandatory reporters](#), we have an obligation to report alleged protected class violations to our home institution.

Specifically:

- Cases of potential protected-class discrimination or harassment will be reported to the CU OIEC.
- If the violation is made by a member of another institution, that information may also be shared with that member's home institution by the CU OIEC under Title IX.
- In some instances, information may be shared with the [National Science Foundation](#), who is the funding organization of ESIL.

When we discuss incidents with people who are accused of misconduct (the respondent), we will anonymize details as much as possible to protect the privacy of the reporter and the person who was impacted (the complainant). In some cases, even when the details are anonymized, the respondent may guess at the identities of the reporter and complainants. If you have concerns about retaliation or your personal safety, please let us know (or note that in your report). We encourage you to report in any case, so that we can support you while keeping ESIL members safe. In some cases, we are able to compile several anonymized reports into a pattern of behavior, and take action based on that pattern.

Note: The reporting party does not need to be directly involved in a Code of Conduct violation incident. Please make a bystander report if you observe a potentially dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of these guidelines, even if the situation is not happening to you.

### **What Happens After a Report Is Filed**

After a member of the ESIL ACI team takes your report, they will (if necessary) consult with the appropriate support people at CU. The ESIL ACI team will respond with a status update within 5 business days.

During this time, they, or members of the CU OIEC will:

- Meet with you or review report documentation to determine what happened
- Consult documentation of past incidents for patterns of behavior
- Discuss appropriate response(s) to the incident
- Connect with the appropriate offices and/or make those response(s)
- Determine the follow up actions for any impacted people and/or the reporter
- Follow up with the impacted people, including connecting them with support and resources

As a result of this process, in minor cases the ESIL ACI lead may communicate with the respondent to:

- Explain what happened and the impact of their behavior
- Offer concrete examples of how to improve their behavior
- Explain consequences of their behavior, or future consequences if the behavior is repeated

**For significant infractions, follow up to the report may be turned over to the CU Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance and/or campus police.**

### **Possible Consequences to Code of Conduct Violations**

What follows are examples of possible responses to an incident report. This list is not exhaustive, and ESIL reserves the right to take any action it deems necessary. Generally speaking, the strongest response ESIL may take is to completely ban a user from further engagement with ESIL activities and, as is required, report a person to the CU OIEC and/or their home institution and NSF. If law enforcement should be involved, they will recommend that the complainant make that contact with the appropriate agency. Employees of CU Boulder may also be subject to consequences as determined by the institution.

In addition to the responses above, ESIL responses may include but are not limited to the following:

- A verbal discussion in person or via phone/Zoom followed by documentation of the conversation via email
- Not publishing the video or slides of a talk that violated the code of conduct
- Not allowing a speaker who violated the Code of Conduct to give (further) talks
- Immediately ending any team leadership, membership, or other responsibilities and privileges that a person holds
- Temporarily banning a person from ESIL activities
- Permanently banning a person from ESIL activities
- Nothing, if the behavior is determined to not be a Code of Conduct violation

**Do you need more resources?** If you prefer to speak with someone who is not on the ESIL leadership team, or who can maintain confidentiality, you may contact:

The [CU Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#) is a resource for all of us in navigating this space. They also offer resource materials that can assist you in exploring various topics and skills [here](#).

If you have questions about what, when, or how to report, or how to help someone else with concerns, [Don't Ignore It](#).

[CU Ombud's Office](#): Confidential support to navigate university situations. (Most universities have these resources)

The [CU Office of Victims Assistance](#) (Counseling is limited to CU students/staff/faculty, though

advocacy is open to everyone engaged with a CU-sponsored activity. Please look for a similar resource on your campus if you are from another institution).

### [National Crisis Hotlines](#)

### **How are we doing?**

Despite our best intentions, in some cases we may not be living up to our ideals of a positive, supportive, respectful, and collaborative community. If you feel we could do better, we welcome your feedback. Comments, suggestions and praise are also very welcome! Please complete [this form to provide anonymous feedback](#).

### **Acknowledgment**

By participating in this event, you agree to abide by this Code of Conduct and understand the consequences of violating it. We believe that a respectful environment benefits all participants and leads to more creative and successful outcomes.

Thank you for your cooperation in making ESIL events welcoming for all. **Have fun!**

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