



# Freedom of Form Foundation Code of Conduct

These standards will help both you, and the FFF, maintain and improve our reputations, and be the best we can be.

This Code isn't just a box to check - if we were just going through the motions, we would have just gotten a copy-paste job off the internet, after all. We are seriously passionate about bringing out the best in our team, and in the world, to the fullest extent of our abilities.

## Our mission

The Freedom of Form Foundation is working to fund and popularize scientific research that will enable freedom of one's physical form – biotech for self-expression.

We are working to fund and popularize scientific research that will enable freedom of one's physical form. We directly support the work of the most promising scientists. We will demonstrate that it is viable, and even appreciated, for scientists to research these topics. We will encourage more outward and open discussion of self-modification. We will engage more broadly with other organizations, universities, and for-profit companies to guarantee formation of a stable, self-sustaining research enterprise.

With the rapid advancement of bioscience, and the increasing attention of both advocates and skeptics towards biotechnology, this is our best chance to help guide the future of biotechnology research for the foreseeable future.

Together, we can make the phrase “be what you want to be” a reality.

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# **How do I work with the Code of Conduct?**

## **Who this Code of Conduct applies to**

All “Workers” - that is, all volunteers, people involved in projects or collaborations, employees, officers, and Board members - are expected to know and follow the Code of Conduct, in practice, substance, and spirit.

In addition, while this Code is written mainly for internal use, we expect other parties we deal with, such as contractors or consultants, to follow and uphold this Code.

## **Questions, clarifications, and suggestions**

Again, we want to emphasize this Code is written to help you, and our community, succeed at our mission. Questions, clarifications, and suggestions about this Code can be sent to your manager, the Secretary (Moonbeam), the Vice President (Atha), or the President (Zennith). Contact info is at the end of this document.

## **Enforcement**

Failures to uphold this Code can result in disciplinary action, potentially including termination.

In the case of suspected Board member violations, the Board will investigate the situation, directly or through committee or appointment, and take appropriate actions, potentially including removal of the Board member.

## **Presumed innocence and proportional responses**

In all cases, note that we assume innocence during investigations by default. In cases where disciplinary actions would be imposed, we will require a sufficient burden of evidence, appropriate to the situation, before imposing them.

In some complex situations requiring more substantial investigation, the person accused may be placed on administrative leave - that is, being temporarily excused from all duties. If the person is an employee, they will still be provided all pay and benefits due. Administrative leave is not a disciplinary action, and must not be viewed in a negative light.

We believe in protecting the rights of the innocent, and even protecting the rights of the guilty (such as avoiding disproportional responses). We’re not a government, so our role here is limited - but we still firmly believe in protecting these rights, and we’ll do our best.

## **Reporting suspected violations**

In most cases, you can report suspected violations to your manager, the Secretary (Moonbeam), the Vice President (Atha), or the President (Zennith).

In cases where you suspect a law or government regulation was broken, you should file a complaint to the Board President, in writing. Upon such receipt by the Board President, an acknowledgement will be sent to the sender within 5 business days.

### **No retaliation for acting in Good Faith**

The FFF doesn't allow retaliation against any Worker (e.g. volunteers, people working on projects, officers, employees, and Board members) for submitting a concern of a violation, reported with genuine intent and belief, with reasonable basis in fact. The person continues to be protected from retaliation only if they allow our investigation process (below) to complete.

Remember - we believe in presumed innocence, and proportional responses. If disciplinary action is due, you can really help us take the correct actions here.

### **Investigation process and confidentiality**

In order to protect all parties, the FFF will carefully investigate reports, and take corrective actions if appropriate. This takes time - please remember we have to prioritize the *appropriateness of response over committing to a specific timeline*.

In complex cases, this might require corresponding with other parties (such as other people, companies, or even government officials, as relevant) - and you can appreciate that this *will take time and details often cannot be discussed with the complainant*. We give you our word that investigations will be completed at a reasonable speed, and will never purposefully delay an investigation.

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis, or may be submitted anonymously. In all cases, reports of suspected violations shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

In short - both you, and the FFF, will do our best to make sure that any potential violations of this Code of Conduct are handled in an appropriate way, protecting the rights of the innocent *and* the guilty, and moving with a reasonable speed - and we'll do our best even if situations are complicated. Sound good?

## **Lead with integrity, diversity, and inclusiveness**

The world is looking up to us. Seriously. And this is why we have to act with the highest expectations of personal conduct.

Meeting these expectations requires a personal choice, and sacrifice. Some of these expectations mean you will have to hold back some personal impulses, and to help lead by example.

## **Standards for personal conduct**

Board members, officers, volunteers, and people working on projects are all agents and representatives of the FFF - and will be seen as such by outside parties. This carries a burden of leadership and self-control that extends far outside our normal stomping grounds, to anywhere you can be seen as a representative of the FFF.

All people who represent our organization share in this duty. Moreover, employees, officers, and Board members shoulder an especially large portion of this burden.

## **Celebrate diversity**

We understand that people are simply...who they are. Diversity in all respects including diversity of thought, and diversity of physical characteristics, are core concepts to morphological freedom. Nothing more, and nothing less. We all gain by learning from each other's abilities and experiences.

We welcome people of all sorts, regardless of race, color, religion, spirituality, ancestry, national origin, veteran's status, pregnancy or reproductive status, marital status, age, retirement status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, financial status, and species identity or expression, in addition to characteristics protected by US and state law.

We expect all Workers - volunteers, people working on projects, officers, employees, and Board members - to similarly welcome people with the same openness, in all their encounters - not just when engaged in FFF business.

Naturally, we will not entertain discrimination based on the characteristics mentioned above when considering a person's candidacy for an open position or task to be performed - candidates will be, and must be, considered based on their merits alone.

If you believe you have been a victim of discrimination, or if you have witnessed discriminatory behavior, by any FFF worker in *any* context, or by *any* person in any areas monitored, hosted, or patrolled by the FFF, please let any of the following people know: your manager, Tanorath, Moonbeam, Atha, or Zennith. Contact info is at the end of this document.

## **Exude respect - professionally and personally**

You like to be heard. You like to be respected, and for your opinions to be taken seriously. You have genuine beliefs and desires, and you have training and experience in areas of expertise that not everyone else shares.

Just remember: many other people are the same way, in areas that are different from the ones you have experience in. Regardless of the specifics, you can always learn something interesting from others, just as they can learn from you.

One other thing - if you are “right” in stating beliefs or predictions even 51% of the time, you could go to Wall Street and handily beat the market. If you don’t have that sort of confidence, you should make allowances that *in every-day interactions, the other person may well be more correct than you.*

The above considerations reinforce why it’s so important to be respectful at all times. You can always learn something, and you may not always be correct. And, even if you *are* correct, the other person probably still has very good reasons that support their position or belief.

You can help us build a safe and fun environment, where everyone can learn from each other, by simply respecting other people’s opinions. Note that here, “opinions” includes anything from informal beliefs, to professional opinions gained through formal training.

If you have a disagreement, we suggest you consider trying to: (1) clarify what exactly is being discussed; (2) clearly state terminology being used, in case it is being understood differently by either party; (3) clarify where you agree; (4) work together to see if either party has more relevant experience or training to the matter of disagreement; (5) remember to focus any disagreement on the *argument itself*, not the person; (6) ask genuine questions to see more about what the other person thinks; and (7) don’t be afraid to say that you need more time to think, and step away to think some more privately.

Importantly - do *not* belittle the other person’s argument, or the person themselves. Don’t respond with sarcasm, don’t make statements as if they *should* have known something, and do not flaunt in any way. They won’t listen to you, *and* you’ll leave a sour taste in everyone’s - including any observers’ - mouths.

### **Be cordial and positive**

Be a pleasant person to be around. It’s something we all want to do, and will do naturally most of the time. But, sometimes it takes effort.

Be thankful and appreciative of others’ time, whether you’re giving or receiving advice, or collaborating on a project, or just discussing off-topic interests. And, if you are observing a conversation between other people, try not to jump in or interrupt, *especially* if you haven’t heard or seen their entire conversation’s context.

Don’t forget to put active effort into *being positive*. Our goals are hard enough, and our entire community is sufficiently skeptical. So, remember to balance skepticism and treatment of caveats, with *other factors that are promising* - such as (1) good analogous results from another field, (2) everyone’s ability to learn and improve, (3) working with competent teammates, and (4) alternative methods and backup strategies.

And be positive towards the other person, too! Give them a hearty hello, take interest in them, ask questions, and give them an occasional genuine compliment too.

### **Project competence and constructiveness**

There are some things you can do that can help you come across as a knowledgeable and intelligent leader, and an expert.

You can display maturity of thought - that is, the ability to make sound judgments and solve problems - by (1) only making statements or opinions that you have thought through and can defend, (2) avoiding over-committing to a position that you have less confidence in - perhaps by saying something like "I'm no expert in this, but I wonder if...", and (3) deferring to and trusting other people if they are experienced or qualified in their field.

Focusing on being constructive can help a lot too. For example, if you see an area where someone can improve (in knowledge, in behavior, etc), you can absolutely help communicate that. Remember to compliment things they do right, as well! And, if the matter that you want to give constructive criticism of is fairly sensitive, you should consider talking in a private message rather than in a group setting.

And finally, being *consistent* can help you project both competence and constructiveness. Try to practice these behaviors every day - they will help you, and all of us, earn and maintain our professional reputation. People will learn that you are reliable and can contribute new insight to any problem.

### **Respect privacy and boundaries**

Some things aren't appropriate to talk about in a group conversation - or even anywhere - especially in a business setting. It's hard to make all-encompassing guidelines about matters of privacy and boundaries - so please be mindful and use your best judgment.

Depending on context and nature of the conversation, inappropriate discussion topics might include matters of health including mental health, personal qualities such as race, spirituality, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, species identity, pregnancy status, retirement status, and veteran's status, especially if the nature of the conversation is of an interview for a potential recruit. Discussing many of the above matters in such a context could be breaking the law, could be forms of harassment, and are simply inappropriate in a business setting.

Natural social conversations for genuine interest in private aspects of a person are likely just fine, if the person is freely offering up that information. For example: "Oh hey, I heard you served in the army a few years ago, what was that like?" or "You mentioned you were pregnant recently, congratulations! How is that going?" - if such topics are genuine water-cooler conversation, you're probably just fine.

However, some things are still rarely or never appropriate, especially not in group conversations. For example, in issues of urgent health or mental health, if you genuinely believe someone needs help, you should encourage them to find a doctor, and not provide any further opinions - especially not in group conversations. Taking any other action besides encouraging professional help can be harmful.

### **Be trustworthy and exercise restraint**

Always tell the truth, especially about things relating to our company. You don't always have to reveal all details, especially if matters are sensitive, or are protected by a Non-Disclosure Agreement, but you do need to uphold truth.

If you make a mistake, own up to it. Even if the mistake is a big deal (or expensive), we can probably get it fixed, with no real harm done. Everyone makes mistakes; it's just part of the job. Coming clean on mistakes helps us avoid "ticking time-bombs", which can be truly damaging. And... we genuinely appreciate the honesty. It increases trust among team members, and helps us uphold the hard-earned trust given to us by donors and stakeholders.

As a corollary, if someone comes to you to admit a mistake, to report bad news, or is simply acting as a messenger - don't take frustration out on them.

Displaying *resilience* is another way you can earn trust. Just think - if you successfully refrain from responding to, or encouraging, an insult or personal attack, you are signaling that you won't compromise your morals or your goals just to get quick satisfaction. In more intense situations, focus on de-escalation - even just walking away is an option. Don't allow yourself to be drawn into a fight.

Moreover, when you receive critique or criticism, don't take it as an attack (unless it is genuinely intended to be damaging, of course). Take the critique seriously, if you are able, and try to learn from it.

Finally, loyalty is an important part of trust. We're not looking for Secret Service levels of loyalty, but we do have some guidelines: (1) Don't leak information that you know or suspect is sensitive; (2) don't make unsubstantiated reports about our organization to other parties; (3) do not take actions that would harm our mission of freedom of form, or that would harm our company; and (4) follow through on your plans - if you tell us you're going to do something, don't leave us hanging!

## **Business expectations**

### **Conflict of Interest Policy**

We have a [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), which we expect everyone to understand and uphold in spirit and in practice. We - along with all our stakeholders, and our community at large - expect



that your decision-making process will be free from unfair financial arrangements, excess benefit arrangements, and so on.

Further, note that certain Workers in the FFF (namely, officers, Board members, or those with “board delegated powers”) need to formally fill out and sign Conflict of Interest Statements. If you need to provide a Conflict of Interest Statement, we’ll let you know.

### **Separation of corporate and personal assets**

We all need to be responsible with how corporate versus personal assets and property are treated, especially due to the nature of our organization being a nonprofit corporation.

Intermixing personal and corporate property can be messy, even if it’s approached with good intentions. Auditing and reporting requirements are difficult enough to keep track of - so please help us keep a clean ship by keeping any FFF property, documents, data, or other assets in different locations from your personal items.

And, in all circumstances, if you are using FFF assets, those assets **must** be used principally for the benefit of the FFF. Use for any other purposes, for anything beyond a negligible level, is not permitted.

One other note - you should generally neither accept nor give gifts of personal property, extravagant meals, or entertainment, with outside parties, if there is any potential business connection with the FFF. These can influence relationships and decision-making, or even be considered bribes, even if you have good intentions. However, minimal gifts, such as pens or coffee cups, should be fine.

Keep in mind these, and related topics, aren’t just our words - there are many US Federal and state laws and regulations about them. Breaking these rules will often be considered serious criminal behavior that government authorities will prosecute you for.

### **Interacting with the media and in public settings**

Representatives of the FFF have already been interacting with very prominent people, including leading researchers, and as we grow, we will run across more encounters with the media and other public settings.

During your work with the FFF, you may find yourself being asked questions by the media, or being offered a chance to appear on a show. Hopefully the context is good - “this is really interesting, can you please tell us more?” Of course, unpleasant context is always possible too: “We heard that Person X has been embezzling funds, what do you know about that?”

**Stop and think!** Any answer, even answers you think would be proper, can potentially do permanent damage - including to you, since you’re now on record.

Take a couple seconds to collect yourself. Then, generally, you should suggest that the journalist (or other prominent person) get in contact with Zennith or Atha, or send an email to [contact@freedomofform.org](mailto:contact@freedomofform.org).

Note that if you have been provided an information packet, talking points, or have otherwise been explicitly authorized by Zennith or Atha to talk with the media, please follow the guidelines you have been given.

### **Interacting professionally with teammates and your manager**

We can't understate how amazing every single person in the FFF is. Yes, everyone is doing their work brilliantly - but less commonly, the culture our company has grown would be admired by any company. What other companies, nevermind nonprofits, can you work at and *really* be yourself in every way? You can probably count on one hand (or paw)!

We still need to be mindful about a few professional expectations for interaction.

All businesses have a chain of command, including ours. A "chain of command" isn't a bad thing - it's just an effective way to manage decision-making and responsibilities. The Board of Directors determines strategies - high-level plans spanning years - and is simply unable to solve every detail of every problem. Strategies are broken up into progressively smaller chunks, where our team can divide-and-conquer each individual problem to fulfill the strategies.

If you run into an issue, you should be mindful *who* in the chain of command is best equipped to help you. For example, if you are part of a team working on an ongoing project, and you have comments or concerns about it, you should first try talking with the teammates *on that project*, including the Project Lead, or with the Operations Manager, Tanorath.

If you are in a position of management, you should bear in mind that people on the team likely know a lot more subject-matter expertise than you do. If they insist something is fact, it probably is - and you should defer to them. And, take any suggestions they make seriously.

If you are working on one project, and you see some interesting results or discussion in a different (parallel) project, please *defer to their expertise*. They likely know more about the topic than you do. If they have to respond to too many external inputs, they will work less efficiently.

If you see something you don't understand, or don't agree with, you should start by asking genuine questions. You'll either understand the reasoning of the other person, or the other person might realize something they hadn't considered before.

Please keep in mind the above suggestions about how to interact professionally with others in the FFF, and you'll help us continue working effectively while upholding and even improving our already exceptional company culture. Thank you!

## Other important documents

### Corporate bylaws

[Link to bylaws](#)

These are the rules that describe how our organization works. Some material in this Code of Conduct is based on the bylaws, but the bylaws cover other important things too, such as board responsibilities, and record-keeping rules.

### Rules for the FFF community Discord server

[Link to Discord rules](#)

The Discord server's rules overlap with this Code of Conduct, though the Discord rules are distinct. The rules have additional provisions about complying with Discord terms of service, and additional ways to stay safe online, which are beyond the scope of this Code of Conduct.

## Contact info

### President - Zennith

Discord: Zennith#2718

Email: [mnorsworthy@freedomofform.org](mailto:mnorsworthy@freedomofform.org)

### Vice President - Atha

Discord: Athamanatha Kitsune (Danfox)#6971

Email: [ddavies@freedomofform.org](mailto:ddavies@freedomofform.org)

### Secretary - Moonbeam

Discord: Moonbeam#7925

Email: [wmccleenny@freedomofform.org](mailto:wmccleenny@freedomofform.org)

### Operations Manager - Tanorath

Discord: Tanorath#3481

Email: [ktan@freedomofform.org](mailto:ktan@freedomofform.org)

### General inquiries

[contact@freedomofform.org](mailto:contact@freedomofform.org)



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