

## Code of Ethics for SCI Members

### 1 Objectivity, Integrity and Selflessness

Members must at all times act only in the best interests of SCI. They should not disclose information they obtain through SCI to other bodies that might benefit from it to the detriment of SCI or its component parts, or be the source of information to others who might benefit. Unauthorised disclosure could also expose SCI to potential risk of liability under confidentiality agreements with partners. Members should endeavour to exercise their decision-making, influencing and representational roles related to SCI on the basis of fact, merit and recognised constitutional procedure.

### 2 Member Conduct

Members must endeavour to promote the overall best interests of the Society; to inspire others to take pride in it; and to work within its ethos and constitutional provisions.

They should conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the organisation, or its staff individually or collectively, and should not take part in any activity which is in conflict with the objects or which might damage the reputation of the organisation.

They should not engage in gossip or innuendo that may undermine the effectiveness of the organisation, or of those elected or appointed to further such effectiveness through the proper exercise of their judgement or conduct of their duties. Members should not denigrate another member of SCI publicly and particularly not in front of SCI staff. Members agree to raise any concerns about the actions or views of another Member, or an SCI employee, constructively, without unnecessary personal comments.

They must at all times avoid actions or statements towards Members, prospective Members, staff and visitors that might be construed as discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age (“protected characteristics”). The following gives further details on the different forms of discrimination:

- Discrimination against an employee. This is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more protected characteristics,
- Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.
- Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

Member communications with the Secretariat which go beyond agreed day to day activities (particularly contentious issues or complaints) should be routed via the Directors rather than directly to a staff member.

Members should take care to note that close personal relationships between a member and a staff member which go beyond the boundaries of a professional relationship may place one or both parties in a difficult position, and have consequences way beyond their respective areas of responsibility. Similar considerations apply to strong personal antipathy.

### **3 Membership of SCI Interest Groups**

Members who join SCI Interest Groups agree to abide by the terms of the SCI Membership Rules and any additional group procedures which may be approved by MAC from time to time.

### **4 Accountability**

Members must recognise that incorporation by Royal Charter and as a Registered Charity places SCI, and especially the Executive Director, under legal constraints over and beyond those applicable to regular companies through regulatory and fiscal compliance.

### **5 Resolution of Problems**

Members must use their best endeavours at all times to work with the Executive Director and other Directors (or Chairman of the Board of Trustees if the Executive Director is involved personally) to resolve any actual or potential conflict or problem arising. If it cannot be resolved, or if it is felt to be so serious as to risk compromising the overall stability or probity of the organisation, it is the duty of those concerned to ask for the matter to be placed on the agenda for a meeting of the Board of Trustees. On that occasion (or in any sub-committee formed for the purpose) those concerned should disclose all relevant facts, and be given the opportunity to defend their conduct.

### **6 Consequences of non-compliance**

Members should be mindful of the following section of the SCI Rules:

*“If a complaint of misconduct about a Member of the Society is made to the Board of Trustees and that complaint, the Member first, having been given the opportunity to resolve the issue with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and failing that second, having been given an opportunity of being heard in his own behalf before the Board of Trustees, is in the opinion of the of the Board of Trustees sufficiently established, the Board of Trustees may, by resolution as hereinafter provided, suspend the Member from rights of membership for such a period as the Board of Trustees may determine, or the Board of Trustees may in like manner determine that his membership shall be terminated and thereupon he shall cease to be a Member. If the Member of the Society is also a Member of the Board of Trustees then he shall, in addition to being suspended or having his membership of the Society terminated, also have his membership of the Board of Trustees suspended or terminated as the case may be.” In the event of it being brought to the notice of the Board of Trustees that any Member has been guilty of misconduct or has been:*

- A) found guilty of any criminal offence involving fraud or dishonesty; or*
- B) committed to prison for any other criminal offence;*

*then the Board of Trustees may, by resolution as hereinafter provided, order his name to be removed from the Register, and thereupon he shall cease to be a Member.*

*A resolution of the Board of Trustees as aforesaid shall not be passed unless not less than two-thirds of the Members of the Board of Trustees eligible to vote in favour of such a resolution. The Member of the Board of Trustees found guilty of misconduct shall not be eligible to vote in respect of such a resolution.*

*The powers in this rule may not be delegated by the Board of Trustees.”*

## **7 Acceptance of the Code of Ethics**

Upon joining SCI as a Member or renewing their membership, Members are required to accept the above Code of Ethics and agree to abide by it for the duration of their Membership of the Society.