



IZFS Event Discrimination and Harassment Policy

(approved by Exec Com 2.21.2022, implemented for IZFC 2022), revised and approved March 27, 2023 to comply with NIH grant required language)

The International Zebrafish Society (IZFS) is committed to providing a discrimination-, harassment-, and retaliation free environment for all society members and participants in society events. IZFS prohibits discrimination or harassment based on actual or perceived gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, body size, disability, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, religion (or lack thereof), or marital or parental status. IZFS has zero tolerance for any form of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation at society meetings and events.

This policy applies to all IZFS events, including those sponsored by other organizations held in conjunction with any virtual or in-person IZFS event. All participants, including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, staff, contractors, vendors and other service providers, and anyone else present at IZFS virtual or in-person meetings or events, are expected to abide by this policy.

Unacceptable Behavior

Discrimination consists of material, adverse treatment based on a person's protected status. Conduct can amount to prohibited discrimination even when a person does not specifically intend to harm someone else.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct of a demeaning, abusive, and/or offensive nature that either (1) constitutes a term or condition of a person's participation in society events (quid pro quo harassment); or (2) substantially interferes with a person's participation in society events or otherwise creates what a reasonable person would consider to be a hostile environment. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, physical or verbal abuse of any participant, stalking or threatening any participant, harassing photography or recording of any participant, the use of slurs and epithets, display of disparaging material, display of sexual imagery, inappropriate or unwelcome physical contact, and nonconsensual sexual advances.

Retaliation consists of material, adverse action taken against someone because the person reported discrimination or harassment (either on behalf of themselves or another) or because the person participated in the investigation and resolution of a report. Retaliation can occur even if the underlying report of discrimination or harassment is unsubstantiated.

Participants who are asked to stop discriminatory or harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. Upon receipt of a report of prohibited conduct, IZFS retains the right to take any steps deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal from the event without warning or refund, to end the conduct and maintain a safe and welcoming environment for participants.

Further, IZFS reserves the right to prohibit anyone who violates this policy from attending any future IZFS meeting or event. Misconduct can also result in the revocation of IZFS membership.

Reporting Unacceptable Behavior

Any person subjected or witness to discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report such conduct to IZFS management as soon as possible and may be asked to file a written report. IZFS staff are available for consultation with any meeting or event participant or attendee who believes they have experienced any form of harassment while at any IZFS meeting or event. Reports should include identification of the offender (or description); behaviors or actions by that person; circumstances around the incident; day, time, and session; and others present. All written reports will be kept confidential.

Upon receipt of a report, the IZFS Executive Director will convene the President, President-Elect, Meeting Planner and Consulting Partner to review the available information, which may include speaking with the persons involved, and determine whether a policy violation has occurred. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, this team will also determine the appropriate consequences as stated above. To the extent any person experiences or witnesses conduct that is criminal in nature, IZFS strongly encourages the person to also make a report to law enforcement.

Unacceptable behaviors not reported during the meeting or event may be reported to IZFS staff after the conference by contacting Executive Director Nichole Nikolic (nnikolic@izfs.org). All complaints will be treated seriously and responded to promptly.

Any individual who has questions, concerns or complaints related to harassment is also encouraged to contact the IZFS Executive Director or the HHS Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Information about how to file a complaint with HHS OCR can be found on OCR's webpage, [Filing a Civil Rights Complaint](#). Filing a complaint with IZFS is not required before filing a complaint of discrimination with HHS OCR, and seeking assistance from IZFS in no way prohibits filing complaints with HHS OCR. Individuals can notify NIH about concerns of harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination, and other forms of inappropriate conduct at NIH-supported conferences (see NIH's [Find Help webpage](#)).

A participant or attendee who believes he or she was falsely or unfairly accused of violating this policy should notify IZFS Executive Director Nichole Nikolic (nnikolic@izfs.org).