

EARLI Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct (EARLI CoPEC)

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EARLI Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct

Adopted in August 2023

Amended by EARLI Board in October 2023

A. Background

EARLI was founded in 1985 with the goal to bring together scientists to advance research on learning and instruction. The association aims at lowering the barriers to accessing and sharing our research within but also outside of Europe, attracting colleagues from all over the world. Staying true to this goal, members of EARLI follow ethical principles serving to *advance and share research on learning and instruction together*.

According to the EARLI statutes, the goals of the EARLI association are the following:

- Promotion and development within Europe of empirical and theoretical research into learning and instruction in its broad context;
- Establishing an international network and communication forum for researchers working in the broad field of learning and instruction;
- Promotion of mutual scientific communication and research cooperation between members and the international exchange of research results among researchers;
- Promotion of the professional training and development of researchers in learning and instruction;
- Promotion of the exchange of information related to research in learning and instruction between European members and other associations around the world in order to pursue the purpose and objectives of the association.

As part of the regular scientific activities of EARLI, the association has been organizing a biennial conference every other year, multiple SIG conferences in the years between, running three scientific journals to-date, and engaging in several activities to support its members' scientific activities and accomplish its mission. EARLI's **mission statement** states that:

EARLI promotes and supports research initiatives between internationally active researchers, such as Special Interest Groups (SIGs), Emerging Field Groups (EFGs), and the EARLI Centre for Excellence in Research (E-CER). It also aims to stimulate young researchers to engage with senior researchers through its JURE network. Paramount in achieving these goals are the EARLI conference activities and publications - three renowned academic journals (Learning and Instruction, Educational Research Review and Frontline Learning Research) and the EARLI book series.

EARLI strongly believes that the diverse composition of its members, regardless of their background, gender, ethnicity or any other distinguishing characteristic,

contributes to the richness of our activities. EARLI is, therefore, committed to encouraging equity, diversity, and inclusion across our association and our activities. [<https://www.earli.org/about>]

Earlier versions of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy can be retrieved here [<https://www.earli.org/assets/files/EARLI-Equity-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Position-Paper-October-2022.pdf>, most recent version: October 2022].

B. A need for the EARLI Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct

EARLI has always been guided by joint goals, values, and ethical principles. Yet, these principles have not been explicitly documented. We acknowledge that developing a complete Code of Ethics that meets every member's expectation is an elusive task. Therefore, we hope that as a community we can create a living document representing our values and specifying our expectations of professional conduct. Therefore, this document is a declaration of the EARLI Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct articulating EARLI's ethical principles to begin a discussion among the community for continuously improving this document.

C. Structure of This Document

This document consists of two parts: The first describes the *EARLI Code of Ethics*, and the second part operationalizes these principles into a *Code of Conduct*. Both represent working documents of the Association.

D. Definitions

We use the following definition for "Code of Ethics":

"Codes of ethics are agreements between representatives of an occupation concerning ethical standards, an obligation to adhere to certain standards, principles, and rules that guide the profession, making them also explicit to outsiders" (Sutrop et al., 2020, p. 69).

A Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines that specify and operationalize the Code of Ethics. There may be multiple such codes. For example, within EARLI there is a Code of Ethics as well as an EARLI Conference Code of Conduct.

E. Working Group and Timeline

The goal is to collectively create the EARLI Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct. There will be multiple steps building up this participatory effort, as follows.

- May 2023: An ad-hoc committee, chaired by the EARLI president, is created to lead the effort. Current members of this committee are the EARLI president, EARLI president-elect, the EARLI EC Communications Portfolio holder, and two EARLI members, and one JURE representative.

- July 2023: A basic draft is created, shared, and discussed with the BoD and ad-hoc committee members.
- August 2023: A revised draft is shared with the Policy Council members in the first week of August, to be discussed during the Policy Council meeting at EARLI 2023.
- September 2023: The draft will also be made available to all EARLI members for feedback. An announcement about this is made during the EARLI Members' meeting at EARLI 2023 and an e-mail is sent to all members
- October 2023: The EARLI BoD reviews and approves the document.
- November 2023: The document is checked by a legal advisor or an expert advisor on the matter.
- November 2023: The revision leads to the document that is endorsed by the EARLI BOD, who also operationalizes the next actions based on this document.
- November 2023: The EARLI website is updated accordingly. A top-level menu is created, titled "Code of Ethics". From within it, one has access to the "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion" policy, the EARLI Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct, and the EARLI Safe Conference Policy.
- December 2023: An EARLI newsletter is circulated with an announcement.

F. The Code of Ethics

EARLI members commit themselves to uphold the highest ethical standards in the pursuit of knowledge and the advancement of educational research. We recognize the profound impact our research can have on individuals, communities, and society as a whole, but also acknowledge the impact that each member of the community can have on each other on a personal level. Therefore, we adhere to the following principles to guide our actions and ensure the integrity and credibility of our work.

All EARLI members are expected to adhere to this Code of Ethics. The EARLI Board of Directors or/and the General Assembly reserve the right to decide on measures to be taken for any member who has been proven not to abide by the EARLI Code of Ethics. These measures may include denied membership to the Association and its activities.

1. Advancing and Sharing Research on Learning and Instruction together

- 1.1 We act responsibly towards our community;
- 1.2 We meet to share knowledge and discuss our findings with each other to progressively arrive at a better understanding of our field;
- 1.3 EARLI builds on the support of each of its members, providing services across the association and within its Special Interest and Research Groups.

2. Integrity and Professionalism

- 2.1. We conduct ourselves with honesty, fairness, and transparency in all aspects of our research activities;
- 2.2. We strive to maintain the highest standards of professional competence, continuously enhancing our knowledge and skills to contribute to the field of educational research;
- 2.3. We respect the intellectual property rights of others and give proper credit for their ideas, theories, and contributions;
- 2.4 We dedicate our work to advance the expertise in our field.

3. Research Design and Conduct

- 3.1. We design, conduct, and report our research in a rigorous, systematic, transparent and unbiased manner, ensuring the validity and reliability of our findings;
- 3.2. We critically examine and evaluate the ethical implications of our research, minimizing potential harm to participants, their rights, privacy, and dignity;
- 3.3. We obtain informed consent from participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the purpose, procedures, potential threats, and benefits of the research. This includes a mention of their right to withdraw from the research at any time.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

- 4.1. We collect, store, and use data with utmost care, ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and data protection in compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- 4.2. We employ sound and ethical practices in data analysis, interpretation, and reporting, avoiding any manipulation or distortion of results to fit preconceived notions or biases;
- 4.3. We acknowledge and address any conflicts of interest that may arise during the research process, disclosing financial, personal, or organizational relationships that could influence the research outcomes.

5. Collaboration and Collegiality

- 5.1. We foster a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and openness among researchers, valuing diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions;
- 5.2. We acknowledge the collaborative nature of research and appropriately attribute the contributions of all individuals involved in the research process;
- 5.3. We actively engage in professional dialogue, sharing knowledge, insights, and best practices with fellow researchers and the broader educational community.

6. Mutual Respect, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- 6.1 We respect each other's inalienable and inherent human rights;
- 6.2 We value and promote diversity in our community;
- 6.3 We ensure that our practices and ways of working are in line with the highest standards of equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- 6.4 We do not accept any kinds of behavior that includes offensive verbal comments related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, and religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, inappropriate physical contact, as well as unwelcome sexual attention in any form amidst our community.

7. Dissemination and Publication

- 7.1 We disseminate our research findings responsibly and transparently, ensuring accurate representation of the study's scope, methods, and limitations;
- 7.2 We disseminate to those who would benefit from the research and encourage open science best practices;
- 7.3 We uphold the principles of intellectual integrity, avoiding plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or any other form of academic misconduct;
- 7.4 We respect the rights of others by obtaining necessary permissions and permissions for the use of copyrighted materials in our publications and presentations.

8. Authorship

8.1 We acknowledge that authorship of publications comprises a list of everyone who has made a substantive and identifiable scientific contribution to the reported research. Such contribution may include formulating the problem or hypothesis, generating ideas, conceptual schemas or analytic categories; structuring the study design; reviewing relevant literature; collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; writing first drafts or substantial parts of text; significant rewriting or editing. If research has involved collaboration across different roles or professions, for example between academic educational researchers and teachers or other practitioners, then anyone who has made a substantive contribution should be credited as a co-author. The order of authorship credit should accurately reflect the relative contributions of persons involved. Alternatively, co-authors may agree to an alphabetic listing of their names. Mutual agreement on authorship should be gained as early as possible in the writing process;

8.2 We should not claim authorship credit for research on the basis of status or seniority;

8.3 We should not use research carried out with co-researchers as the basis of individual outputs without the agreement of the co-researchers involved;

8.4. A student is usually listed as principal author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's dissertation or thesis.

9. Ethical Review and Oversight

9.1. We seek appropriate ethical review and oversight for our research involving human participants, animals, or sensitive data, adhering to the established guidelines and regulations;

9.2. We take responsibility for addressing any ethical concerns raised by stakeholders, promptly investigating and taking corrective actions as necessary;

9.3. We promote ethical awareness and education within our association, fostering a culture of ethical conduct and ensuring compliance with this Code of Ethics.

10. Mentoring and Accountability

10.1. As members of the EARLI community, we strive to selflessly promote the goals of the EARLI association;

10.2 All EARLI members should be mentors to junior researchers and should create an environment of mutual trust and respect to help junior researchers grow as professionals;

10.3 All EARLI members who hold a position of power within the community are accountable to each other and should always act as positive role models for others.

11. Social Responsibility

11.1. We strive to contribute to the betterment of society through our research, recognizing the importance of addressing social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges;

11.2. We actively consider the potential consequences and implications of our research, aiming to promote inclusivity, equity, and social justice in education;

11.3. We engage with policymakers, practitioners, and the public, sharing our expertise to inform evidence-based decision-making and positively impact educational practices.

G. Adherence to the Code

Adherence to this Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct is a fundamental requirement for all members of this professional, non-profit, educational research association. By upholding these principles, we aim to foster an environment of trust, integrity, and accountability, promoting the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of education in Europe and beyond.

H. EARLI Safe Conference Policy (online [here](#))

I. EARLI Conference Code of Conduct (online [here](#))

L. EARLI Complaint Policy and Procedures (online [here](#))

Reference

Sutrop, M., Parder, M. L., & Juurik, M. (2020). Research ethics codes and guidelines. In R. Iphofen (Ed.), *Handbook of research ethics and scientific integrity* (pp. 67-89). Springer International Publishing.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Link to the EARLI Safe Conference Policy

Appendix 2: Link to the EARLI Conference Code of Conduct

Appendix 3: Link to the EARLI Complain Policy and Procedures

Appendix 4: Link to Other Codes of Ethics

Appendix 1: EARLI Policy for Safe Conferences

Adopted in August 2023

Amended by the Board of Directors in October, 2023

(Link to online documents [here](#))

Appendix 2: EARLI Safe Conference Code of Conduct

Adopted since EARLI 2023 conference

(Link to online document [here](#))

Appendix 3: EARLI Complain Policy and Procedures

Adopted by the EARLI Board of Directors in November 2023

(Link to online document [here](#))

Appendix 4: Other relevant Professional Codes of Ethics

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Code of Ethics

Ethical Standards of the American Educational Research Association: Cases and Commentary

AERA Endorsement of the Singapore Statement on Research Integrity

<https://www.aera.net/About-AERA/AERA-Rules-Policies/Professional-Ethics>

American Psychological Association (APA)

Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>

Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE)

Code of Conduct

<https://www.aare.edu.au/assets/documents/AARE-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Research Council and Universities Australia

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018>

British Educational Research Association (BERA)

Guidelines for educational research

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018>

Code of conduct

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/about/bera-handbook>

British Psychological Society (BPS)

Code of Ethics and Conduct

https://explore.bps.org.uk/binary/bpsworks/bf9d9fead1dfec7c/3acfadeebe810a324dde720ea7b34b6e87a80cad1de5471be0810935dac0415b/inf94_2021.pdf

European Educational Research Association (EERA)

Ethical Guidelines

<https://eera-ecer.de/about-eera/ethical-guidelines>

Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA)

Ethical guidelines for educational research

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.weraonline.org/resource/resmgr/a_general/sera.pdf

Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (endorsed by several associations)

https://www.jsps.go.jp/file/storage/general/english/e-kousei/data/singapore_statement_EN.pdf

World Economic Forum

Code of Ethics for Researchers

<https://widgets.weforum.org/coe/index.html#code>

World Education Research Association (WERA)

Education Research Ethics and Conduct

<https://www.weraonline.org/page/Resources?&hhsearchterms=%22code+and+ethics%22>

Relevant references

Gilman, S. C. (2005). *Ethics codes and codes of conduct as tools for promoting an ethical and professional public service: Comparative successes and lessons*. The PREM, the World Bank. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/35521418.pdf>

Young, G. (2017). *Revising the APA ethics code*. Springer Retrieved from:

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-319-60002-4.pdf>