



Photonics Ireland 2025

3rd to 5th September 2025

Cork, Ireland

Code of conduct – Photonics Ireland 2025

At the Photonics Ireland 2025 conference, we are committed to providing an environment that is conducive to the free and robust exchange of scientific ideas. This environment requires that all participants be treated with equal consideration and respect. While we encourage vigorous debate of ideas, personal attacks create an environment in which people feel threatened or intimidated. This is not productive and does not advance the cause of science. All participants of the Photonics Ireland 2025 conference are therefore expected to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully.

It is the policy of Photonics Ireland 2025 conference that all forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment, sexual or otherwise, are prohibited. This policy applies to every individual at the event, whether attendee, speaker, exhibitor, staff, contractor or other. It is also a violation of this policy to retaliate against an individual for reporting bullying, discrimination or harassment or to intentionally file a false report of bullying, discrimination or harassment.

Bullying, discrimination and harassment of any sort by someone in a position of power, prestige or authority is particularly harmful since those of lower status or rank may be hesitant to express their objections or discomfort out of fear of retaliation.

You can report an incident via email through info@ipic.ie or onsite at the conference to any staff member at the registration desk.

You are encouraged to write down as many relevant details as you can recall (e.g. names, dates, times, locations, behaviour or statements made, etc.), which can be helpful in assisting any future investigation of the incident.

What are bullying, discrimination, harassment and retaliation?

For purposes of this policy, “Bullying”, “Discrimination”, “Harassment” (including “Sexual Harassment”) and “Retaliation” are defined as follows.

Bullying: Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. Examples of bullying (not exhaustive):

- **Verbal:** personal insults, demeaning remarks, regular humiliation often in front of others, nicknames, ridicule, threats;
- **Non-verbal or indirect:** exclusion with negative consequences, hostile attitude, spreading malicious rumours;



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- **Abuse of power:** regular excessive and inappropriate criticism, deliberately and maliciously withholding work-related information in order to undermine a colleague, repeatedly manipulating a person's job content and targets without due cause;
- **Physical:** aggressive behaviour, physical intimidation, unwelcome physical contact up to and including assault;
- **Communications technology:** insulting texts, emails, derogatory comments on social media.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to an individual's dignity but, as a once-off incident, is not considered to be bullying

Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of categories of people based on personal attributes such as race, sex, age, sexual orientation, body size, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, marital status, political affiliation or other attributes not related to the merit of one's work or scientific research or ideas.

Harassment is defined in Employment Equality legislation as any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The nine discriminatory grounds are:

- Gender
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Traveller community

Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Sexual Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour. Examples of sexual harassment (not exhaustive):

- Unwanted physical contact such as unnecessary touching, patting, or pinching or brushing against another employee's body, assault and coercive sexual intercourse;
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome, unwanted or offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendos or lewd comments;
- Sexual jokes, stories, comments, use of telephone or radio systems for inappropriate suggestive comments;

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- Telling lies or spreading rumours about a colleague's sex life;
- Display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects, written materials, slogans, graffiti, emails, text messages, faxes, comments or posts on social media.
- Derogatory, intimidatory or degrading abuse or insults which are gender related.

Retaliation consists of negative action or treatment towards someone who has reported bullying, discrimination or harassment based upon such report. Retaliation may include terminating or demoting a reporting employee, excluding a reporting individual from work or professional activities, injuring a reporting individual's professional or personal reputation or unjustly demeaning a reporting individual's work. Retaliation can be used as a method of bullying or harassment, but more importantly retaliation creates an environment that discourages victims and bystanders from reporting offensive behaviour.

What happens if I report an incident?

Upon receiving a report of misconduct, the conference organisers will conduct a prompt, thorough investigation, which will include speaking with all parties with knowledge of the incident, including the reporting individual, the alleged victim (if different from the reporting individual), any known witnesses and the alleged offender. The conference organisers may seek professional support in conducting such inquiries. The conference organisers may consult with the alleged victim and/or the reporting individual prior to taking any action.

If the conference organisers find that a violation of this policy has occurred, they may take any disciplinary action it deems appropriate, which may include suspension or ejection from the conference without refund. Serious or repeated offenses may result in more significant consequences such as being banned from participation in future Photonics Ireland conferences, contacting the violator's employer, etc. if applicable.

For any question about this policy, you may contact info@ipic.ie.

