



Data Guild Code of Conduct

This is the official Code of Conduct of Data Guild ry.
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1 The DG Code of Conduct in short

For the complete and official description of the DG Code of Conduct with practical examples given for each part, see the following sections 3-6.

What?

Data Guild's Code of Conduct is a document that lists jointly agreed upon guidelines for the type of behavior that is expected of people involved in the guild's activities. In conflict cases, the Code of Conduct can be interpreted to examine whether these guidelines have been followed/broken.

How?

Most important is to act appropriately and respectfully, taking into account others' boundaries, and being understanding of the differing needs people have. Mistakes happen, and no one is expected to be perfect all the time. If someone behaves in a non-inclusive way, the Harassment Contact People of the guild are happy to help them learn to be better and improve for next time. We are all on a learning journey together!

In case you encounter harassment or other inappropriate behavior, find a Harassment Contact Person to help out with mediating the situation. These conflicts are always primarily attempted to be solved in a civil matter, but in the worst case, breaking the guidelines of the Code of Conduct can lead to a warning or getting kicked out of the event in question; with repeated violations, the board can decide to suspend the violator's right to attend DG events for the decided duration.

Where?

This Code of Conduct applies at any physical or digital space, event or happening associated with Data Guild (e.g., DG organized events, the DG guild room, DG Telegram chats).

Why?

In a diverse community, people can have differing opinions on appropriate behavior in different contexts. Having an agreed upon set of guidelines for the allowed/disallowed behavior at Data Guild makes it easier to know how you're expected to act at any given time.

2 Introduction

This section is not intended as an official part of the Code of Conduct, but rather goes over the motivation for the existence of the document, and some general thoughts regarding the communication of boundaries. The section includes some level of nonspecificity to it, and should thus be interpreted simply as a description of the overarching writing philosophy behind the creation of the Code of Conduct.

2.1 The purpose of a Code of Conduct

At the time of writing, Data Guild (DG) has been growing in numbers for almost four years, each new member different from the ones before. DG is currently the only fully international guild at the Otaniemi campus of Aalto University, gathering people from all around the world to join our community. This is an enormous privilege: diversity brings with it valuable culture and rapid innovation, and DG is richer for it.

As a guild that acts for the benefit of all of its members, we have a responsibility to assure a welcoming and safe environment for everyone involved with DG. Every distinct member comes with distinct needs, which we should take into account as best we can. Since our community is diverse and likely has differing ideas of how the guild's inclusivity work should be conducted, it's useful for the members of the guild to agree to a clearly defined set of guidelines to follow within the guild's activities. The Code of Conduct – which you are currently reading – is exactly that.

Note that these guidelines can (and very likely will) change in the future. Social situations are often complex and difficult to unpack, making it quite impossible to write a comprehensive set of rules that would cover any conflict that could be faced within the guild. Generally, a Code of Conduct does not even aim to do so: its objective is to act as a generalized collection of principles that the guild members agree to, which will then be applied to specific conflicts. Additionally, the creation of and commitment to a Code of Conduct support the overarching inclusivity work within our guild. It is the responsibility of the guild to actively recognize and dismantle structural barriers to inclusion: changes to the document should be proactively made whenever these are identified to increase participation of guild members with diverse needs. If such needs arise within guild members and they are yet to be covered by the Code of Conduct, discussion for revising the document is also highly encouraged!

If any questions arise, be sure to contact the current Main Harassment Contact Person – they'd love to discuss the topic further, or help understand the parts of this document that feel unclear.

2.2 A note on consent, boundaries, misunderstandings, and responsibility

While this Code of Conduct attempts to cover commonly sensitive contexts and topics with which appropriate discretion is usually advised, it should be obvious that not everything falling into this category is, or can be, discussed within this document. Consequently, the main takeaway from this Code of Conduct with respect to such sensitive matters should be to *ask for consent*, set and *respect boundaries*, attempt to *tolerate misunderstandings*, and *carry responsibility* for one's mistakes.

One might have heard of the concept of consent being held to an appropriately high regard with respect to intimate acts between people, but in reality, the importance of consent applies in every form of social interaction. Expressing/denying consent is the general notion of agreeing/not agreeing to something, whether a conversation or an activity. Explicitly expressing/denying consent generally notifies others that the topic is likely to be sensitive to the person in question: they are setting a social boundary. Once such boundaries have been established, they should be respected to the best of the ability of the people present.

However, social situations can be complicated: sometimes it's not quite clear when one should explicitly ask for consent, nor is it reasonable to ask for it for each and every minor thing. If someone hands you their phone to check out a meme they found, it can understandably feel appropriate to grab the phone from their hand to inspect the picture more closely - even if consent for this wasn't clearly expressed. Unknowingly, it might feel important for the owner of the phone that no one else takes it from them without permission. In situations like these, a misunderstanding can easily take place: nevertheless, boundaries can (and should!) still be expressed afterwards. While this example is simple in nature, it highlights the main focus of this section: *while consent and setting boundaries are incredibly important, effective communication and interpretation of them can be difficult.*

Naturally, whenever one accidentally breaks someone's expressed boundaries, it is important for them to carry responsibility for their mistake. In most cases, if responsibility is carried tactfully and respectfully, and the mistake doesn't repeat, people will be more than happy to re-express their boundaries and forgive such mistakes or misunderstandings.

This all said, our common goal should simply be to create as comfortable an environment for all as we possibly can together. While traversing social situations can be difficult at times, we can all attempt to respect the boundaries of each other to the best of our ability!

3 Applicability

This Code of Conduct (as described in sections 4, 5 and 6) applies to all DG members and employees, attendees at DG events, partners of DG and all people who hold a position of trust at DG or an association operating under DG. The guidelines of this Code of Conduct should be followed in interactions of all kinds between members of the community in all events, happenings and spaces associated with DG, whether physical or virtual.

Applicable situations include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- organizing or participating in events or happenings associated with Data Guild or organized by DG's committees, for example the IE or Culture committees
- representing Data Guild at an event or happening
- conversing in group chats, social media or other online spaces associated with or administrated by Data Guild
- spending time at the DG guild room.

4 The Data Guild Code of Conduct

4.1 Multiculturalism and Ethnicity

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on elements such as country of origin, skin color, culture, ethnicity, religion or similar is tolerated. Expressions of identity, such as differing social conventions, clothing, culinary customs or similar must be respected to the best ability of each.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to differing cultures include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- refraining from questioning the traditions and customs of differing cultures
- respecting the expressed boundaries of others when discussing cultural matters.

4.2 Language

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on the language skills of others is tolerated. Whenever feasible, language should not be a restricting factor to taking part in an applicable event, gathering or space. The main language of communication within Data Guild is English: discussing in other languages is allowed only if doing so does not discriminate against a non-speaker present.

Examples of expected behavior with reference to spoken languages and the use of language include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- making sure everyone present understands and feels comfortable discussing in the language currently in use: by default, people are expected to be able to communicate in English
- being understanding and respectful of the problems caused by language barriers; the language being spoken might not be a first language to some present, making the conversation prone to misunderstandings
- using gender inclusive language when discussing an unknown person.

4.3 Gender

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on gender orientation, gender expression, the pronouns of others or any other aspect of gender identity is tolerated. The nonbinary and fluid nature of gender as well as the freedom to identify with the gender one feels comfortable with must be respected to the best ability of each.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to gender orientation and identity include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- refraining from questioning or invalidating the gender expression and identity of others, as well as assuming others' gender identities simply from their appearance or other unrelated factors
- respecting the expressed boundaries of others when discussing their gender identity or gender in general
- respecting the gender pronouns of others, and kindly asking if unsure of how they should be addressed.

4.4 Sexuality

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on sexuality, expression of sexual orientation, the cultures of people of some sexual orientation, or any other aspect of sexual identity is tolerated. Sexuality must be respected as a self-defined part of each person's identity.

As sexuality, intimacy, sexual acts, and other similar topics can be sensitive and private to some as well as largely culture-dependent, discretion is advised when taking part in conversation including them. One must not subject another to topics of sexual nature through discussion, pictures or other means without their consent.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to sexuality include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- refraining from questioning or invalidating the sexuality of others
- respecting the expressed boundaries of others when discussing topics of sexual nature in general.

4.5 Accessibility and Disability

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on the physical or psychological abilities or disabilities of others is tolerated. Accessibility must be a priority at events and gatherings: wherever an event venue or other applicable environment does not sufficiently take into account the physical or psychological needs of the people present, arrangements must take place to make everyone feel as included and welcomed as possible.

The organizers of applicable events are responsible for proactively mapping out possible accessibility/disability needs of the participants, and accommodating them to the best of the organizers' ability.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to disability include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- refraining from questioning, invalidating, or inappropriately pointing out the disabilities of others
- respecting the expressed boundaries of others when discussing their disabilities
- taking others' expressed needs with respect to their disabilities into account to the best of one's ability.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to accessibility include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- staying respectful and patient whenever arrangements are made to account for a disability, even if they slightly inconvenience oneself
- taking into account the physical, psychological, economical or other similar differences that could affect how accessible an event or gathering is.

4.6 Age

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on the age of others is tolerated. The differing cultures, developmental stages, applicable laws and other age-dependent factors must be respected and taken into account to the best of one's abilities.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to age include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- respecting generational culture differences
- taking into account the restricted accessibility of underage peers to gatherings with e.g. alcohol served.

4.7 Socio-Economic Background and Status

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on the socio-economic background or status of others is tolerated. Discretion is advised when discussing others' income, occupation, place of residence, or other topics related to socio-economic background or status. The restrictions caused by differences in socio-economic background or status should be taken into account in the organization of events, happenings and gatherings.

Examples of expected behavior with reference to socio-economic background and status include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- considering and respecting the restrictions caused by the economic situation of others
- staying respectful and understanding of the differing levels of income and education others might have.

4.8 Political Alignment

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, no deliberate discrimination based on political alignment is tolerated. Discretion is advised when discussing politically sensitive topics, and the boundaries set by others in these discussions should be respected.

This Code of Conduct applies to one whether or not it contradicts with their political alignment. The topics brought up within this document are not considered matters of politics by the guild, but rather of preventing structural discrimination and promoting inclusion.

Examples of expected behavior with reference to politics and political alignment include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- being respectful of others' political alignment, even if it contradicts with one's own
- being mindful of the sensitive nature of some topics of politics, and approaching potentially sensitive political topics with discretion.

4.9 Alcohol and Intoxication

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, each must take into account their responsibility when intoxicated due to alcohol or otherwise. Intoxication is allowed at events at which alcohol is permitted, but the participant intoxicated is nevertheless completely responsible for their own behavior. Drinking alcohol is never mandatory nor expected from any participant of an event.

Examples of expected behavior when intoxicated or when at an event where alcohol is permitted include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- being conscious of how alcohol affects oneself and avoiding losing control of their behavior
- recognizing the full responsibility one has of their actions, regardless of the amount of alcohol they might have consumed
- respecting the amount of alcohol, if any, others are drinking, and not pressuring them to drink more; not offering others more alcohol if they've expressed they would not like to drink more.

4.10 Privacy

Wherever this Code of Conduct applies, the privacy of others must be respected. One has the right to decide which information they want to share, or have shared, about themselves.

Examples of expected behavior with respect to privacy include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- respecting the extent to which others want to share information about themselves
- refraining from sharing personal information, contact details, or other private information of others without their consent.

5 Conflict Mediation and Reporting

In the case of a witnessed Code of Conduct violation (or other inappropriate behavior/some other conflict) taking place, guild members may acquire the help of an impartial Harassment Contact Person of Data Guild to help mediate resolving such conflicts. Each DG event should have at least one HCP present and ready to take on such cases; alternatively, one can contact the current Main HCP. Whether one was involved in the conflict witnessed or not, they may optionally contact an HCP through the anonymous HCP contact form.

Conflicts reported to Harassment Contact People for mediation will be kept strictly anonymous: only in the case that further action due to a considerable Code of Conduct infringement takes place might anonymity be broken, as described in section 6.

6 Infringements of the Code of Conduct

6.1 General handling of Code of Conduct violations

Cases of Code of Conduct violations will be primarily attempted to be resolved in a civil manner through conversation and mediation. As described in section 5, a Harassment Contact Person of Data Guild can be in contact with a Code of Conduct violator: they will explain the nature of the Code of Conduct violation(s) in question, and propose ways for the violator to carry responsibility for their actions. If the conflict in question is successfully resolved, no further repercussions may occur.

6.2 Repercussions of Code of Conduct violations

In the case the Code of Conduct violator is unwilling or unable to carry responsibility for their actions, one of the following repercussions may take place:

- A Harassment Contact Person can remove the violator from the applicable event/happening/space, or in the case of digital spaces (e.g. chat groups) remove content (e.g. messages, media) the violator shared in the space on their own judgment, though whenever possible, another HCP will be consulted in this decision. The person removed is not allowed to return to the event unless otherwise specified, and the content removed from a digital space is done so indefinitely. Depending on the severity of the violation, the HCP in question can alternatively decide to simply provide a warning to the violator, without removing them/their content from the applicable space.
- In the case of the same person repeatedly making similar Code of Conduct violations, the currently standing Board of Data Guild can be notified by the Main HCP. During a board meeting, the Board can decide to prohibit the violator's access to applicable events/happenings/spaces for a set duration of time: generally 3 months, unless there is strong reason for a different duration. Board meetings during which such is decided will stay as anonymous as possible: the applicable discussion will be restricted to only the Board, the Main HCP and the HCPs that have been involved with the violator's Code of Conduct infringement cases. The meeting minutes of the board meeting in question will state the name of the violator, whether their access to applicable events/happenings/spaces is restricted thereafter, and the duration of the restriction.
- In the extreme case that the previous repercussions have taken place repeatedly, with the violator showing little signs of carrying responsibility for their repeated Code of Conduct violations, the Board can decide to raise the issue to a guild meeting. The Guild can discuss the Code of Conduct violations of the person in question, and vote on whether the violator's Data Guild membership should be terminated and/or their access to applicable Data Guild events/happenings/spaces be restricted indefinitely.

6.3 Collecting information of Code of Conduct violators

In the case a Code of Conduct violation leads to repercussion(s) as described in 6.2, the violator's information can be collected and stored by the Main Harassment Contact Person. This information is used to connect repeated violations of the Code of Conduct as seen necessary per 6.2. The data collected will generally only be accessible to the standing Main HCP, though in the case repeated violations possibly justify more severe consequences, the Board and/or the Guild will also gain knowledge of the violations in question, as seen necessary per 6.2. The information that might be collected include: the violator's name, their contact information (e.g., a Telegram tag, email), date of the violation, the type of violation, and a short description of the events that took place with reference to the violation.

The collection of information as described above follows Data Guild's GDPR compliant privacy statement for the Code of Conduct violations register.

7 Acknowledgements

- This document was written as a joint effort between multiple members of Data Guild, and will be improved by many more.
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