

**Next review date: January 2024, and every six months thereafter**

# Independent Media Association (IMA) Code of Conduct

*This Policy will be applied to all communications between members, including WhatsApp and email.*

## **1. Respectful Communication:**

- All members must engage in civil and respectful communication at all times. Avoid personal attacks, insults, or discriminatory language.
- Disagreements are expected and welcomed, but they should be expressed in a constructive manner, focusing on the issue at hand rather than attacking individuals.

## **2. Professionalism:**

- Maintain a professional tone and conduct in all interactions within the group.
- Refrain from sharing content or engaging in discussions that are excessively personal, irrelevant, or aggressive for a professional setting.
  - **Excessively personal:** This term refers to content or discussions that divulge intimate or private information about oneself or others, beyond what is considered appropriate in a professional setting. It may include personal details about one's relationships, health, finances, or other sensitive topics that are unrelated to the professional context at hand. Criticisms should often be levied against organisations, not the organisation's representatives, unless otherwise relevant.
  - **Irrelevant:** In the context of a professional setting, irrelevant refers to content or discussions that do not directly contribute to or address the topic or purpose of the professional environment. It may involve introducing unrelated or off-topic subjects that do not align with the goals, objectives, or interests of the individuals or organisation involved.

- **Aggressive:** Aggressive behaviour, in a professional setting, typically involves an intimidating, hostile, or confrontational approach in interactions or communications. It may include using offensive or disrespectful language, making personal attacks, exhibiting an excessively forceful or domineering attitude, or attempting to overpower others' opinions or perspectives through aggressive means. Aggressive behaviour is generally considered unprofessional and can create a hostile or uncomfortable work environment.

### **3. Confidentiality:**

- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of group discussions. Do not share or forward any information discussed within the group without explicit permission.
- Understand that the group is a closed environment for members' collaboration, and sensitive information shared within the group should remain confidential.

### **4. Avoid Spamming and Self-Promotion:**

- Refrain from spamming the WhatsApp community with irrelevant or unsolicited content.
- Avoid excessive self-promotion, as the group's primary purpose is professional collaboration and not personal marketing.

### **5. Constructive Criticism and Feedback:**

- Provide constructive criticism and feedback when necessary, keeping in mind the importance of promoting growth and improvement.
- Critiques should be delivered respectfully and offer suggestions for improvement.

### **6. Conflict Resolution:**

- In the event of a conflict or disagreement, members are encouraged to engage in open and honest dialogue to resolve the issue peacefully.
- If a conflict escalates or persists, members should report the matter to the IMA board for mediation and resolution, by emailing [community@ima.press](mailto:community@ima.press).

### **7. Respect for Diverse Perspectives:**

- Embrace and respect diverse opinions, experiences, backgrounds and lived experience of fellow members.
- Engage in discussions that promote inclusion and foster an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

#### **8. Compliance with Laws and Guidelines:**

- Adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines when participating in the group discussions, including the IMPRESS Standards Code.
- Refrain from sharing any content that may infringe upon intellectual property rights or violate any legal obligations.

Remember, while freedom of speech is valued, it must be exercised responsibly, within the boundaries of this code of conduct. The IMA board reserves the right to take appropriate action, including warnings, temporary suspensions, or to begin removal processes, for members who violate this code, and in line with the Co-operative's Rules as found on the Financial Conduct Authority website.

**By participating in the IMA, you acknowledge and agree to abide by this code of conduct and contribute positively to the professional environment of the group.**