



AFGHANISTAN PHOTOGRAPHERS  
ASSOCIATION (APA)

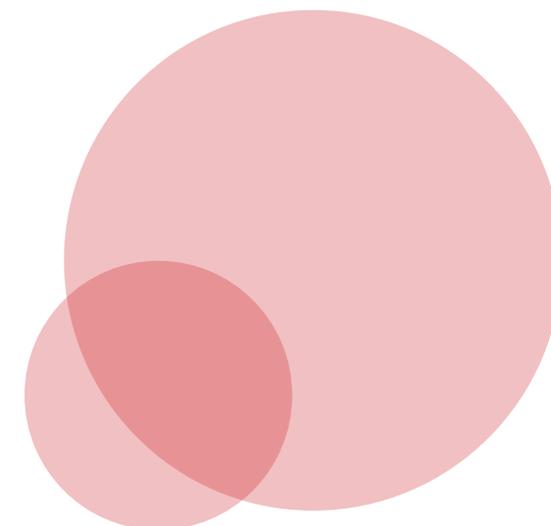
# CODE OF CONDUCT

June, 2021  
Kabul, Afghanistan

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## ABOUT APA

Established in 2016, Afghanistan Photographers Association (APA) is a Kabul-based registered cultural and educational organization that is independent, non-profit, and non-political. Center to its arts-based and result-based approach, APA is committed to promoting the art and culture of photography by offering diverse programs, outstanding benefits and opportunities, and essential business resources to help photographers reach their full potential.

Know more at [www.afghanistanpa.org](http://www.afghanistanpa.org)

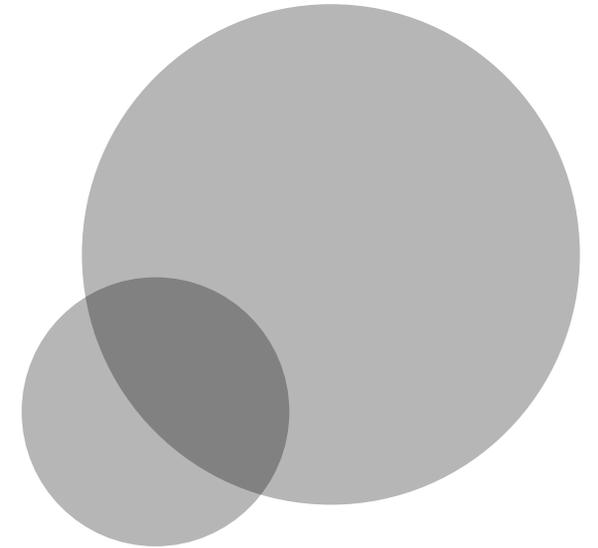
## INTRODUCTION

APA is built on key principles, among which its core values are: 1. Professionalism, 2. Equality, 3. Diversity and Inclusion, 4. Creativity, 5. Accountability, 6. Sustainability. In applying this Code of Conduct (Code), APA expects the highest standards of conduct, competence and performance from all APA members, in order to reflect the organization's principles. To this end, APA members have a genuine responsibility to contribute to the goals of APA, and to ensure that their conduct is consistent with the standards of conduct established in this document.

With goal in mind, the Code has been carefully devised and developed with APA's objectives at forefront, and is to be applied accordingly by all its members. After reading the Code, all members should have a greater understanding of our core values, the behaviors expected to support them, and the privileges and responsibilities that go along with working for APA. Responsibility for professional conduct lies with members at all levels, and must be taken seriously, as it forms the basis of APA's reputation.

In its spirit and principles, this Code and its policies apply to all members who work with/for APA: i.e.: Board members, staff members, photographer members; non-staff members including consultants and advisors; as well as interns, volunteers, and third-party entities such as vendors, contractors or technical partners who have a contractual relationship with APA - independent of their location or grade.

In this document the word "member" will be used to indicate mentioned people who work with/for APA.



## COMMITMENT TO THE CODE

Every APA member must comply with this Code. In doing so, you must take time to read, understand and sign this document. If you have any questions or need advice, please speak to our HR team.

# LIVING BY OUR CORE VALUES

- **Professionalism**

In the context of APA's culture, professionalism is «the quality of how we show up to exceed standards, not only to produce greater efficiencies in our work and conduct, but also to foster greater participation in our community». This being said, what APA expects from its members is a collection of traits that put together and make up an exceptional member and, thus, a successful and reliable organization. These traits include reliability, competence, respect, trust, and integrity. APA's believes in the spirit of this value because this will not only allow its members the ability to do their jobs well, but also demonstrate that this example of APA principle, like its other values, is passed to photographers and ultimately, the greater community.

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

APA promotes an equal, diverse and inclusive workplace and environment internally and externally. Every member is expected to treat everyone with whom we have contact with dignity, courtesy and respect. At APA we treat our members fairly and on merit. We hire/recruit, promote and reward our members based equally and, on their capabilities, and skills. Gender, race, color, ethnic or national origins, marital status, family circumstances, age, disability, sexual orientation, political or religious belief are not relevant to personal and team performance at work. Supporting and upholding human rights principles, every APA member has the right to work in a safe and conducive environment free from discrimination, bullying or harassment.



- **Creativity**

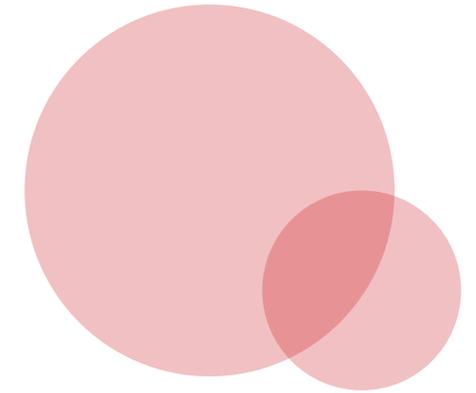
APA promotes and encourages creativity and innovation among its members to produce skills and behavior development to work optimally, and bring about a working environment where new ideas and suggestions are heard, discussed and valued. We believe creativity should be embodied at every level and in every form, whether that is challenging the way we look at things on a daily basis, or encouraging the freedom to create while being bold in our ideas.

- **Accountability**

APA believes accountability is all about a genuine sense of personal responsibility, reliability and clarity - accepting responsibility of a project or even a task - from reception to outcome, taking ownership of it, and promptly correcting its mistakes to the greatest extent possible. With this mindset, we value the ability of our members and organization to honor our commitments to our donors, partners, and to each other. APA members are responsible and accountable for their performance outcomes and conduct at all times.

- **Sustainability**

Developing a sustainable organization, both environmentally and financially, is the best way to help look after the wellbeing of APA, as well as creating and fostering a successful and value-driven organization. Thus, it is important for APA to operate within a framework of understanding its short-term and long-term impacts.

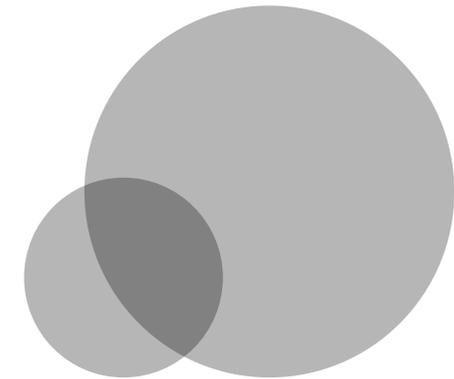


## YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

All APA members must inform themselves of the provisions of this Code. Members are reminded that their actions may have consequences that they are ultimately accountable for. It is their responsibility to seek advice before taking action and to ensure that they comply with the principles outlined in this document.

Every member at the APA has particular responsibilities, including:

- Leading by example;
- Acting with common decency, good faith, and honesty;
- Promoting and role-modelling good ethical behavior and professional conduct;
- Ensuring you have access to and receive training on ethical issues and policies relating to this Code;
- Promoting an environment where your colleagues feel confident and able to raise ethical concerns, and that they are taken seriously and followed-up;
- Working to fulfil the duties of their position to the best of their abilities;
- Taking responsibility for your actions in the achievement of your individual objectives and deliverables;
- Seeking guidance from your manager/supervisor, or senior management on any of the conduct policies;
- Report suspicion of wrongdoing through APA's Whistleblowing policy.



## ZERO TOLERANCE

This Code provides information and guidance for certain areas where APA has a zero-tolerance policy. The areas are as follows:

- Unsafe, illegal or unethical working practices;
- Violence and aggression;
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment;
- Bribery and Corruption;
- Disregard for privacy
- Retaliation against anyone who speaks up and does the right thing.

# CONDUCT AND POLICIES

## 1. Workplace Safety and Personal Safety

APA works to ensure the workplace safety for its members. We expect all our members to play their individual part in making the organization safer and more conducive in ensuring their team has the right equipment, training and knowledge to guarantee a safe working environment. Moreover, APA expects all its members to avoid any action that may harm/threaten a fellow member's personal safety.

## 2. No Harassment, Discrimination at Workplace

As mentioned earlier, every APA member has the right to a working environment free from harassment, bullying and intimidation of any kind. Harassment is unwanted conduct which is reasonably considered to have the purpose or effect of:

- Violating the member's dignity;
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the member.

At all times every APA member has a personal responsibility to behave in a manner that is not offensive to others. Line managers and Human Resources are responsible for communicating this policy to our members, and for investigating any complaints of harassment against any member of the organization.

APA prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or social origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or other aspects of personal status. Discrimination includes actions, made either directly or indirectly, based on distinctions or prejudices which have the purpose or effect of treating individuals or groups unfairly or unjustly. It may include a series of events or a one-time incident.



## 3. Violence in the Workplace, Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Smoke-free Environment

APA strives to provide a safe work environment for all its members and does not tolerate any level of violence or threat of violence in any form, whether committed on office premises or elsewhere, and shall be cause for disciplinary action. Carrying weapons or fake weapons on APA premises, in APA vehicles, or any place where APA conducts business is strictly prohibited.

APA's position on substance abuse is clear: it is incompatible with the health and safety of our workplace and is strictly prohibited. APA is a workplace that aims to be free from illegal drugs and harmful use of alcohol. All APA members are expected to exercise good judgement and not engage in any behavior that may adversely affect performance, may be harmful to themselves or fellow members. Moreover, APA is a smoke-free environment and prohibits any member from smoking at its workplace.

## 4. Acceptance of Gifts, Honors and Decorations

This Code requires that APA members should never solicit gifts or favor in connection with their official duties. Gifts that are offered should not be accepted if this would give the appearance of impropriety or bias, or would appear to call into question the independence and reputation of APA.

As to accepting any honor or decoration, APA members must inform and seek authorization from the Executive Director, in the case of Board members, from the Chair of the Board. If authorization is given, the member must acknowledge, when receiving the award, that it is being conferred in recognition of work for APA.

## 5. Bribery and Corruption

APA operates a zero-tolerance policy to bribery and corruption. We do not offer or accept bribes or improper inducements, including facilitation payment, to secure our organizational goals, or to gain any advantage for either the organization or any of our member. We actively refrain from any misleading or deceptive accounting or financial reporting practices. Therefore, we expect our members to comply with the bribery and corruption-related legislation, and to take all reasonable steps to ensure everyone you work with does the same.



## 6. Disadvantage of Privacy

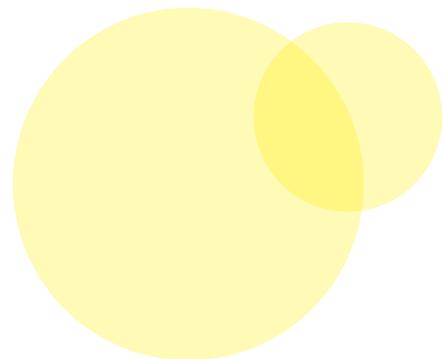
APA takes its members' privacy and safety seriously. APA assures its members that it will not share your personal information for marketing or any other purposes without your consent, unless where required by law. APA will always respect your privacy and any of your personal communication between you and the organization. APA also expects all of its members to comply with any data protection legislation currently in force.

## 7. Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest can arise in many situations. We at the APA avoid conflicts of interests and always act in the best interest of APA. Therefore, we expect our members to not let their personal interests conflict - or appear to conflict - with APA's interests because even the perception of a conflict of interest could affect your judgment and damage the organization's reputation. Where requested, you should always disclose your interest to your line manager and remove yourself from the decision-making process.

## 8. Family and Friends

We take special care to ensure that our personal interests do not conflict with our responsibilities at APA. Hence, you should not directly or indirectly supervise or use influence to favor anyone with whom you have a family or close personal relationship, including family members. Interviewing, hiring or engaging a family member or close personal friend as an employee creates a conflict of interest. You must disclose any such relationship and remove yourself from the decision-making process.



## 9. Protecting APA's Assets and Confidentiality

We each have a duty to look after and respect all of APA's assets - namely our place of work, computer and telephone, organization vehicle, finances or supplies you may have access to and even our working time. We should protect APA's assets from misuse, theft and waste. We must also ensure other entities cannot gain an unfair advantage by accessing important information about our business.

Therefore, you should:

- Use APA's resources responsibly and appropriately;
- Ensure hardware, such as laptops, phones and other handheld devices are never left in public or insecure places;
- Ensure that all sensitive, confidential and personal information you may handle stays secure;
- Ensure business expenditure is accurately and honestly accounted.

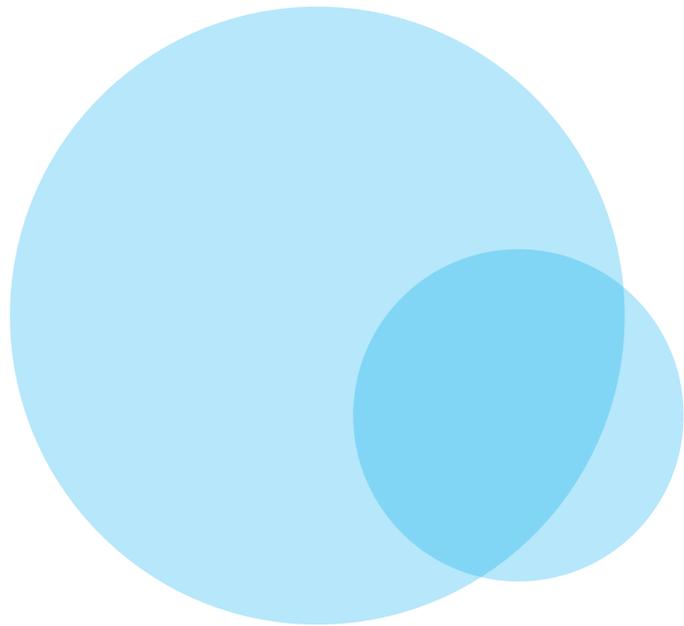
## 10. Political Relationships

In your professional role as an APA member, you should not get involved in any political activity or make a donation to a political party. We encourage you to remain politically neutral at all times. We do, however, understand that you may wish to involve yourself in your own time and respect your right to do so. When this happens, you must make it clear that the views you express are your own.

## 11. External Communications

Any communication on behalf of APA with external stakeholders, such as our partners, shareholders, donor agencies or even the media, must be clear and truthful. We urge you to take care when using social media and email. Remember that once you have made a public statement you have no control over what happens to it or who uses it. All important and potential external communication that are on behalf of APA should be approved by your supervisor or, if necessary, by the Communications Manager. Internal communication is equally important as this can easily make it into the outside world. So, always be aware that your actual audience might not be the one you intended to address.



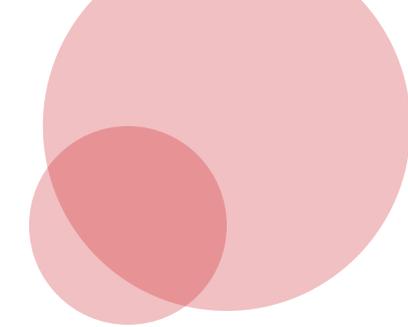
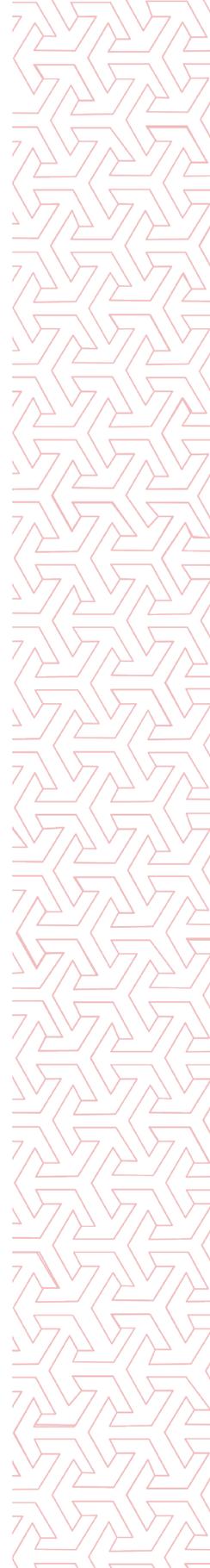


## 12. Financial and Non-Financial Accounting and Reporting

We have an obligation to our non-profit type of organization, donors, partners and candidates to ensure that we report openly, honestly and accurately on our organization's performance to its respective recipient, such as supervisor, Board of Director, or donors. Accurate record keeping protects our reputation.

So, all members must always:

- Accurately and fairly report all organization transactions and performance metrics to their supervisors/in-line managers;
- Complete all expense claims accurately and in line with the Finance Policy and Procedures;
- Maintain records in accordance with APA's Finance Policies and other legal requirements.



# WHISTLEBLOWING

## What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing at work by a member, the organization or a supplier or partner. Our whistleblowing policy exists to help you speak up in situations where you suspect dangerous, illegal, harmful or fraudulent activity is taking place, or when you or your colleagues are being treated unfairly. APA conducts its operations to the highest standards of integrity and honesty, and we expect you to maintain these same standards in everything you do.

To work out the right thing to do in any situation, ask yourself:

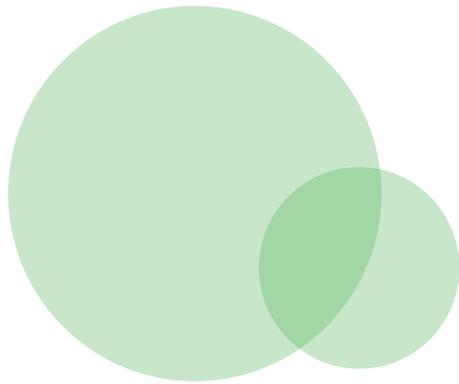
- Is it legal?
- Is it ethical?
- Would I be happy telling my family or close friend about it?

If the answer to any of these is 'no,' then we expect you to speak up.

## Who should You speak to?

If you have an issue with a colleague or any member, you should initially discuss the matter with

them. If this is not possible, you should speak to your line manager or the organization's HR manager. If it is not possible to talk to any of the above, you may directly speak it to the Executive Director/Secretary of the Board.



## DUTY TO COMPLY AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

The failure of an APA member to fulfil their functions and responsibilities at an acceptable level may be resolved by appropriate managerial action. However, actions or omissions that constitute a failure to adhere to the standards of conduct set out in this Code will be investigated and, if established, will result in the initiation of disciplinary proceedings. In the event that the allegations against the member are found to be substantiated by the evidence, and depending on the gravity of the misconduct, one or more of the following disciplinary measures will be imposed:

- Written censure, to be retained in the member's personal record;
- Fine of up to two months' net base salary;
- Loss of steps in grade;
- Suspension with partial or no pay for up to one month;
- Dismissal/termination.

## OATH OF THE CODE

I solemnly affirm/promise to exercise in all loyalty, discretion, and conscience the functions entrusted to me as a member of the APA, to discharge those functions and **regulate my conduct, as described in this Code, with the interests of the APA only.**

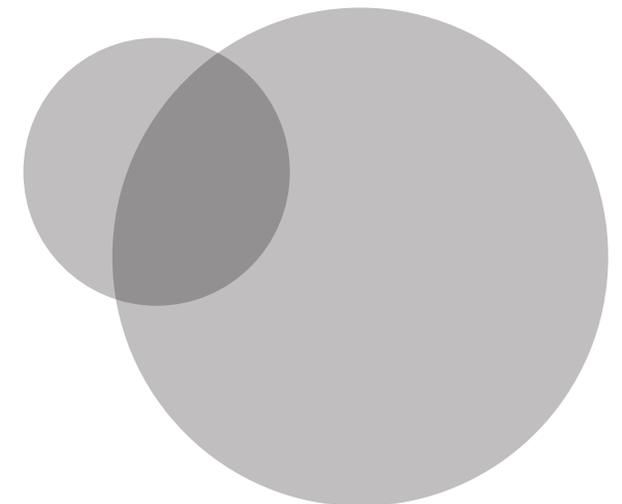
Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_





## CONTACT DIRECTORY

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For any questions or concerns, please contact us.

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