WOSM
Code of Conduct
for Elections
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PREAMBLE

Purpose

The leadership of WOSM aspires to the highest ethical standards. In seeking to serve in the highest offices of the leadership of WOSM, we wish the candidates to be good examples of the values of the Scout Promise and Law. This Code of Conduct is intended to assist candidates and their supporters to proactively avoid any actions that might be contrary to the values of WOSM.

The WOSM Code of Conduct for Elections (Code) is based on the Scout values contained in the Scout Promise and Law. As such, the Code acts as guidelines on how candidates and their supporters are expected to behave when contesting elections for roles in the WOSM Volunteer Structure. We want to promote an environment where our behaviour is guided by Scouting values and everyone feels safe and respected. This Code will help us prevent unwanted behaviours and also allow us to act to correct them if they occur. As Scouts, we want to build a better world where people are self-fulfilled and play a constructive role in society. Our actions as volunteers and employees in our everyday life should promote our Scouting values and our mission. This document is to help clarify, in concrete terms, what is expected of each member of the WOSM in such elections.

As Members seeking Leadership roles in WOSM, it is expected that candidates should lead by example in their actions in contesting these elections.

In addition, the purpose of this Code is to ensure that the elections and campaign activities are carried out in such manner as to protect the rights of candidates and Member Organizations to democratic, free, fair, and transparent processes to ensure equal opportunity for any candidate running for election to be elected.
Scope & Applicability

The Code of Conduct for Elections (Code) applies to all elections for roles held on the World, Regional or Zonal levels of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM).

This Code shall be applied but not limited to all candidates running for elections (Candidates), WOSM Team members and any other individuals, agents or entities (including Member Organizations) related to or supporting the election procedure and campaign of a Candidate either with finances or other material resources or efforts, with the consent or acquiescence of the Candidate (Supporters) from the date of call for nominations for the role. Any action in bad faith by a Candidate prior to the date of Call for Nominations with the intention to undermine the democratic process through the breach of this Code of Conduct will be actioned under this Code of Conduct.

Key Documents

WOSM Constitution
WOSM Code of Conduct
WOSM Complaints Policy
World Safe from Harm Policy
The Essential Characteristics of Scouting
WOSM Diversity and Inclusion Position Paper
Effectiveness

This Code becomes effective from 25 February 2021 onwards, following the issuance of a circular through ScoutPak containing the latest version of this Code.

Non-exhaustiveness

In the event that any breach not stated or provided for in the Code materialises, disciplinary action may be taken against any action that is contrary to the Code, the Scout Law, or the Scout Promise as laid down in Article II.2 of the WOSM Constitution.

Limitation Period

WOSM reserves the right to follow up on any breach to the Code at any time, and will process any complaints submitted under this Code within 4 weeks of the date of election. Any complaint received after this period will not be considered.

Severability

Regardless of any of the elements described in this Code, WOSM shall, as detailed in the Complaint Policy, comply with any Legal Requirements in the country of the alleged breach.

Amendment and Review

The World Scout Committee’s (WSC) Ethics Committee may propose amendments to this Code to the WSC for approval.

This Code is, with consultation to stakeholders, reviewed by the Ethics Committee at a minimum of once every triennium and recommended amendments will be submitted by the Ethics Committee to the WSC for ratification, after which ratification, the Code will be updated as necessary and communicated via ScoutPak.
General Provisions

1. Rule of Law
All Candidates and Supporters accept the authority of the WSC’s Ethics Committee or other competent body appointed by the WSC’s Ethics Committee, and abide by this Code and all applicable laws, rules, regulations and policies governing elections.

2. Prohibited Acts

a. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from engaging in any activity that would contravene this Code or the General Provisions of the WOSM Code of Conduct.

b. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from offering any bribe, gift, inducement or reward to voters. The offering of inducements shall include the practice of vote bartering or trading.

c. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from making any threat of retaliation or reprisal to Member Organizations, members of Member Organizations, voters or other participants of any Scout event.

d. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from intimidating voters or Member Organizations or members of NSOs.

e. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from posing as other voters or Member Organizations.

f. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from preventing other Candidates and their Supporters, physically or psychologically, from campaigning.

g. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from engaging in any misconduct, including but not limited to physical or psychological acts of violence, bullying, corruption, discrimination, harassment or any criminal activity in any jurisdiction applicable to the Candidate or the place of registration of WOSM.

h. World Scout Bureau Staff are prohibited from taking any action that would interfere with, promote or negatively affect a Candidate, unless such action is a direct result of an instruction from the WSC as an outcome of a complaint under this Code.
i. Candidates and Supporters are prohibited from using negative campaign tactics such as:
   • character assassinations
   • pejorative language
   • usage of rumors or insinuations
   • personal attacks on candidates
   • use of false or misleading information on candidates

   as such would be considered a breach of the WOSM Code of Conduct.

3. Responsibilities

a. Candidates and Supporters shall respect and conduct themselves in compliance with the Scout Law and Promise.


c. Each Member Organization that sponsors a Candidate shall be responsible for their members' conduct in support of the Candidate.

d. All candidates must familiarize themselves with this Code of Conduct by completing the training provided by WSB during their submission of candidature, and should make their supporters aware of it. WOSM will require evidence of this as part of the nomination process by confirmation from the Candidate and the International Commissioner or equivalent of the supporting NSO.

e. Candidates shall ensure that their Supporters are aware of this Code and take decisive and reasonable measures to ensure they avoid any action which may appear to contravene the Code.

f. Candidates and Supporters shall conduct themselves in a manner that respects the right of other Candidates, Member Organizations, Supporters to a free, fair and democratic process.

g. Candidates and Supporters shall respect the right and freedom of all other Candidates to campaign and to express their ideas without intimidation.
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h. Candidates shall organize and conduct their election campaign in a manner that contributes toward a free, fair and peaceful atmosphere during the campaigning period.

i. Candidates and Supporters shall follow the election process to ensure a democratic, free, fair, and transparent process.

j. Candidates and Supporters, or any other participant in the election process, shall report prior to the time of the vote of the election any observation of misconduct, including physical or psychological acts of violence, bullying, corruption, discrimination or harassment, committed by another Candidate or Supporter.

k. Candidates and Supporters shall maintain and aid in maintaining the secret voting process.

l. Candidates and Supporters shall accept and respect the certified outcome of the election.

m. Candidates shall, no later than 24 hours before the election, submit a written report to the Ethics Committee detailing the sources and amounts of funding used in the election campaign, and how the funds were expended in the format provided via the WSB.

4. Conflict of Interest

a. WOSM Team members, as defined under the WOSM Code of Conduct, shall refrain from any action that directly or indirectly affects the outcome of elections while acting in an official WOSM capacity.

b. Candidates, who hold office or appointment in any capacity of the WOSM Team, shall not make use of their office to further their own or another Candidate's campaign or otherwise gain advantage over another Candidate. The following are non-exhaustive examples of actions deemed as taking advantage of their office and appointment held within the WOSM Team for campaigning and would be considered as contravening this Code as well as WOSM Code of Conduct (Item 3.6 Election, WOSM Code of Conduct):
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i. A WOSM Team member using his/her scout.org e-mail in campaigning for election.

ii. A WOSM Team member using the stage of an event which the Candidate has been invited to as a WOSM Team member to campaign for election.

iii. A WOSM Team member utilizing or displaying a logo, label or any other promotional material of a campaign while acting in an official WOSM capacity.

c. Candidates, who are members of the WOSM Team, shall maintain the rights of their official role and be treated with the same respect as given to all other members.

5. Promotional Materials

a. Candidates and Supporters may not offer promotional materials that would induce another to stand or not to stand for election. Candidates shall consider the volume and limit the value of promotional materials to be given away during the election campaigning period and at the election venue, recognising the perception of corrupt behaviour, the environmental impact and cost of such activities. While it may not be possible to limit the volume of promotional materials to be given away, the perception of sustainability and cost is to be considered as part of compliance and enforcement.

b. Any Promotional materials shall be of token value only.

6. Sanctions

a. Sanctions are meant to be corrective actions to address any proven breach and vexatious complaints concerning breaches to this Code.

b. Sanctions may be imposed by the World Scout Bureau upon approval by the WSC of the Ethics Committee's recommendation as detailed in the Complaints Policy.

c. Sanctions may be imposed on Candidates and Supporters (including sponsoring Member Organizations) for any breach of this Code.
d. The principle of Sanctions will apply as follows:

i. Should the individual breach this Code of Conduct, the sanction will apply only to the individual and the sponsoring NSO would be entitled to nominate and support a new Candidate for the current election, unless the nomination period for the current election has already been concluded.

ii. Should the Member Organization breach this Code of Conduct, then the sanctions would apply to the Candidate, and over and above any sanctions applied, the NSO would not be entitled to nominate a new candidate for the election being contested.

e. The following sanctions may be applied, depending on the severity and type of infraction (sanctions can be cumulative and/or combined):

i. Confidential verbal and written warnings

ii. Reprimand communicated to Member Organizations by circular and/or at the election venue

iii. Disqualification of candidature

iv. Loss of right to stand for future elections within WOSM

v. Any legal action to seek redress

vi. Any other sanctions it deems appropriate which are within the authority of the WOSM Constitution and the relevant WOSM policies

f. The findings, recommendations and sanctions related to any complaint or allegation will be filed and retained by WSB.
Monitoring and Reporting

This section outlines how the World Scout Bureau monitors the implementation of this Code and inquiries into any allegation of breaches of this Code.

Monitoring

World Scout Bureau will put in place internal procedures to monitor the implementation of this Code and ensure that complaints are submitted to the WSC’s Ethics Committee for timely resolution.

Reporting of breaches and allegations

A report of a breach to this Code should be submitted prior to the vote at the election. Any complaint alleging a breach to this Code submitted after the vote shall follow the process in the WOSM Complaints Policy.

Per the procedure in the WOSM Complaints Policy, all formal reporting of breaches associated with this Code should be addressed to the World Scout Bureau at complaints@scout.org or by post or by hand to the World Scout Bureau at Rue Henri-Christiné 5, P.O. Box 91, 1205 Genève, Switzerland. The designated World Scout Bureau Staff Support for the WSC’s Ethics Committee is responsible for receiving these reports and supporting the WSC’s Ethics Committee to carry out the complaint process. A report made against a World Scout Bureau Staff will be received and carried out by the designated World Scout Bureau Staff overseeing HR matters.

The person handling the election, after having consulted and confirmed nonconfidential details with the officials overseeing the reports of breach to this Code shall deliver a summary report prior to the vote at the election to ensure transparency is maintained.

Confidentiality

All report information will be handled sensitively and confidentially, providing information to the relevant parties only and in accordance with any relevant data protection requirements and legal requirements in respect of the subject of the report. Please refer to Article 5 of the WOSM Complaints Policy.
Complaint Process

Under normal circumstances, free from time pressure or challenging situations, an allegation of breach must be received, investigated and decided by the WSC’s Ethics Committee per the procedures established in the WOSM Complaints Policy to ensure procedural fairness and due process.

To avoid any conflict of interest, the investigators and decision-makers must not be either a Candidate or the representative from the Member Organization which nominated the accused Candidate.

Any breach of this Code by a World Scout Bureau Staff should be reported and will be addressed via internal procedures of the World Scout Bureau.

Exceptions to the Normal Complaints Process under the WOSM Complaints Policy

Only under time pressure due to election timelines, or limited capacity of the EC to deal with the matter timely, the WSC’s Ethics Committee Chairperson, on behalf of the WSC’s Ethics Committee, may at its sole discretion appoint a special panel to investigate and provide findings and recommendations (including sanctions if applicable) to the WSC’s Ethics Committee for its decision. Alternatively, after seeking the approval of the Chairperson of the WSC and the WOSM Secretary General, the Chairperson of the WSC’s Ethics Committee on behalf of the WSC’s Ethics Committee may assign its authority over to the appointed special panel to handle and decide on the entire case. In the event of the appointment of a Special Panel, the members appointed to the Panel will be subject to the same obligations, constraints and regulations as detailed out in the Terms of Reference of the Ethics Committee.

While the process specified in the WOSM Complaints Policy will be followed as closely as possible, provisions may be adjusted by the appointed special panel or the WSC’s Ethics Committee to ensure a timely and equitable decision is made. Any Complaint submitted within 30 days prior to the date of voting will be expedited.

An appeal under this Code shall be processed under the regulations detailed in the WOSM Complaint Policy.