






INTERNAL REGULATION OF J. HEYROVSKÝ INSTITUTE OF PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY			
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## CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

### of the J. Heyrovský Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS

	Position	Name	Signature	Date
Responsible person	Head of Director's Office	Ing. Zuzana Musilová, Ph.D.		12.7.24
Issued by	Gender Equality Officer	Mgr. Michaela Svatošová		18.7.24
Submitted by	Head of Director's Office	Ing. Zuzana Musilová, Ph.D.		18.7.24
Approved by	Director	prof. Martin Hof, Dr. rer. nat., DSc.		26.7.24
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### Preamble

Education, research and innovation are the fundamental pillars of the development of today's society. Confidence in science is based on trusting the integrity of researchers achieving new results. For science to remain credible, it is essential that the employees of the J. Heyrovsky Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS (hereinafter referred to as HIPC) follow the basic ethical principles and values of an academic environment.

The Code of Ethical Conduct (hereafter referred to as the Code) sets standards of behaviour for HIPC employees, both scientific and non-scientific professions, and members of professional advisory bodies and committees within the scope of their authority. It defines undesirable acts of behaviour (see individual chapters) that may affect the satisfaction, sense of security, and motivation of the employees or damage the credibility and prestige of HIPC, and hence the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as CAS).

The Code is a document that focuses mainly on issues related to a safe working environment and internal and external communication within and outside of HIPC and applies to all HIPC employees, while the [Code of Ethics for Scientific Research of the Czech Academy of Sciences](#) (hereinafter referred to as the CAS Code of Ethics) focuses mainly on ethical issues related to scientific research activities conducted at the premises of CAS.

The objective of the Code is to contribute to creating and cultivating a fair and safe working environment for all, regardless of differences, based on mutual respect, professional responsibility and integrity. This enables HIPC to fulfil its obligations to society in accordance with its goals and mission. This Code complements the CAS Code of Ethics, particularly in areas related to general moral principles and standards, relationships with colleagues, or behaviour of authorities.

The Code applies to all persons working at HIPC, regardless of their employment relationship, job title, experience or academic title, including students, employees on service contract agreements and external collaborators (hereinafter referred to as employees).

HIPC employees are obliged to observe the principles of ethical conduct and communication, particularly in the following areas:

## 1 Standards of Workplace Behaviour

Employees interact with each other respectfully and with confidence in professional competence.

### 1.1 Respect and Esteem

Employees shall, at all times, respect the principles of collegiality and academic cooperation and show mutual respect. This mutual respect is key to creating a fair, open, and dignified environment and preventing undesirable behaviour, such as discrimination, harassment, prejudice, bullying, violence, and abuse of power.

Manifestations of respect include:

- equal treatment regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race or belief,
- treating all with dignity in all circumstances,
- open and fair communication, honesty and constructive criticism.

### 1.2 Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination

All employees are guided by principles of non-discrimination and equal treatment and access to all individuals, particularly with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, age, disability, religion, political or other opinions, social origin, nationality or ethnicity, or other status. Employees avoid not only discriminatory behaviour but also the application of gender and cultural stereotypes.

#### 1.2.1 Zero Tolerance to all Forms of Violence (Gender-Based Violence), Harassment, and Bullying

HIPC rejects all forms of violence, harassment, or bullying in the workplace.

Unacceptable forms of violence include:

- physical violence - kicking, pushing, hitting or restraining movement,
- psychological violence - insults, offence, humiliation, mockery, shouting, deliberate ignoring in communication, belittling, or inappropriate humour,
- economic violence - denying opportunities to submit grant proposals or unequal access to funds, e.g. business travels compared to colleagues,
- cyber violence - sending or sharing intimidating, offensive or sexually explicit content, unauthorised collection and disclosure of personal data,
- stalking - pursuing or repeated harassment through messages.

A specific type of violence is **gender-based violence**, which refers to any act of violence that is targeted at women or men because of their gender or acts of such violence that disproportionately affect women or men.

Examples of gender-based violence include:

- gender-based harassment - e.g. humiliating comments that diminish a person's abilities because of their gender identity,
- sexual harassment - e.g. sexually aimed comments about a person's appearance or unwanted touching,
- sexual violence - e.g. sexual coercion or unwanted contact.

Additionally, **bullying**, which is characterised by targeted, systematic, repeated psychological abuse, is also considered unacceptable behaviour.

Examples of bullying include:

- bossing - bullying by superiors towards subordinates may include rumours, lies, blackmail, withholding information, uncooperative or harassing behaviour and inappropriate behaviour, including sexual harassment, unreasonable or deliberate non-compliance with employees' legitimate demands,
- staffing - bullying of superiors by subordinates, with the aim to harm superiors; the forms are identical to those of bossing,
- mobbing - bullying by a group of colleagues against an individual, manifested through ridicule, excessive criticism or exclusion from the team,
- defamation - discrediting and damaging someone's reputation manifested by spreading rumours, e.g. in order to gain promotion at the expense of the disparaged person (chaining).

All of these forms (only the most serious are listed) are unacceptable in both real and online environments.

### 1.3 Integrity, Professional Responsibility and Fair Approach

Awareness of equal opportunities, space for full utilisation of one's abilities and ambitions in the best interests of the institution, and a guarantee of fair assessment, enhances employee satisfaction and motivation, and thus also contributes to increasing the quality and productivity of work.

Employees, when performing their work responsibilities:

- use property, material, financial and other resources responsibly, economically, and in the interests of the institution,
- do not harm the legitimate interests of their workplace,
- protect sensitive workplace information and prevent its misuse - confidential or personal data is not allowed to be shared outside the institution verbally, in writing, through media, or on social networks,
- [protect intellectual property](#),
- make decisions in work-related matters based on objective facts, not on personal preferences,
- encourage a cooperative work environment,
- academic and administrative staff cooperate with each other without unnecessary delay,
- do not harm the environment and minimise energy consumption.

### 1.4 Transparency and Conflict of Interest

The HIPC employees are obliged to prevent situations where a conflict of interest may arise between their personal interests and the interests of HIPC. A conflict of interest is defined as any preferential treatment for individual HIPC employees, but also for their family members and close persons.

All employees:

- actively communicate important and job-relevant information and do not intentionally withhold any of such information,
- do not manipulate information for their own personal benefit,
- do not circumvent internal workplace processes to advance their personal interests,
- do not abuse their professional or academic position for the purpose of obtaining financial or other benefits for themselves or a close person,
- ensure that no support (financial, professional, through auspices or otherwise) is provided by untrusted external bodies,
- are required to report any case of a conflict of interest (even at the attempt stage) in accordance with the [Complaints and Suggestions Procedure](#).

## 2 Standards of Workplace Behaviour for Scientific and Managerial Professions

### 2.1 Ethical Principles for Scientific Work

Scientific and academic employees adhere to the following “[Code of Ethics for Scientific Research of the Czech Academy of Sciences](#)”, “[Code of Ethics for Employees of Scientific Departments of J. Heyrovsky Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS](#)”, and “[Guidance on Authorship in Scientific Publications for Researchers of the J. Heyrovský Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS](#)”.

### 2.2 Influence of Foreign Power

A part of ethical behaviour is also increased resistance to the influence of foreign power. All employees are obliged to familiarise themselves with the threat of influence from foreign powers, which can endanger not only intellectual property, computer systems, but also the reputation of the HIPC. Details are provided in the Directive [SM-35 Increasing Institutional Resilience](#) and [Counter Foreign Interference Manual for the Czech Academic Sector](#).

The influence of foreign powers is an undesirable and unacceptable form of external influence. It specifically includes hidden, deceptive, coercive or corrupt practices targeting employees. Unsolicited attempts of contact, such as those currently coming from Russia, China and Iran, are directed to the Institutional Resilience Coordinator (see [Complaints and Suggestions Procedure](#)).

Particular attention should be paid to risks related to:

- intellectual property protection, research projects and grants, their content and solutions,
- protecting HIPC’s reputation, employees, partners and other stakeholders,
- cooperation with partner organisations.

### 2.3 Special Responsibilities of Persons in Managerial Positions

Persons in managerial positions fulfil their duties as a service to the institution as a whole. Such service involves responsibility for colleagues under their authority, fairness in decision-making, integrity and objectivity in conflict resolution, and in the evaluation of subordinates.

Managers do not abuse their position and do not engage in power behaviour towards subordinates that would qualify as bullying or violence. They do not misuse their position to enrich themselves and gain advantages and better conditions. They apply equal access and treatment to subordinates and newcomers and follow OTM-R rules in recruitment.

## 3 Standards of Communication with the Media and the Public

In communication about HIPC, its activities, services and projects in the media and externally (e.g. web, social networks), employees act in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the “[Communication Strategy](#)” currently in effect.

## 4 Validity and Applicability of the Code

### 4.1 Prevention and Final Provisions

This Code (directive SM-36 HIPC Code of Ethical Conduct) is mandatory for all current employees who are obliged to acquaint themselves with its content. HIPC offers preventive seminars promoting the

topics covered in the Code; participating in these activities increases employee awareness and, thus, implementation of the Code principles.

#### 4.2 Enforcement

The Code regulates employees' rights and obligations and complements the [Organisational Rules and Code of Ethics for Employees of Scientific Departments of J. Heyrovsky Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS](#) and other related regulations listed in the Annex. HIPC management is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code within the scope of their activities of the departments, sections and offices.

#### 4.3 Disclosure Obligations

Every employee is obliged to report all instances of Code violations that have been discovered or suspected. For this purpose, HIPC has developed a document titled "[Complaints and Suggestions Procedure](#)."

According to EU Regulation 2019/1937 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law, HIPC has established an effective and comprehensive protection of whistleblowers, i.e. a protection system for individuals who report illegal activities related to their work. ([Internal Reporting System](#))

#### 4.4 Basic Principles of the Issue Investigation

Any report of a violation of this Code is considered confidential. All information related to the case is recorded and safely stored with the person investigating the alleged violation. Each case is handled individually with maximum sensitivity and without delay. The result may be either a rejection of the suspicion or the implementation of further appropriate measures if the suspicion is confirmed. The person against whom a complaint has been made must be given an opportunity to explain and respond to the allegations before any disciplinary action is taken. The investigation findings must be communicated to all involved parties and must include a proposal for remedial action if a violation of the Code is confirmed.

#### 4.5 Consequence of a Violation of the Code

Behaviour that is in conflict with this Code may lead to disciplinary measures commensurate with the severity of the violation, including employment law consequences for employees who violate the Code. In the case of a breach of the Code, HIPC will take appropriate measures without delay and support the legitimate interests of affected individuals. The disciplinary measures or employment law consequences for employees who violate the Code will be decided by a superior officer together with the HIPC director; the decision is made on a case-by-case basis and considers the severity of the case, the consequences of the harmful action on affected individuals, and institutional interests.

**The Czech version of these general terms and conditions is binding. The English version is for information purposes only.**

### 5 Annex: Related Regulations

[Complaints and Suggestions Procedure](#)

[European Charter for Researchers 2023](#)

[European Charter for Researchers, The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers 2005](#)

[Code of Ethics for Scientific Research of the Czech Academy of Sciences](#)

[Organisational Rules](#)

[Guidance on Authorship in Scientific Publications](#)

[Code of Ethics for Employees of Scientific Departments of J. Heyrovsky Institute of Physical Chemistry of the CAS](#)

[Rules of procedure of the Committee for Scientific Work Ethics of the JHIPC](#)

[Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment of researchers at the Heyrovsky Institute of Physical Chemistry](#)

[HR Award Action Plan](#)

[Gender Equality Plan](#)

[Handbook of inclusive and sensitive communication](#)

[Directive-35 Increasing institutional resilience at the institute](#)

[Directive-09 Management of intellectual ownership and protection and application of industrial property rights](#)

[Communication Strategy \(CZ\)](#)