

Anti-harassment policy for ISAL conferences

This policy is adapted from the example available from http://geekfeminism.wikia.com/wiki/Conference_anti-harassment/Policy which is written and promoted by the Ada Initiative co-founders.

Introduction by the Ada Initiative

Why have an official anti-harassment policy for your conference? First, it is necessary (unfortunately). Harassment at conferences is incredibly common. Second, it sets expectations for behaviour at the conference. Simply having an anti-harassment policy can prevent harassment all by itself. Third, it encourages people to attend who have had bad experiences at other conferences. Finally, it gives conference staff instructions on how to handle harassment quickly, with the minimum amount of disruption or bad press for your conference.

Anti-harassment policy text

There are different length versions of the anti-harassment policy for public consumption, and an internal version spelling out implementation for use by the conference organisers and staff.

Short public version

[This very short version refers the reader to a longer version of the policy. Suitable for footers on announcement emails, web pages, news stories, etc.]

\$ECAL/ALife\$ is dedicated to a harassment-free conference experience for everyone. Our anti-harassment policy can be found at \$URL\$.

Medium public version

[This is a statement of the organisers' principles and sets expectations for the tone and style of the conference. Suitable for longer announcements.]

\$ECAL/ALife\$ is dedicated to providing a harassment-free conference experience for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, or religion. We do not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venue, including presentations. Conference participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the conference at the discretion of the conference organisers. Our anti-harassment policy can be found at \$URL\$.

Long public version

[This version focuses on specific instructions to the participants, with the goal of preventing harassment in the first place through education. Suitable for the conference web site and conference program material.]

[Insert medium public version of policy here.]

Harassment includes: offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion; sexual images in public spaces; deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; unwelcome sexual attention. Participants asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately.

If a participant engages in harassing behaviour, the conference organisers may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender or expulsion from the conference. If you are being harassed, or notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of conference staff immediately.

Conference staff will be happy to help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the conference. We value your attendance.

Email address for organisers: \$contact details\$

Phone number for conference security or organizers: \$contact details\$

Local sexual assault hot line: : \$contact details\$

Local emergency and non-emergency medical: \$contact details\$

Local taxi company: \$contact details\$

We expect participants to follow these rules at all conference venues and conference-related social events.

Internal version for conference staff

[This version is intended for internal use by the conference staff.]

Warnings

Any member of conference staff can issue a verbal warning to a participant that their behaviour violates the conference's

anti-harassment policy. Warnings should be reported to the local chair as soon as practical. The report should include:

- Identifying information of the participant (name from conference badge)
- The time you issued the warning
- The behaviour that was in violation
- The approximate time of the behaviour (if different from the time of warning)
- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- Your identity
- Other people involved in the incident
- any other relevant information

Presentations

Presentations or similar events should not be stopped for one-time gaffes or minor problems, although a member of conference staff should speak to the presenter afterward. However, staff should take immediate action to politely and calmly stop any presentation or event that repeatedly or seriously violates the anti-harassment policy. Simply say "I'm sorry, this presentation cannot be continued at the present time" with no further explanation.

Taking reports

When taking a report from someone experiencing harassment you should record what they say and reassure them that they are being taken seriously, but avoid making specific promises about what actions the organisers will take. Ask for any other information if the reporter has not volunteered it (such as time, place) but do not pressure them to provide it if they are reluctant. Even if the report lacks important details such as the identity of the person taking the harassing actions, it should still be recorded and passed along to the local chair. If the reporter desires it, arrange for an escort by conference staff or a trusted person, contact a friend, and contact local law enforcement. Do not pressure the reporter to take any action if they do not want to do it. Respect the reporter's privacy by not sharing unnecessary details with others, especially individuals who were not involved with the situation or non-staff members.

See "Warnings" section for the information to gather in your report.

Expulsion

A participant may be expelled by the decision of any of the above listed entities for whatever reasons they deem sufficient. However, here are some general guidelines for when a participant should be expelled:

- A second offense resulting in a warning from staff
- Continuing to harass after any “No” or “Stop” instruction
- A pattern of harassing behaviour, with or without warnings
- A single serious offense (e.g., punching or groping someone)
- A single obviously intentional offense (e.g., taking up-skirt photos)

Venue security and local authorities should be contacted when appropriate.

Public statements

As a general rule, conference staff should not make any public statements about the behaviour of individual people during or after the conference.

In general, consult with other staff members when possible but act when necessary.