

## ***Tool # 12: Rights and Democracy Network Code of Ethics***

This Code of Ethics was drafted by the Rights and Democracy Network team (hereinafter: “the Network”) to help members comply with certain regulations which aim to promote the Network’s objectives of promotion, protection and implementation of human rights.

Network members (hereinafter: “the members”) shall:

### **1. Respect others and avoid all forms of discrimination**

- Members shall respect minimum human rights standards, as stated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*;
- Members of a delegation shall respect the dignity of other members, avoid causing harm, minimize personal conflicts with other members and ensure that all interested individuals not be isolated or excluded from Delegation proceedings;
- Members of a delegation shall maintain harmonious and respectful relations with all individuals with whom they interact as part of their involvement with the Network;
- Delegation members shall take appropriate care of borrowed equipment, where applicable. Members shall not voluntarily damage or vandalize equipment borrowed from the Network or from any other partner including the facilities provided by universities, such as premises or audiovisual equipment.

### **2. Demonstrate equal treatment**

- All members are equal and should not be treated differently because of age, race, origin, sexual orientation, social condition or any other personal characteristic.

### **3. Demonstrate integrity and transparency**

- Members shall act in accordance with the laws in effect, they shall also act faithfully and honestly in the best interests of the Network and the Delegation;
- Members shall refrain from using Network resources for personal purposes;
- Members shall oppose and refrain from taking part in embezzlement or any act that is contrary to the public interest or generally accepted ethical standards;
- Members shall provide the Network’s team with timely information regarding irregularities committed by any individual connected with the Network;
- The Delegation Executive Committee shall provide information to requestors regarding its proceedings and shall complete financial and project-related documentation in order to leave behind traces for executive committees to come. Moreover, for the sake of transparency and to ensure effective operation, Delegation meetings are open to all members and are not reserved to the Executive Committee.
- Delegation members shall not voluntarily damage or vandalize equipment borrowed from the Network or from any other partner including the facilities provided by universities, such as premises or audiovisual equipment.

### **4. Respect environmental standards**

- During Network activities, members shall consume products and use materials that do not adversely affect the environment or those who use them. In addition, these items shall be disposed of in a clean and sanitary fashion using appropriate facilities, including the use of recycling bins and other environmentally sensitive initiatives.

## **5. Act in accordance with the democratic expression**

- Democracy shall constitute the basis for all Delegation management and implemented projects as well as dictate the conduct of Delegation members, partners and any other individuals with whom they are involved. The Executive Committee shall be elected by members present at the General Assembly. The Assembly shall be publicized to all members.

## **Partnerships**

- In the context of projects implemented in cooperation with other groups or associations, Network members shall ensure mutual respect between the groups as well as ensuring that established projects comply with Code of Ethics standards and that the mandates or objectives of other associations do not contravene those of the Rights and Democracy Network.

## **The “Rights and Democracy Network” graphic symbol and image**

- The Network logo may be used for Delegation activities and projects. However, under no circumstances may it be used for personal purposes.
- When Delegation members and their executive committees use the terms “Rights and Democracy Network”, they are under obligation to respect the institution’s values as well as to act in the best interest of the Network and refrain from damaging the Network’s image.
- The Rights and Democracy logo may not be used without written permission from Rights and Democracy.

## **Communications**

- Communication between Network members and between delegations and the community shall be clear, honest, non-defamatory and devoid of hateful language.

## **The Network’s approaches**

- Delegations shall ensure inclusion of the Network’s approaches (Ripple effect, Ethics, Innovation, Interconnectivity, Integration of the human rights framework in education and career, Multidisciplinarity, Non-discrimination and gender equality, Innovation and reflection, Action and community outreach) in projects and operations.

## **Final provisions**

- a) This Code of Ethics is available online on the Rights and Democracy Network Web site [www.dd-rd.net](http://www.dd-rd.net) for consultation by members and the general public;
- b) This Code of Ethics may be amended in accordance with the organization’s evolution.

## **Conclusion<sup>1</sup>**

This Code of Ethics constitutes:

- a) A call for cooperation, professional action and respect
- b) An opportunity to rally around a common ideal which is to facilitate compliance and sharing of the Network’s humanist values
- c) A tool for reflection on the values that inspire action as well as on the nature of relationships that Network members must entertain in their school, work and life environments
- d) A reflection of the rules of conduct expected from members of the Rights and Democracy Network
- e) A call to exceed expectations.

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<sup>1</sup> These conclusions are inspired by the Code of Ethics of the Fondation québécoise du cancer (Quebec Cancer Foundation), available online in French at : <http://www.fqc.qc.ca/pdf/codeethique.pdf>