



Suicide Prevention
Australia

JANUARY 2024

Code of Conduct for Engagements in Suicide Prevention

Suicide Prevention Australia is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment during all public forums across the suicide prevention sector. The purpose of this *Code of Conduct for Engagements in Suicide Prevention* is to create a set of behavioural standards to achieve this goal.

All people are expected to treat each other with respect, professionalism and courtesy throughout the duration of any engagement or event being conducted within the suicide prevention sector, with the intention of advancing the goals of the suicide prevention sector.

Any form of discrimination, harassment or behaviour that conflicts with the goals of this code will not be tolerated. This includes actions based on perspective, race, religion, culture, sexuality, gender identity, disability, political persuasion or any other characteristic.

It is a requirement of everyone engaging in these public forums to be responsible for their personal safety and to try with their best endeavours to protect the safety of others. Any unsafe situations or concerns should be immediately acted on or reported.

There is a duty of care that rests with the organisers of engagements in suicide prevention. To deliver on that duty and to ensure the ability of this Code to achieve the goals of safety and respect, organisers will at all times take reasonable steps to ensure that they, their event contributors and participants abide by the principles of this Code.

Our Vision

The Code of Engagement aims to create an atmosphere that fosters productive interactions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration while prioritising the safety and experience of all participants.

Public forums may include conferences, seminars, webinars, committee meetings, public events and any other organised activity that seeks to bring together a range of individuals and organisations to advance suicide prevention.

Best Practice Principles

<p><u>Valuing lived experience of suicide</u> Relevant activities are co-designed or co-created with people with lived experience of suicide.</p>	<p><u>Reducing stigma of suicide</u> Demystify suicide by encouraging safe discussions about suicide and promoting skills to support these discussions.</p>
<p><u>Reflecting diversity and inclusion</u> Activities reflect the differing needs and preferences of individuals, communities and cultures.</p>	<p><u>Acting with integrity</u> Use and communicate information with purpose and integrity.</p>

Embedding help-seeking information

Promote crisis support contact details on relevant collateral (any printed material, presentations or videos used at a forum) and on occasions that may heighten distress.

Promoting safe and person-centred language

Promote and implement safe and inclusive language when communicating about suicide prevention.

Respect

All participants are expected to treat each other with respect, professionalism and courtesy. Any form of discrimination, harassment or behaviour that conflicts with the goals of this code will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, actions based on perspective, race, religion, culture, sexuality, gender identity, disability, political persuasion or any other protected characteristic.

Safety

Attendees and presenters are responsible for their personal safety. When talking about suicide, safe and inclusive language is essential. Any unsafe situations or concerns should be immediately reported to the event organisers or designated personnel.

Engaging with Lived Experience

Often people with lived experience of suicide will be present, possibly in significant numbers at suicide prevention gatherings. Therefore, a trauma-aware approach and safe communication about suicide is expected.

Organisers and presenters are to identify opportunities and provide relevant platforms for lived experience of suicide perspectives to be presented alongside other content. Organisers are to provide support for those requiring time out, a quiet space and/or counselling or peer support staff.

Recognising and honouring people with lived experience of suicide who are present, and the lives lost to suicide, is a courteous convention that has emerged in suicide prevention to help give visibility to the personal experience of suicide and to reduce the stigma.

Presenters' Responsibilities

Presenters must be well-prepared and deliver content that is appropriate, accurate, and respectful of the audience's diverse perspectives. Presenters are encouraged to create an inclusive environment that promotes open discussion and participation from all attendees. They should seek to promote diversity and inclusivity in content and discussions.

Presenters should ensure that their presentations do not include offensive, discriminatory or inappropriate content.

Presenters are to ensure that their responses to any questions are respectful and delivered in a safe manner. Different perspectives and experiences may be presented through the

questions and feedback of attendees. Presenters must respond in a way that promotes the principles of safety and support.

If a presentation includes content that may cause distress for most people, it is the presenter's responsibility to notify the organisers as a matter of priority so they can take appropriate action.

Should any offence or distress be experienced by an attendee as a result of a question, comment, feedback or otherwise from a presenter, the organisers or Suicide Prevention Australia will notify the presenter and it is the presenter's responsibility to address the issue in a safe, supportive and respectful manner.

Attendees' Responsibilities

Disruptive behaviour, including but not limited to excessive noise, interruptions or disrespectful comments, will not be tolerated. Attendees should respect the personal space and boundaries of others and refrain from any behaviour that could cause discomfort or distress to fellow participants. Attendees must respect that presenters may have their own personal background or experiences relating to suicide and therefore ensure that any questions, comments, feedback or otherwise is delivered in a safe and respectful way that aligns with the Best Practice Principles.

Organisers' Responsibilities

Organisers must have a good understanding of the content being delivered by presenters and the profile of their attendees. It is the organiser's responsibility to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that no unnecessary distress is caused to any presenters or attendees. This is especially important when there is content to be shared that may cause distress for most people.

Reasonable steps to protect presenter and attendee safety is managed by:

- Obtaining contact details of all presenters and attendees.
- Monitoring discussions and ensuring that they abide by the expectations established in this Code.
- Following up immediately with any presenters or attendees who appear as though they may have experienced a level of distress.
- Following up with all presenters and attendees to offer support and seek feedback on how the engagement could have been improved.
- Ensuring that there is notification to, and an express understanding of, attendees where there is an occasion for information to be shared that would normally cause distress for most people in most circumstances.

Accountability and Management

If any participant witnesses or experiences behaviour that goes against the principles outlined in this Code, they are encouraged to report it to the organisers or designated personnel. Reports can be made anonymously, and all reports will be treated seriously and

confidentially. Appropriate actions will be taken to address the issue and prevent further occurrences. Depending on the severity and frequency of the violation, consequences for individuals who breach this Code may include warnings, removal from the event, termination of membership with Suicide Prevention Australia or legal action if appropriate.

Protection of Diverse Opinions

Suicide Prevention Australia is committed to advancing open, honest discourse that will advance the interests of the suicide prevention sector and promote the importance of free speech and diverse opinions for this to be achieved.

Providing misinformation or information that is being used for the purpose of vilification of any person or groups will not be tolerated and appropriate action may be taken should this occur.

Sharing of any personal stories without the express and direct permission of the individual will not be tolerated and appropriate action may be taken should this occur.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

It is important to acknowledge that organisations involved in suicide prevention vary in size, structure and focus. Organisers should proactively promote the inclusion of small and large entities. Where possible, organisers should also ensure that the diversity of the community is reflected at their event. The goal of increasing the awareness and inclusion of diverse groups is to address the equity gap where there is a disproportionate representation in suicidality.

Inclusivity helps to break down barriers and promotes the interests of equity.

Other Resources

Further resources developed by Everymind can be found here:

- [National Communications Charter](#)
- [Quick reference guide for conferences and events](#)
- [Quick reference guide for communicating safely about suicide & self-harm data](#), and
- [Quick reference guide for researchers](#)

Further Information

Please reach out to Suicide Prevention Australia for further guidance. We understand that every public forum is different and we are happy to help guide you on the best way to embrace this Code for your specific activity.

Contact

membership@suicidepreventionaust.org