SBND Code Of Conduct

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For the SBND Collaboration

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Webpage: https://sbn-nd.fnal.gov/internal/conduct.html
Document: https://sbn-nd.fnal.gov/website_documents/SBND_Code_of_Conduct.pdf

How It Came To Be

- At the SBND 2020 summer collaboration meeting, we had a session discussing racism and what we can do to address it in our academic circles and communities
- It was suggested that SBND should move to create a committee to write a CoC.
- A committee was formed of a diverse (backgrounds and career levels) group selected by the co-spokespeople during the following months.
- In the fall of 2020, a survey was sent to the collaboration (see next couple slides).
- Looked at other different existing CoC to based the SBND on (e.g. what was already done, what is included, etc).
- In summer 2021, the draft was presented to the collaboration and asked for feedback. Feedback was implemented before being re-sent to the collaboration.
- It was then presented at the SBND IB and approved. It was enacted in January 2022.
- The collaboration were made aware throughout the whole process at every collaboration meeting and via emails once specific milestones were achieved.

Collaboration Initial Input

- In November 2020, initial feedback and suggestions survey was sent to the whole collaboration to help the writers of the code to understand what the collaboration wants to see in it.
- Received surveys from collaborators at different levels which is useful to have received.

◆ **Which of these represents you the best? (43 responses)**

51.2%
7%
20.9%
20.9%

- Undergraduate Student
- Post-Bac (not yet in a graduate program)
- Graduate Student (Masters, PhD)
- Post-Doc
- Technician or Technical Staff Member
- University Faculty/Lab Scientist (Academics/Advisors/Professors with/ without students)
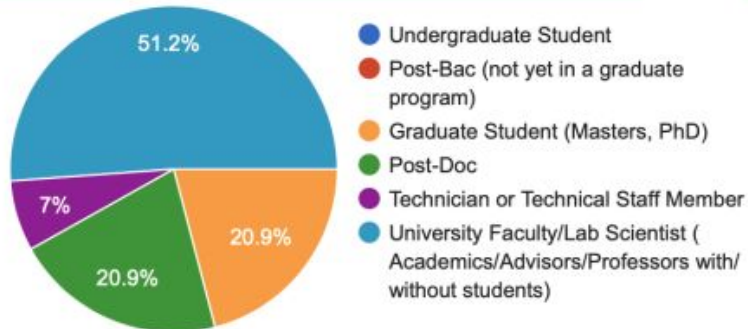
◆ **Are you in a supervision position? (43 responses)**

41.9%
55.8%

- Yes
- No
- Kind of
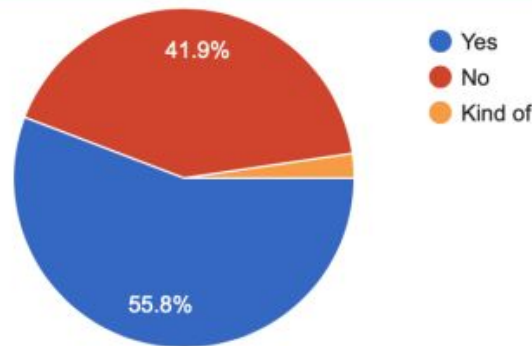
Collaboration Initial Input

- 5 responders have used the CoC of other organization, a summary of their experiences:
  - process poorly defined, not transparent, incredibly slow
  - complete failure, no action was taken
  - completely ineffective because there were no consequences of violation
  - was tricky to prove the violation
  - ineffective due to lack of cross collaboration code

◆ What would you like to have present in the CoC document? Check as many options as applicable. (43 responses)

- Scope - What it covers and doesn't **97.7%**
- Consequences to CoC violation **79.1%**
- Reporting and investigation details **74.4%**

◆ Should the CoC contain a concrete set of actions towards individuals that act (once or multiple times) against the SBND CoC? If yes, what kind of action do you think would be appropriate? Please use the 'other' option to add your suggestions. Check as many options as applicable. (42 responses)

- The CoC should not contain a concrete set of actions **23.8%**
- A formal report to the supervisor, employer or institution which ever is/are applicable **73.8%**
- Temporary ban on attending meetings in-person **47.6%**
- Temporary removal from leadership position(s) **64.3%**
- Temporary removal from author list **47.6%**
- Removal from Collaboration **42.9%**

Scope

Much of collaboration feedback/initial concerns were around scope – how does this document fit into the myriad other codes of conduct that collaboration members are subject to?

Goal here is to explicitly place the SBND CoC in the context of other organizations such as the host lab and the members' home institutions

The SBND collaboration strives to foster a professional, supportive and inclusive environment that enables productive scientific collaboration. This Code of Conduct (CoC) document is intended to set expectations for the SBND collaboration members for professional scientific and ethical standards. This Code of Conduct aligns with and furthers Fermilab's commitment to fostering a safe, diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment that values mutual respect and personal and scientific integrity. This document is not intended to replace or supersede home institutions' policies, other institutional or professional societies codes of conduct, regulations, and any applicable laws, to which collaboration members are subject to. While this document is focused on SBND's principles and accountability procedures, behavior may be reported to the appropriate organizations at Fermilab, at a collaborator's home institution, or law enforcement, as appropriate.

This document is applicable to all SBND members in all interactions and activities related to the collaboration and covers all forms of business and communication, be they digital or in person, in any context. The collaboration members are expected to adhere to the core values and principles outlined in this document and strive to maintain an environment that is welcoming to all members and free from any form of discrimination or harassment while representing the SBND collaboration.

Core Values and Principles

Provides a list of core values and principles:
- Respect and support collaboration and community members and communicate in ways that make sure all voices can be heard
- Commit to constructive dialog and take initiative to improve the collaborative environment
- Commit to inclusive practices in collaboration activities and organization
- Commit to ethical professional and interpersonal behavior in relationships with collaborators
- Commit to ethical practices for conducting scientific research within a collaboration and reporting scientific results

For each, provides **specific** guidance for how to uphold these principles with many examples of **proactive** behavior

Example of Core Values and Principles

- Commit to inclusive practices in collaboration activities and organization: **Brief Core Value**

  - Be aware of diversity along multiple axes, including gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disability, career stage and professional affiliation, and geographical region, when assigning leadership positions, forming committees or working groups, or assigning speaking opportunities.

  - Consider keeping records that allow evaluation of diversity within the collaboration; eg: demographics information for leadership opportunities, speaking opportunities, etc.

  - Be aware of subconscious bias in choosing collaboration members for leadership roles and for other collaboration activities.

  - Be aware of words and phrases that can subtly limit participation when making calls for volunteers or collaborator contributions.

  - Explicitly and actively encourage participation from groups that are underrepresented in collaboration leadership or activities.

Specific guidance for proactive behavior

Forbidden Conduct

Provides a list of specific behaviors do not have a place in the collaboration:
- Comments or actions based on stereotypes, group generalizations, or any form of racism, sexism, or discrimination
- Bullying or harassment, regardless of motivation
- Abuse of authority
- Unwelcome physical contact or sexual advances, threats of violence, any form of assault
- Dissemination of collaboration data, software, or results without following collaboration review procedures
- Scientific misconduct, including falsification of data or results, plagiary, misrepresentation, or failure to appropriately credit the work of others
- Professional or personal retaliation for invoking the CoC, reporting CoC violations, or enforcing the CoC

Enforcement of the Code of Conduct

- Our commitment to a healthy collaborative culture requires that we recognize that violations of our standards of collaborative behavior may occur and that we are **ready to respond** to protect and support our collaborators should they be impacted by misconduct.
- Collaborators are **encouraged to invoke the SBND Code of Conduct themselves as needed** in interactions with collaborators. They may also choose to report violations of SBND's Code of Conduct to the SBND Code of Conduct Committee.
- All collaborators are encouraged and are responsible to express concerns on the violation of this CoC without the fear of retaliation.
- **Retaliation** toward a member who expresses concern or toward anyone assisting either in the reporting or investigation of a claim, **is a severe violation of this Code of Conduct**.

Code of Conduct Committee

- The Code of Conduct Committee (CoCC) consist of **four members of the collaboration, elected by the collaboration**. CoCC members will each serve for **two years, with terms staggered** such that half of the committee membership is elected each year. The CoCC election will be held once a year (spring).
- Existing CoCC members who are not up for re-election will manage the logistics of the election process. Nominations and self-nominations will be solicited from the collaboration.
- The CoCC will ensure that the slate of nominees presented to the collaboration contains at least four people (two of whom will be elected), that all nominees are willing to serve if elected, and that the slate of nominees is as diverse as possible, including **opportunity for early career members** (students and postdocs) to serve.

Code of Conduct Committee

- The CoCC will provide an **opportunity for the collaboration to provide feedback on the nominees**, to minimize the chance that someone untrustworthy is elected.
- The collaboration will vote, via **ranked-choice voting**, to select two members of the CoCC.
- The CoCC will choose one of their members to serve as chair.
- The **spokespeople will be ex-officio members** of the CoCC.
- *CoCC members will obtain appropriate education or training on diversity, equity, and inclusion and conflict resolution.*

Reporting Process

- Collaborators may report issues to the CoCC via **private communication with any member of the CoCC or via the committee's mailing list**.
- Collaborators may also ask a **trusted colleague to contact the CoCC on their behalf**. While there is no mechanism for fully anonymous reporting, the surrogate is not required to share the identity of the person they represent.
- We opted against a *truly anonymous* reporting since it could be challenging for the CoCC e.g. in the case of disturbing anonymous reports.
- Issues communicated privately to a single member will be **shared with the full committee unless a request is made to restrict** the discussion to a smaller group; in this case, a minimum of two members of the CoCC will be involved.
- If the **complaint directly involves a CoCC member**, that **member will not be included in discussions or decisions** associated with that report.

Reporting Process

- All discussions with the CoCC will be kept confidential within the CoC committee unless an agreement is reached to involve others or the CoCC feels ethics-bound to take action on issues that are serious threats to community wellbeing.
- The CoCC will keep confidential records of all reports and resulting actions and will be conscious of observing patterns of behavior if multiple reports involve a particular person, group, or situation.
- The CoCC will make regular presentations to the collaboration with aggregate descriptions of reports received and actions taken, taking care to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of the people involved.

Reporting Process: *Typical* Example

- Once a report is received to the committee, the committee tries to reply to the individual as soon as possible to thank them for their message and acknowledge its reception.
- The committee then convenes to schedule a meeting with the individual. To not intimidate the individual, only a subset of the committee will meet with them.
- These names and proposed meeting time are sent to the individual to have an in-person (zoom) discussion.
- This discussion is not a fact-finding mission, it is an opportunity for the individual to speak their minds and inform the committee of the situation.
- Notes are taken and will be shared with the rest of the committee unless requested otherwise by the individual.
- The information is then discussed within the committee and a formal plan of action is elaborated before being presented to the individual and requesting their feedback on it.
- If okay with the individual, the plan of action is enacted.
- For all cases, no matter how severe or not, the committee will be monitoring further actions and do regular check-ins with the individual (as long that they agree).

Accountability

- The CoCC will use its judgement to determine how best to ensure accountability for each specific report they receive.
- In the case of more serious consequences involving removal of people from roles or situations within the collaboration, the CoCC will recommend appropriate consequences to the SBND IB; the IB will have final responsibility for ratifying and imposing consequences.
- The CoCC and the IB will strive to respect the privacy of individuals as much as possible.
- More egregious behavior may be reported to the appropriate organizations at Fermilab, at a collaborator's home institution, or law enforcement, as appropriate.

Accountability: Examples of incidents (1)

- **Isolated incidents of disrespectful, nonconstructive, non-inclusive, or anti-collaborative behavior:** Appropriate responses could include simply recording the report, composing a general reminder of appropriate behavior to the collaboration or to a subgroup in which the incident occurred, composing a personalized reminder of appropriate behavior to the person who committed the offense, or having a conversation with the person who committed the offense.

- **Repeated incidents of disrespectful, nonconstructive, non-inclusive, or anti-collaborative behavior or egregious isolated incidents:** If a pattern of behavior is established, behavior is repeated after the reminders/discussions, or if the violation is egregious, escalating consequences will be applied. These may include being barred from particular settings and/or communication channels where the behavior is occurring or being removed from collaboration leadership positions.

Accountability: Examples of incidents (2)

- **Incidents involving unethical scientific practices and or interpersonal behavior:** If a collaboration member is determined to have abused their authority, exploited those under their supervision, fabricated, falsified, or plagiarized data or results, or engaged in any form of harassment or assault, serious consequences will be imposed. These may include being barred from collaboration activities, being removed from collaboration leadership positions, or being removed from the collaboration.

Scenario 1

How would your collaboration respond to a case of retaliation against someone who made a previous allegation of misconduct? (i.e., person A harms person B, person B reports person A, and person A then retaliates against person B)

Any form of retaliation is expressly forbidden in our CoC. Any actions taken by the committee would be more severe than "first offenses", since this counts as "repeated behaviour".
It is possible to suspend or bar Person A from all (or some) collaboration activity during investigation, or indefinitely.

Scenario 2

How would your collaboration respond if a collaborator made inappropriate advances toward other collaborators during a collaboration meeting? Are you able to respond during the meeting if necessary?

If the committee was made aware of a situation like this one happening at a collaboration meeting, we would respond during the meeting. This might include:

- Ensure that the individual would not be left alone with the offender and act as buffers and first hand witnesses. This would include meetings time, breaks, and social events.
- Address the matter with the offender, requesting that they stop this behavior.
- If deemed appropriate by the CoCC (egregious behavior or failure to respond appropriately to a warning), an offending collaborator would be asked to leave the collaboration meeting with immediate effect, either with the ability to connect remotely, or not.

Experiences (so far)

- So far we have only received one formal report.
  - We have received the feedback that the response provided by the CoCC was supportive and had a better outcome than anticipated
- Electing members of the committee is difficult because we want to keep the trust and legitimacy of the committee. We are currently reviewing how to seek inputs on future nominations for the next round before announcing to the collaboration.
- One gap is the lack of knowledge/communication about behaviours of SBND collaborators in other collaborations. This is difficult…