1. Purpose

1.1 The Code of Conduct establishes the principles that govern the conduct of all Participants of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association.

1.2 WSAVA is committed to fostering a welcoming environment of equity, diversity and inclusivity that is safe, collaborative, and productive for supporting dialogue and discovery for all Volunteers and Members.

1.3 Failure to comply with this Code inclusive of the Ethical Conduct, Anti-Harassment Policy and Member Community Pledge means that Volunteers and Members may be subject to disciplinary procedures as set out in the WSAVA By Laws and Complaints Procedure.
2. **Objective**

2.1 As a general rule, applying common sense, good judgment and integrity to the issues that are faced on a day-to-day basis will help ensure that Volunteers’ and Members’ actions and decisions are consistent with the WSAVA Core Values and this Code of Conduct.

2.2 As a multinational and multicultural association, our volunteers and members are expected to be culturally sensible and sensitive, making a proactive effort to understand the cultural differences and trying to make all members feel comfortable should be a normal WSAVA attitude.

2.3 WSAVA is determined to protect and enhance the reputation of its collective membership. The integrity that our brand “WSAVA” represents is one of WSAVA’s most valuable assets.

2.4 Acting with integrity and the highest ethical standards is good business practice and policy. Each Volunteer and Member of the WSAVA should adhere to both the letter and the spirit of this Code of Conduct and all its parts.

2.5 Whilst this Code of Conduct does not attempt to list every possible ethical issue that may arise, it does set out clear requirements for the conduct of Volunteers, Members, employees and contractors and Participants.

3. **Definitions**

3.1 **Volunteers** - Executive Board Members, Committee Members, Working Group Members, Member Representatives, Volunteers, of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association

3.2 **Members** - Members of Member Associations including Full, Affiliate or Associate Members

3.3 **EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS** – Employees and contractors, be they directly or indirectly employed or contracted, full or part time, of the World Small Veterinary Association.

3.4 **Participants** - Any Volunteer, Member, speaker, organizer, exhibitor, event venue staff or media attending a meeting, activity or event

3.5 **Code** - This Code of Conduct which includes the Ethical Conduct, Core Values, Anti-Harassment Policy and Member Community Pledge

4. **Policy**

4.1 All Volunteers, Members, Employees and contractors and Participants will abide by this Code and all its elements.

4.2 At any meeting, activity or event all Participants will:

4.2.1 Respect common-sense rules for public behaviour, personal interaction, courtesy, and respect for private property

4.2.2 Follow the WSAVA Ethical Conduct and Core Values

4.2.3 Be considerate and respectful of differing perspectives and cultures

4.2.4 Respect the rules and policies of the WSAVA and the venue
4.3 Any Participants asked to stop engaging in hostile or harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately. Should they continue the behaviour they will be asked to leave the meeting, activity or event whether it be in-person or virtual.

4.4 Although WSAVA ask for tolerance of cultural differences for the definition of “good behaviour”, it is important to note that when a behaviour is seen as culturally normal and acceptable in one region, but seen as insulting or unacceptable in another, that behaviour must be stopped out of respect to those who feel insulted or harassed by it. WSAVA prohibits any form of harassment as described in the Anti-Harassment Policy.

4.5 Violations of this Code should be reported as soon as possible, either to the Chair of a meeting, official at an activity or event and through the Complaints Procedure process.

4.6 Volunteers and Members who do not comply with this Code may be subject to Enforcement Action.

5. WSAVA Ethical Conduct

The WSAVA Ethical Conduct is based on a four-tiered ‘commitment structure’, comprising of:

- Governance
- Contribution
- Communication
- Behaviour

6. WSAVA Core Values

Our Ethical Conduct is further defined by the WSAVA Core Values, which are:

- **6.1 Integrity:** We conduct our organization without conflicts of interest, by promoting transparency, honesty, fairness and consistency in honouring our commitments.
- **6.2 Professional:** Our organization reflects the character of our profession. We are passionate, competent, qualified, capable and we strive to represent and uphold the status of our profession.
- **6.3 Engaging:** We are an inclusive community, welcoming member associations, members, volunteers, committees, staff, strategic partners and are always accessible for those seeking opportunities for involvement.
6.4 Empowering: We believe that to lead the profession we must create leaders by welcoming the minority opinion while striving for consensus, and to provide support and capacity building with local communities and members to be key drivers of development according to their own determined needs and goals. All our partnerships must serve to strengthen this commitment and not take away the privilege of this responsibility.
7. **WSAVA Anti-Harassment Policy**

7.1 As a professional association, the WSAVA is committed to providing an atmosphere of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI), that encourages the free expression and exchange of scientific ideas. In pursuit of this, the WSAVA is dedicated to the philosophy of equality of opportunity and treatment for all members.

7.2 WSAVA is strongly against any form of harassment. Our community culture is a key factor to our success, how we interact, communicate, and behave with each other is paramount to maintaining this success. All volunteers and staff are entitled to an environment which respects their personal dignity, and which is free from any objectionable conduct.

7.3 **What Is Harassment?**

7.3.1 Unwanted conduct whether written, verbal, visual, physical or not, about someone’s race, color, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, religion or religious belief, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or disability, or

7.3.2 Bullying by intimidatory behaviour.

7.3.3 The following are examples but is not an exhaustive list:

7.3.3.1 Inappropriate use of authority

7.3.3.2 Physical threats, stalking, assault or insulting behaviours or gestures

7.3.3.3 Yelling at, threatening, or personally insulting participants or presenters at a meeting, activity or event (verbally or physically whether face-to-face or virtually).

7.3.3.4 Display or circulation of sexually or racially offensive written or recorded material

7.3.3.5 Insults, ridicule or teasing

7.3.3.6 Verbal conduct of a sexual nature, unwelcome sexual advances, flirtations or propositions

7.3.3.7 Unwanted physical contact

7.3.3.8 Making unwelcome jokes or comments about someone’s race, color, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, religion or religious belief, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or disability or any other reason not related to scientific merit.

7.3.3.9 Cyber harassment

7.3.3.10 Demeaning or belittling comments

7.3.3.11 Retaliation against individuals who raise conduct concerns

7.4 Harassment in any of its forms is an offence and incidents will be dealt with under the WSAVA Complaints Procedure.
8. **WSAVA Member Community Pledge**

As a Member or Volunteer of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA), I declare:

8.1 **I shall always act and behave in a manner that:**
   8.1.1 Promotes the values and behaviours of good citizenship and that I will always show consideration for individuals.
   8.1.2 Could not be considered as harassment in any of its forms.
   8.1.3 Is consistent with the Global Principles of Veterinary Collegiality.
   8.1.4 Is ethical, honest, trustworthy and in good faith in the exercise of my powers and the discharge of my duties of office.
   8.1.5 Use professional courtesy, always dealing with other members of the WSAVA community in a respectful manner.
   8.1.6 Is in the best interests of the Association, and not influenced by personal gain or bias. If representing a third-party position, I will ensure that any real or potential conflict of interest is declared in advance.

8.2 **I shall exercise quality communication strategies – which includes:**
   8.2.1 Respecting other people’s ideas and opinions by being open and flexible – even if they differ from my own. This means accepting that there may sometimes be more than one “right” solutions or answer to an issue or problem.
   8.2.2 Being objective, fair and not allow prejudice or bias to override that objectivity.
   8.2.3 Actively listening to what the other person is saying.
   8.2.4 Letting the other person finish what they are saying before making my own comments.
   8.2.5 Being succinct when making my own comments.
   8.2.6 Ensuring that when I want to contribute to a discussion that I am recognized by the Chairperson prior to speaking.
   8.2.7 Publicly supporting all Board decisions.

8.3 **I shall make a contribution that demonstrates:**
   8.3.1 An appropriate amount of preparation and adequate research.
   8.3.2 A commitment to take on a reasonable and fair workload. Conversely, I am prepared to say “no” to extra workload when it’s beyond my capacity to deliver it.
   8.3.3 A commitment to working as part of a team and achieving the team goals.
   8.3.4 A respect for accountability and thus a commitment for delivering results and meeting deadlines.

8.4 **I respect that good corporate governance is essential to both managing risk and maintaining the operational and structural integrity of the Association, and thus I will:**
   8.4.1 Ensure that I have a thorough understanding of corporate governance principles.
   8.4.2 Exercise a duty to use due care and diligence in fulfilling the function of office and in exercising the powers attached to that office.
8.4.3 Acts in a lawful manner and comply with all WSAVA policies that may apply from time to time.
8.4.4 Respect the differing roles of the Board, Committees and the operations of the secretariat.
8.4.5 Respect the confidentiality of all WSAVA discussions, unless otherwise agreed-to
8.4.6 Declare any real or potential conflict of interest.

8.5 I agree to be bound by this Ethical Conduct. If I am unable to meet or continue to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct, I will be prepared to meet with the Board in order to attempt to resolve the points of difference.

9. Enforcement Action

9.1 All Members are advised, when they apply to become Members, that they will be bound by this Code of Conduct as updated from time to time.
9.2 All Volunteers are advised when they apply to become Executive Board Members, Committee Members, Working Group Members, Member Representatives, Volunteers, Employees and Contractors, that they will be bound by this Code of Conduct as updated from time to time.
9.3 A Member or Volunteer or employee or contractor who breaches this Code of Conduct may be subject to enforcement and disciplinary procedures as set out in the WSAVA By Laws and as determined by the WSAVA’s Complaints Procedure.

9.4 Who may lodge complaints under this Code

9.4.1 Any Member, Volunteer, employee or contractor Participant may make a complaint regarding breach of this Code of Conduct.

9.5 How complaints are made

9.5.1 Complaints can be made to the Chair of the meeting, official at an activity or event and must be made in writing using the Complaints Management Form and are to be accompanied by all materials reasonably necessary to support what is alleged in that complaint.
9.5.2 The WSAVA Complaints Procedure contains information and provides procedures and forms in relation to the making of complaints.

9.6 Who considers the complaint

9.6.1 WSAVA’s Complaints Procedure establishes the individuals and Panels that must consider the complaint as soon as practicable, and deal with the complaint accordingly.