

## INTRODUCTION

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Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is committed to upholding and promoting high ethical standards not only in our policies, programs, and practices, but in the daily work and actions of our employees.

IDRC's Code of Conduct aims to support and guide employees in making decisions that are consistent with our core principles and standards. IDRC demonstrates its commitment to ethics in the workplace, fosters a work environment that encourages creativity and innovation, and values competence and teamwork.

As a research institution dedicated to ethical practices and scientific excellence, it is incumbent on all IDRC staff to lead by example, and to uphold and promote the highest standard of conduct in the workplace. In so doing, we enhance the reputation and integrity of the Centre and contribute to the Government of Canada's promotion of Values and Ethics for the Public Sector.

IDRC staff are expected to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct and apply its principles to every undertaking.

## OUR MANDATE

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The mandate of IDRC is described in the *IDRC Act*: "... to initiate, encourage, support, and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical, and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of those regions."

In pursuing its mandate, the Act empowers the Centre:

- to enlist the talents of natural and social scientists and technologists in Canada and other countries;
- to assist the developing regions to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills, and the institutions required to solve their problems;
- to encourage generally the coordination of international development research; and
- to foster cooperation in research on development problems between the developed and developing regions for their mutual benefit.

## OUR EMPLOYMENT PHILOSOPHY

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IDRC's Employment Philosophy focuses on our expectations for the workplace and articulates our values and commitment to ethical behaviour and productive management–employee relations.

The Employment Philosophy applies equally to all IDRC employees, in Canada and abroad.

Given that IDRC's success depends on highly effective and imaginative staff working well together, we believe that this is best accomplished when managers and employees meet our joint commitment to:

- embrace and uphold the principles of fairness and equity;

- protect the fundamental health and safety of employees in the workplace and while they are traveling;
- support and promote the use of Canada’s two official languages;
- ensure consistency and openness in the treatment of employees through the development and application of sound policies and practices;
- provide a total compensation plan (i.e. salary and benefits) that is fair, as well as training and professional development opportunities that enrich the Centre’s work and that promote individual levels of competence;
- create an environment where employees can attain and maintain a balance between their work and personal lives;
- recognize and reward excellence in the achievement of work objectives, taking initiative, dealing with others, and contributing in a responsive and positive way to the work and environment of the Centre;
- promote and support working relationships and teamwork between and among employees based on mutual trust, respect, and goodwill;
- promote and maintain open and honest communication; and
- make IDRC a place where the views of employees are encouraged, welcomed, and respected.

## **OUR CODE OF CONDUCT**

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*IDRC is committed to the highest standard of ethical conduct in all its activities.*

*Our Code of Conduct flows from our Mandate, Employment Philosophy, and Centre-wide Employment Philosophy discussions. IDRC’s Board of Governors and the President, along with the Senior Management Committee, have endorsed this Code of Conduct and consider it integral to our corporate culture.*

*This Code will also help to further strengthen our good corporate governance practices and maintain public trust in the institutions of government. It complements the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector and directly supports the application of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act (PSDPA).*

The Code along with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector applies to all IDRC employees in Canada and abroad and to all of IDRC's business activities. Any reference to employees is intended to include all employees and officers.

The values and principles outlined in this Code must be reflected in our collective practices, policies and actions. The values and principles outlined below not only encompass the commitments made in the Employment Philosophy; they also describe minimum ethical standards by which we, as IDRC employees, operate.

## **Compliance**

We comply with Canadian laws, the country agreements IDRC has signed, codes of professional conduct governing our respective professions and those international conventions and treaties ratified by Canada.

## **Professionalism**

We are professional and courteous when dealing with our fellow employees, Centre partners, recipients, contractors, members of the public and other stakeholders.

We contribute to harmonious working relationships. We act reasonably and fairly in our expectations of others. We resolve conflicts in a mature and professional manner. This extends to directing our concerns to appropriate parties.

We work towards safeguarding and enhancing the reputation, corporate values and principles, and working life of IDRC.

## **Supporting/Promoting Quality, Integrity and Ethics in Research**

We engage in research work that furthers the Centre's mandate. We strive for excellence and impose high standards of integrity and ethics on the research we conduct or support.

We encourage capacity building and knowledge sharing among our partners and recipients to further enhance the impact and future sustainability of Centre-funded projects, while at the same time, promoting awareness and respect of intellectual property rights, including but not limited to copyright works and traditional knowledge.

We properly acknowledge the work of our co-workers, partners, and recipients. We are sensitive to the potential ethical considerations that may arise in connection with a Centre-funded project.

We respect different methodological approaches to research without prejudice and strive to conduct balanced analyses of the project work we support.

We comply with the letter and spirit of internationally accepted ethical principles governing research, and Centre policies governing research ethics.

### **Use of Centre Resources and Assets**

We use Centre resources and assets responsibly, including property, information systems, and electronic networks, funds, information, and records.

We exercise prudent management of Parliamentary appropriations to the Centre and all other sources of funding. We promote the application of sound business and risk-management practices.

### **Record Keeping and Reporting**

We promote transparency.

We safeguard and keep our records current, relevant, complete, and accurate.

We ensure that corporate business records are prepared reliably, accurately and in a timely fashion.

We comply with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

### **Understanding and Respecting Cross-Cultural Differences**

We strive to be respectful of and sensitive to cultural differences, particularly local customs and culture in countries in which we conduct business.

We make an effort to better understand local culture, and before traveling or being assigned to a given region, familiarize ourselves with local customs and practices.

### **Acting in the Best Interests of the Centre**

We always endeavour to act in the best interests of IDRC and its mandate. We do not knowingly engage in activities that would otherwise undermine the reputation, integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Centre or its representatives.

We are responsible for ensuring that purchasing and funding decisions are made with honesty and integrity.

### **Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Duties**

A conflict of interest exists in any situation where employees' ability to fulfill their official duties and responsibilities could be adversely affected by their private interests or personal considerations. This goes beyond a financial or economic interest to include any personal interest that arises from business dealings, social ties, or other personal considerations. Conflicts of interest may also arise from a conflict in duties not created from employees' private interests but as a result of concurrent competing official responsibilities.

As employees of the Centre, we conduct ourselves and perform our duties in a manner that reflects the values, principles, standards, and best interests of IDRC, and in a transparent way that enhances public confidence and trust in the integrity of the Centre.

We act in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny and foster public confidence.

We strive to avoid situations that place us in an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest and conflict of duties and self-report on all such conflicts, in accordance with the Centre's governing policy. We regularly review IDRC's conflict of interest policy to ensure compliance and raise any concerns we may have directly with our fellow employees, supervisor, or if inadvisable or inappropriate, the next level of supervision.

### **Respect for Confidentiality of Information**

We respect and seek to protect personal employee information, third party proprietary confidential information, or such other confidential information that is not otherwise public information.

### **Health and Safety**

We are all responsible for promoting and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment and to prevent violence in the workplace. We take all reasonable precautions to ensure our own health and safety and that of our colleagues or others who are affected by our work.

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

We are all responsible for promoting and maintaining an environment that is free of all forms of discrimination and/or harassment (including sexual, physical, or psychological harassment).

## **OUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The Code is intended to help us understand ethical requirements and responsibilities in day-to-day operations and by way of appendix, to serve as a reference tool to more detailed policies and guidelines. It is not intended to be a set of detailed rules but, rather, a set of principles.

When faced with a difficult business decision that is not addressed in this Code, a few questions may help us determine the appropriate course of action:

- ⇒ Is it ethical?
- ⇒ Is it legal?
- ⇒ Is the decision defensible in the eyes of the public?
- ⇒ What would a reasonable person think about our decision/action?
- ⇒ Does it have the potential to reflect negatively on IDRC or us?
- ⇒ Would we be embarrassed if others knew we took this action?
- ⇒ Is there an alternative course that may not pose the same ethical conflict/dilemma?

If still in doubt about a situation or whether it is consistent with IDRC's high ethical standards, we must seek help and guidance from our supervisor, or if inappropriate or otherwise unadvisable to do so, the next level of supervision, or the Senior Officer designated for the purpose of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act.

We, members of management and staff alike, are all responsible for ensuring that we read, understand, and uphold the values, principles and standards outlined in the Code and in the supporting Centre policies. To be effective, the Code must be integral to everything we do.

### **Avenue of resolution**

Concerns about this Code and its application should first be discussed with management. When unable to raise the concern with a direct supervisor, we are to consult the next higher level of authority or, ultimately, the Senior Officer designated for the purpose of the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*.

In all cases, reporting requirements related to the disclosure of wrongdoings and the protections afforded to those employees who, acting in good faith and without being frivolous or vexatious, have made an allegation of wrongdoing, will be consistent with the requirements of the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*.



## **Failure to comply**

The Code forms part of our conditions of employment at IDRC. We are expected to operate within and uphold the highest standard of conduct. We understand that any failure to do so will be viewed as falling short of IDRC's acceptable standards of conduct as defined in the Volume 1, Chapter 7 of the Management Policy Manual on discipline, and may lead to disciplinary action including termination of employment.