



Mycological Society of America Virtual Meeting Conduct Policy

This Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy of the Mycological Society of America (MSA) supplements the MSA's general [Code of Conduct for Events](#) and seeks to advance productive outcomes, with safety, full participation, and belonging for all Participants in MSA Virtual Meetings. Prior to an MSA Virtual Meeting, Participants are expected to be familiar with this Policy.

Participants must register for a Virtual Meeting and provide an email, text, phone or (for special needs) other contact where they can be reached during the Virtual Meeting. Registration constitutes consent to audio and visual recording (and use and alteration of the recording) by the MSA (or those it authorizes) at the Meeting for non-commercial purposes aligned with MSA's mission. Failure to register, provide such contact, or be available via the contact provided is grounds for being disconnected from the Virtual Meeting at the Participant's cost, without further notice or process.

Participation norms

- Generally, Participants may join a Virtual Meeting via phone or the internet, using (at the Participant's choice) an audio/video or audio function, and will be included fully either way.
- Generally, panelists, facilitators, and presenters will join via video/audio. They will describe any visuals that have not been provided in advance in case anyone is unable to view them during the Virtual Meeting.
- Participants: Mute audio when not speaking. Raise a hand or use the chat function to be recognized by the facilitator.
- The MSA intends Virtual Meetings to enable full participation, regardless of the range of individual visual, audio, and other sensory abilities, and welcomes contact about special needs for registration and participation. Please let us know by the Virtual Meeting registration deadline so that we may make reasonable accommodations. Contact Cori VanGalder at msafungi@reesgroupinc.com.

Requirements for Ethical, Professional and Inclusive Conduct

Participants' conduct at MSA Virtual Meetings must meet the following requirements to satisfy the Meetings' purpose of advancing excellence by enabling equitable and full engagement and contributions by all Participants. These requirements also apply to activities that are associated with an MSA Virtual Meeting.



DO...

- **demonstrate respect and consideration for all people** and don't dominate airtime;
- **listen well to others.** Make room for a diversity of voices in group discussions, on panels, and the like. Welcome all voices, regardless of whether they participate by video/audio, audio or other means. Facilitators, invite but be sensitive not to pressure those who have not communicated to do so;
- **be collaborative.** Be mindful not to exert dominance over others. Consider the effect of relationship, position, experience, and privilege power differentials, ease of communicating by video/audio vs. audio or other means, and other factors to avoid dominance;
- **demonstrate that differing perspectives are valued**—critique ideas (not people);
- **demonstrate welcome for a diversity of individuals and their identities**—pay attention to whether individuals of many identities and roles are included on panels, leading sessions, being called on when they raise their hands or use the chat function, and having their points considered;
- **act to avoid invading personal privacy of individuals.** Assume that a person who is being viewed at times or in places where people can reasonably expect privacy (e.g., bathrooms, breastfeeding rooms, etc.) via the Virtual Meeting platform does not realize it and notify a Meeting Official right away to help the person;
- **report conduct concerns to a Meeting Contract** so that concerns can be addressed responsibly and timely. **Respect and maintain confidentiality of the identities of any individuals involved in a conduct concern, while it is being reviewed and addressed;**
- **answer questions about conduct concerns in a forthright and complete manner** (e.g., when registering or during a review of concerns); and
- **if any leader or facilitator of an activity/session, any official of the platform, or any Meeting Official directs a Participant to stop a behavior or comment, immediately comply.** Directions are made to implement this Policy or the platform's policies.
 - After Participants comply, they may raise any questions or concerns to a Meeting Official.

DO NOT...

- **intentionally talk over or interrupt others;**
- **favor those participating by video/audio over audio or other means;**
- **engage in biased, demeaning, intimidating, coercive, or harassing/hostile conduct or commentary, whether seriously or in jest** (e.g., based on power differential, gender [sex, identity, expression], sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or national origin, religion, marital status, veteran status, age, body size or other physical appearance, disability, or other identities); this is the opposite of respectful and welcoming conduct;
- **engage in personal attacks;**
- **comment on personal appearance or assumed or known reasons why a person chooses to participate via video/audio, audio, or other means**—seriously or in jest;
- **retaliate against or disadvantage anyone for reporting a conduct concern or assisting in its resolution. Do not make bad faith accusations;**
- **disrupt the virtual meeting** (e.g., “zoom-bombing”) or **engage in harm or threats of harm of any kind.** Do not create/contribute to a safety threat or unsafe or exclusionary situation;
- **make audio or visual recordings of the Virtual Meeting in any medium—and do not distribute audio or visual recordings of the Virtual Meeting** (via social media or any other means). Only the Society or its agents may do so, after warning Participants to give them an opportunity to opt out;
- ***do not take or distribute pictures of or copy research posters/presentation materials unless explicit permission is granted;*** or
- **do not engage in any of these bad acts in the Virtual Meeting** (including via public or private chat)—**or on social media or other means in any way associated with the Virtual Meeting.**



Note About Differences of Opinion and Offense:

To achieve the purpose of an MSA Virtual Meeting in the limited time provided, with the universal benefit of all Participants being fully engaged, discussions should be focused on the Meeting topic at hand and all Participants must be able and welcome to equitably and effectively participate. It is not a violation of the MSA's Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy to express an opinion, raise research or describe an experience (articulation) that is at odds with the opinions of or is offensive to others - if the articulation is part of an on-point discussion of the Virtual MSA Meeting topic at hand and is offered in a manner that does not interfere with others' reasonable ability and welcome to participate fully. That means expressing differing positions with respect and consideration for all, in a manner that reflects intellectual rigor and is demonstrably mindful of minimizing, as reasonably possible, its potential adverse effect on others' ability to participate. It also means not making an articulation that is reasonably expected to cause offense gratuitously (i.e., unrelated or unnecessary for the work on that topic.) It means not directing the articulation as a personal attack or put-down of an individual, and not dominating the discussion. It further means demonstrating consideration for anyone who appears to be in distress by promptly stopping the cause and demonstrating caring, while still pursuing a way to share pertinent information, with the MSA facilitator's assistance if needed.

What to do if you have a conduct concern

- Keep safe by having the contact information below handy before joining the Virtual Meeting.
- Act if you have, or identify someone else who has, a conduct concern by:
 - Alerting a Meeting Contact: (Bill Stoeffler: bstoeffler@reesgroupinc.com, or Cori VanGalder: cvangalder@reesgroupinc.com)
- Confidentiality. If the person raising the concern, any identified individual target, or the accused (each an "individual most directly involved") or a particular witness asks the Meeting Contact for confidentiality of their identity while the concern is being addressed, reasonable steps will be taken to do so. But the Society will not maintain confidentiality, if in its judgment and discretion, safety or law, an investigation, determination of a violation, or disconnecting a Participant from the Virtual Meeting requires otherwise. Anyone who receives information during an investigation, however, must maintain its confidentiality; failure to do so is a serious violation of this Policy, as it is retaliation against any identified individual target, witness, or anyone who raises or helps resolve a conduct concern.



Determining a violation

When a conduct concern under this Policy is raised to Meeting Contact(s), the Meeting Contact(s) will determine whether the situation can (and should) be diffused by communicating remotely, privately and separately with the individuals most directly involved and, possibly, particular witness(es) (“simple resolution”). **A simple resolution is appropriate when** a Meeting Contact provides a warning and clear conduct instructions to a person accused of a violation of this Policy, the accused Participant complies, and **it is apparent that:** misunderstandings occurred and are corrected or lessons have been learned by those in need of learning; there is an authentic commitment to avoid a repetition of the cause of the conduct concern (and no reason to think a repetition is likely); and (considering all of this and the nature of the conduct concern and harm) a sense of safety and inclusion has been restored without the need for further action, and any identified individual target and accused Participant agree without coercion. Meeting Contract(s) will inform the Meeting Official in any event.

A Meeting Official may determine, based on the Meeting Contact’s fact-finding, whether a violation of this Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy occurred and will notify the individuals most directly involved an opportunity to provide (but will not require them to provide) in writing any additional facts relevant to the decision; will give a copy of each one’s submission (if any). The Meeting Official will set submission deadlines in their sole discretion but taking into account the nature of the conduct concern, timing, and logistics. If a Meeting Official does not make a determination during the Virtual Meeting (e.g., due to the nature of the conduct concern, time constraints or logistics), the determination will be made and any consequences imposed under MSA’s otherwise applicable [Conduct Policy](#) OR by the Meeting Official after the Virtual Meeting, who may direct the Meeting Contact(s) to conduct further factfinding.

Consequences that may be imposed

- If a Meeting Official determines a violation of this Policy during a Virtual Meeting, the Meeting Official may, upon notice, disconnect the Participant (or compel disconnection), at the Participant’s own cost, if any. A Meeting Official will make the determination, in that Official’s sole discretion to serve the best interests of MSA’s membership and mission as reflected in this Policy. The Meeting Official also may notify a senior official of the Participant’s home (employment or university) institution of the violation if, in the Meeting Official’s sole discretion, the nature of the violation causes concern about safety or disruption in other settings (beyond the MSA Virtual Meeting). When giving any notice to Participant’s home institution, the MSA will include a copy of this Policy and will copy the Participant on the notice.
- The Meeting Official may exercise the same discretion and impose any of the above-listed consequences on an accused Participant, prior to determining whether a violation occurred, if a Meeting Official decides, in that official’s sole discretion based on those facts known, that a credible question of a violation exists and such action is needed in short order to avoid



disruption or to advance inclusion or safety at the Virtual Meeting. Any notice of an allegation to the Participant's home institution will state:

- *"The MSA received an allegation that [Participant's Name] violated the MSA's Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy and required [Participant's Name] to leave the meeting to avoid disruption or as a safety precaution, but no determination (one way or the other) has been made about the allegation. In disconnecting the Participant from the Virtual Meeting or notifying you based on an allegation, the MSA is not making a judgment that the accused Participant violated this Policy. Any statement or action to the contrary is not authorized by the MSA. In these circumstances, the MSA prioritizes preventative non-disruption and safety measures in the interest of the MSA's mission and of many Participants, over the interest of one or a few, if the two must be weighed. It is not always feasible during an MSA Virtual Meeting (given the available time and logistics) to timely conduct and complete fact-finding or take other steps needed to reach a conclusion. You will be notified of any determination when made."*
- The MSA will be clear about these points (but will not state the accused Participant's name) in any communication that may become necessary about the matter.
- Other/additional consequences for violation of the Virtual Meetings Conduct Policy, to be determined after the Meeting Period, may include, without limitation, being banned or suspended from participation in Society Virtual and other Meetings in the future and/or loss or suspension of Society membership or membership privileges.
- Whether or not a violation is found – and instead of or in addition to any other consequences for a violation – the MSA may pursue a restorative or other community-building practice. Such practices can elevate understanding of a conduct concern, enhance ownership of the MSA's conduct standards, prevent recurrence of a conduct concern, and repair relationships. Community building is pursued if the Meeting Official or other authorized MSA official determines in its sole discretion that it is in the best interests of the MSA's mission and membership under the circumstances, and the individuals most directly involved consent without coercion.

Appeal of a determination

- **An appeal of a decision** on whether a violation of this Virtual Meetings Policy occurred, or regarding the consequences imposed, may be pursued by the Participant who is found in violation or by an identified individual target under (and subject to the limitations of) the MSAs



regular [conduct policies](#) and processes OR an official authorized by the MSA after the MSA meeting.

- **However, the only remedy** for an accused Participant's successful appeal of a requirement to leave an MSA Virtual Meeting and notice to the accused's employing institution is (a) a waiver of a future similar Meeting's registration fee (if the accused Participant paid a fee for the Virtual Meeting) and (b) providing a copy of the finding on appeal to the employing institution as an update.