

NGAPS+ Code of Conduct

Last Updated November 6, 2025

Vision and Purpose:

This Code represents a chance for NGAPS+ co-officers and members to clearly profess our values and our goals for a more equitable, ethical, and compassionate workplace. This code was created to promote and ensure a safe, respectful, inclusive environment for all NGAPS+ members and associates, regardless of work affiliation (civil servants, contractors, university co-op scientists, NASA Postdoctoral Program fellows, interns, etc.) to NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC), job title, or field.

We hope this will provide guidance and inspiration to other GSFC-based and GSFC-affiliated organizations in their efforts to build and promote our ideal work environment. NASA is a true leader for excellence in astrophysics, heliophysics, earth science, and planetary science, and is therefore uniquely positioned to also become a leader in professional ethics. Only by abiding by and promoting values such as those outlined in this Code, including adapting it as needed to better serve people from marginalized populations and the larger GSFC community, can we truly build our ideal workplace.

Values:

This Code of Conduct, the listed expected behavior, and the consequences hereafter are based on upholding the core values of:

- 1) Inclusion:** Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that our working environment is supportive and welcoming for all.
- 2) Community:** We recognize the importance of mentorship and supporting the next generation of scientists, which includes ensuring that early career scientists are adequately prepared for a successful career.
- 3) Safety:** Everyone is responsible for maintaining a physically, mentally, and psychologically safe working environment for all that prevents any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior so that we can collectively work towards dismantling systemic inequity and organizational silence.

Expected Behaviors:

To uphold these values, below are the behaviors that we expect of all NGAPS+ co-officers, members, and anyone who participates in NGAPS+ events.

We expect everyone to treat others with respect, and to be treated with respect themselves. Any harassment, discrimination, or bullying is not tolerated, including microaggressions and microinequities. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, incidents based on gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, citizenship status, religion, career status, etc. It is the responsibility

of everyone to ensure that NGAPS+ is an inclusive group that provides a safe and supportive environment for all co-officers, members, and affiliates.

Office, Lab, and Event Safety:

- Everyone is expected to maintain a safe environment for all co-officers, members, and affiliates.
- Everyone is expected to show respect for GSFC facilities and NGAPS+ event spaces.

Communication:

- In meetings and discussions, allow time for everyone to speak if they would like to. Be mindful of times when you may be dominating the conversation.
- Be mindful that you do not interrupt or speak over others.
- Discuss preferred forms of communication and respect the preferences and time of others when possible.
- Be respectful of everyone's pronouns, and if comfortable, share your pronouns in meetings, discussions, and emails.
- Be mindful of sending and responding to emails and messages in a timely manner and seek to avoid short fuse emails or unreasonable expectations regarding response times.

Work-Life Balance:

- Work hours may vary from person to person in the time of telework/remote work and future of work. Respect that others might not always be available during your work hours.
- Respect those who are on leave (whether this is personal/vacation/sick leave, or for parental leave) and give them space from work. There should be no obligation or expectation to check emails, messages, or work while on leave.
- Recognize that everyone is juggling multiple work and service projects, along with their personal and family life and be respectful with the frequency of communication.
- Recognize that NGAPS+ is run entirely by early career scientist volunteers, whose availability may change depending on their research and mission workload.

Other Expected Behaviors: While the following behaviors may not be directly related to NGAPS+ events and activities, we expect our co-officers, members, and affiliates to uphold our same commitment to ethics in their research and list examples of expected behaviors below.

Academic Behavior:

- Respect the value of collaboration and the time and effort that colleagues have put into their work. Give credit to anyone involved in the data collection or other project processes at any stage.
- Be transparent throughout the research process. Include collaborators in relevant meetings and keep them apprised of significant updates.
- Be clear about scheduled tasks and ask for information in advance of deadlines.
- Individuals wishing to share data collected by other participants must get permission from those who collected the data.
- When mentoring a student, post-bac, or other early career scientist, the focus should be on tasks that benefit the mentee's professional development.

Reporting Mechanisms:

We recognize that there is often a great deal of stress and uncertainty associated with reporting an instance of misconduct and we therefore seek to provide as many opportunities as possible to make a report, with varying levels of anonymity and formality. We highlight that this is an informal process, and in most cases, unless the person making the report would like to escalate the issue, we will self-enforce issues within our own community. In situations of immediate danger, however, any of the below options may escalate to ensure the safety of all. As far as we are able to, our priority is always to protect you from retaliation, stop the behavior from occurring, and prevent it from occurring in the future to you or others. If there are other mechanisms that you think would be beneficial, please reach out to the NGAPS+ Admins.

We highlight that everyone is empowered to stop any activity that puts someone in danger, and that psychological safety is an integral part of someone's safety and well-being. Anyone can step in to address bullying, harassment, or any other behavior that perpetuates unsafe conditions. We recommend that everyone actively practice bystander intervention, and learn how to safely, respectfully, and effectively advocate for themselves and others.

The following are several options available to those at GSFC, especially early career scientists, to report misconduct and/or receive guidance.

NGAPS+ Advocates:

NGAPS+ Advocates are a subset of NGAPS+ members and co-officers who have chosen to become "allies" for those who wish to report an incident. They serve as unofficial points of contact and can provide support and guidance. NGAPS+ Advocates can respond to misconduct through NGAPS+ (e.g., removing an individual from an event) or can support you through the process if you choose to escalate a matter (whether related specifically to NGAPS+ or not) to more official channels. They can also provide advice and mentorship. For an updated list of our NGAPS+ Advocates, please visit our [website](#).

External Advocates:

Our external advocates are chosen from non-early career Goddard employees who have demonstrated strong support for early career scientists in the past. They can provide similar guidance as that given by NGAPS+ Advocates, though in some cases may be bound by additional reporting requirements. For an updated list of our External Advocates, please visit our [website](#).

Ombuds:

The Ombuds program is a neutral party available to all GSFC workers (including civil servants, contractors, postdocs, co-op scientists, interns, and students) that provides confidential, informal, and independent support to resolve issues, conflicts, and concerns related to our work at Goddard. This program is fully confidential and provides an opportunity to raise concerns with people trained in conflict resolution without an official report being filed. For more information on the Ombuds program, please visit their website ([here](#)) or find the contact information for the GSFC Ombuds [here](#).

Anonymous Web Form:

Finally, NGAPS+ provides an anonymous option to report concerns on our website [here](#). This information will only be viewed by NGAPS+ Admin. While there is an option for you to leave your name and contact information for follow-up, it can be completely anonymous if you choose not to provide that identifying information.

Response to Misconduct:

As we acknowledge that the act of reporting can be extremely stressful, we highlight that *no* response to your report will happen without your approval, except in cases of immediate danger, or in cases where required by the particular External Advocate's position (which are noted on our [website](#) to whom the report was made (e.g., for mandatory reporters). Possible responses include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Removal of the offending party from an NGAPS+ event and/or prevention from attending future events
- 2) Intervention or discussion with the offending party
- 4) Support through the process of escalating the report
- 5) In the case of an NGAPS+ Co-officer or Advocate engaging in misconduct, they will be removed from their Advocate or Co-officer role.

If you are in need of immediate help, these external hotlines are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are not in any way affiliated with NGAPS+, GSFC, or NASA and offer varying levels of trained and peer-based support.

1-800-273-8255: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (SuicidePreventionLifeline.org)

Text START to 741-741: The Crisis Text Line (CrisisTextLine.org)

(800) 656-4673: National Sexual Assault Hotline (Rainn.org) - Note that the hotline

automatically redirects callers to local rape crisis centers based on the area code and the first three digits of the caller's phone number. RAINN does not keep a record of the caller's phone number.