

Code of Conduct for the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence*

The Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence strives to create a transformative space where its members, guests, and staff work jointly towards the reconfiguration of African Studies. The Cluster's key prisms of relationality, reflexivity, and multiplicity offer a blueprint for a working environment where our actual research and our socialities as researchers are intrinsically connected. Against this backdrop we adopt the following Code of Conduct as the desired norm for communicative praxis and social interaction in the Cluster.

I. Everyday Interaction in the Cluster Community

- (1) We communicate openly with each other in a spirit of goodwill.
- (2) In face-to-face interaction as well as in email communication we maintain a respectful and appreciative tone.
- (3) We avoid conversations about matters that concern people who are not present; instead, we address such matters directly to the person concerned.
- (4) We do not tolerate racist and sexist language or behaviour, or other modes of discrimination in word and deed.
- (5) We do not engage in non-transparent and undesirable forms of communication, such as spreading rumors and gossip.
- (6) We commit to maintaining a space that is free of accusations, blaming, or spreading negative opinions about groups or individuals in the Cluster.
- (7) If we express criticism, we pledge to do so in a constructive manner.
- (8) We adhere to procedural regulations and honour our promises and deadlines.

II. Academic Forms of Interaction

- (1) We are entitled to express our views freely and without being interrupted, as long as we abide by the rule of respectful communication.
- (2) We commit to the cultivation of epistemic plurality and diversity of research approaches through mutual respect and recognition.
- (3) Whenever necessary, we strive to create the space needed for more exchange and for all voices to be heard.
- (4) If differences persist, we respectfully agree to disagree.
- (5) We abstain from making disparaging remarks or sweeping statements about points of view expressed by members, affiliates, and guests of the Cluster community.
- (6) During our academic events we abstain from attending to our email or smartphone and refrain from conversations with our neighbors.
- (7) When we act as moderators and chairpersons, we are sensitive to abusive behaviour, and we intervene when parties involved act against the guidelines of the present Code.

III. Cases of Violation and Conflict

If we are unable to address a violation or potential violation ourselves, or if we fail to resolve a conflict we are involved in, we can take recourse to the following steps:

- (1) We can report the matter to the elected Cluster leaders (Dean and Vice Deans) and the ACC directors, who are ready to confront violations and take formal action if needed.
- (2) We can approach the Cluster Dean for advice and support in cases where professional conflict resolution and anti-discrimination consultation measures are required.
- (3) Cluster members may call upon the ombudspersons of the Cluster in case of complaints.
- (4) In severe or repeated instances of violations, the Academic Committee may rescind the membership of a Cluster member, or, in the case of employees at the University of Bayreuth, the Cluster Dean may issue a warning notice to the employee in question.

* This is an abridged version. The full document can be requested from africamultiple-dean@uni-bayreuth.de