

A COMMUNITY

CODE OF

ETHICS

FOR CREATIVES,

ARTISTS & ART

ORGANISATIONS

IN GHANA

TABLE OF

CONTENTS

- 1** OVERVIEW
- 2** THE PERSONAL CODE
- 3** THE COMMUNITY CODE
- 4** SUPPORTING DIVERSITY
- 5** INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR
- 6** CONCLUSION

With this Code of Conduct, we forge the language of a vision of a creative & arts community that exists and thrives in harmony.

We want a thriving, happy and very productive arts community that engenders a space that supports creating and creative work.

We recognize that to create such a community requires both individual and communal dedication and effort.

It is by having inner peace and harmony that we can spread that peace and harmony to our community.

By languaging this Code and by declaring our intention to live this Code, we declare our intention to do our best to live in love and to create a community built on love and integrity.

The Ghanaian Creative and Arts community is an especially unique space within Ghana in that it is the fiery hub of innovation, artistic excellence, societal revolution, entrepreneurship, alternative solutions, and most importantly, the holder of culture.

By declaring our intention to live by this Code of Conduct we challenge prejudice, violence, and any behaviour that causes discord within the community.

Because of the power and relevance of creativity and art in holding the culture of a society, this Code of Ethics is a demonstration of our willingness to protect the harmony of this space.

In harmony, we seek to create a productive and thriving creative and arts space that continuously improves, and contributes to the larger Ghanaian community.

This Code of Conduct governs how we behave in the community, in our personal and public dealings with any member or group within the community.

This Code of Conduct exists to ensure that diverse groups and persons within the community collaborate to mutual advantage and pleasure.

As creative or artistic practitioners who operate within the Ghanaian socio-cultural space, in the diversity of creative and artistic fields we come in, we strive:

To embrace and respect the diversity we come in

To live in empathy

To honour virtue

To live in integrity and do our best to live with an unshakable moral compass

To be non-violent and non-abusive

To benefit without violence

To respect the humanity of others

To live and speak Truth

To work with others in the spirit of peace and good intent

To be a member that can be trusted

To protect our environment

To communicate with compassion

To create harmony in all spaces we operate

To recognize the particular dangers for minority groups and ensure our spaces are welcoming of minority groups or persons

To be forgiving, of ourselves and of others.

To do our best.

In both our physical and virtual spaces, as a Community, we strive to:

Ensure our spaces are free from all forms of sexual violence and harrassment.

To create inclusive physical and virtual spaces

To be considerate and respectful of the creative and artistic work of others. Our work will be used by other people, and we in turn will depend on the work of others. Any decision we take will affect users and colleagues, and we should consider them when making decisions. We will not condone plagiarism.

To respect people not as a means to an end but as an end in itself. Consider and treat everyone as a unique individual who matters, not as a number in political or social calculations. We respect everyone's human, civil and legal rights.

To be respectful in our dealings with others in the community. We recognize that disagreements will arise. However, disagreement is no excuse for abuse or violence. We will work together to resolve conflict, assume good intentions and do our best to act in an empathic fashion. We will not allow frustration to turn into personal attacks. A community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a productive one.

To act in integrity and take responsibility for our words and our actions. We recognize that we can all make mistakes; when we do, we take responsibility for them. If someone has been harmed or offended, we will listen carefully and respectfully, and work to right the wrong.

To embrace the diversity of all, irrespective of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion or spirituality (or lack thereof).

To value decisiveness, clarity and consensus.

To be collaborative. We recognize that the creative and artistic community is a whole and we are the sum of its varying and diverse parts. Collaboration reduces redundancy and improves the quality of our work, therefore internally and externally, we support good collaboration. Harmonious collaboration that respects all above is mandatory.

To be transparent in our dealings with other creatives and artists.

As creatives and artists who operate within the Ghanaian arts and cultural space, we commit to the following in acknowledgment of our existing diversity of being:

We acknowledge that the lived experiences of marginalized groups are valid. We acknowledge that each community member will experience the world differently, based on their past experiences, background and identity. We encourage all to bring their experiences to community conversations, while being open to learning about other people's different lived experiences.

We commit to working on processing intense negative feelings about diversity if we have them. If you have never experienced discrimination, learning about it may make you feel uncomfortable, upset, or even angry. You may feel sad because you didn't realize the world was unjust. You may feel guilty because you hold unconscious bias. You may feel excluded because your experiences with hardship are not viewed as discrimination. We encourage you process those feelings with a person with a similar background who understands the discrimination marginalized groups in our community face.

We commit to listening to marginalized groups, and to try not to put the burden of education on them. We encourage community members to be curious about different lived experiences. However, note that people from marginalized groups in our community are often asked to explain their experiences. Providing education and examples of discrimination can be emotionally draining. We ask that community members to do their own research before asking for education from marginalized groups in our community. If a community member does not want to discuss a diversity topic with you, please respect their wishes. Reasonable communication of topic boundaries is not against the Code of Conduct.

We commit to being open to learning how to be more inclusive. It's important that our community continues to talk about how to become more inclusive. We also recognize that community members may choose to privately or publicly critique behavior that negatively impacts marginalized groups in our community. It is not against the Code of Conduct to provide such a critique. However, critique should be non-violent, with the spirit of good intention and not evolve into personal attack.

We commit to avoiding critiquing people's tone when they talk about discrimination. Talking about discrimination and different lived experiences can be difficult. Seeing biased or discriminatory statements can bring up past negative experiences for marginalized groups in our community. These negative experiences often bring up strong emotions, which may lead to the person communicating in a more blunt tone. We encourage community members to acknowledge others' experiences with discrimination, rather than critiquing the tone that people use to communicate about that discrimination.

We want all participants of the creative and artistic community to have the best possible experience they can. In order to be clear what that means, we've provided a list of examples of behaviors that are inappropriate for our spaces:

Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following

Harassing photography or recording at events. If someone says they do not want a picture or video taken of them, respect that choice. If they ask you to delete or remove a picture taken without permission, do so. Photographers (even paid event photographers) following or stalking attendees in order to get shots of a diverse group of community members is not acceptable.

Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist language or otherwise exclusionary language. This includes deliberately referring to someone by a gender that they do not identify with, and/or questioning the legitimacy of an individual's gender identity. If you're unsure if a word is derogatory, don't use it.

This also includes repeated subtle and/or indirect discrimination.

Unwelcome sexual attention or behavior that contributes to a sexualized environment. This includes sexualized comments, jokes or imagery in interactions, inappropriate touching, groping, or sexual advances.

Unwelcome physical contact. This includes touching a person without permission, including sensitive areas such as their hair, pregnant stomach, buttocks, mobility device (wheelchair, scooter, etc) or tattoos. This also includes physically blocking or intimidating another person.

Physical contact or simulated physical contact without affirmative consent is not acceptable. This includes sharing or distribution of sexualized images or text without permission of the subject.

Rape and all forms of sexual violence

Violence or threats of violence. Violence and threats of violence are not acceptable - online or offline. This includes incitement of violence toward any individual, including encouraging a person to commit self-harm. This also includes posting or threatening to post other people's personally identifying information ("doxxing") online.

Bringing a weapon to public events. No weapons are allowed at event venues, including but not limited to explosives (including fireworks), guns, and large knives such as those used for hunting or display, as well as any other item used for the purpose of causing injury or harm to others.

Influencing or encouraging inappropriate behavior.

CONCLUSION

We recognize these are high moral standards we hold ourselves to and we intend to do the best we can. We recognize that to live by this is not an end destination but a continuous journey of becoming. We recognize that the only way to be successful at this is to love in a spirit of forgiveness, of ourselves and of others, to allow for the inevitable contradictions and to remember love and humanity. We are all in this together.

ATTRIBUTION

Our Code of Conduct is supported by the Ghana Culture Forum.

Resources:

<https://ubuntu.com/community/code-of-conduct>

<https://communitycodeofconduct.com/>

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/choose-and-adapt-community-interventions/ethical-issues/main>

<https://www.elastic.co/community/codeofconduct>

<https://aamd.org/about/code-of-ethics>