

# Niwot Ridge Code of Conduct & Community Engagement Guidelines 2023

## Niwot Ridge Code of Conduct

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The Niwot Ridge Long-Term Ecological Research Program (NWT LTER) is committed to providing a safe, productive, and non-discriminatory environment that fosters excellence in research, training, and outreach. To best fulfill this commitment, all community members of the NWT LTER program must adhere to the following guidelines. If you need more information, have suggestions, or want to raise a concern, please contact Nancy Emery (PI, [Nancy.Emery@colorado.edu](mailto:Nancy.Emery@colorado.edu)), Katharine Suding (co-PI, [suding@colorado.edu](mailto:suding@colorado.edu)), Marko Spasojevic (Chair Diversity and Equity committee, [markos@ucr.edu](mailto:markos@ucr.edu)) or Alexa Esler (program coordinator, [aternwt@colorado.edu](mailto:aternwt@colorado.edu)).

All participants, including students, faculty, and staff, are expected to abide by a common Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct applies in all physical and virtual places related to NWT activities (e.g., field, laboratories, offices, in person and online meetings, shuttle).

### ***Expected Behavior***

- Treat all participants with kindness, respect, and consideration.
- No demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and/or speech directed toward others, whether in person, in print, or online.
- Be mindful of your actions and how your actions may impact your fellow participants.
- Abide by principles of academic integrity and ethical professional conduct (see below).

Harassment, intimidation, discrimination, and sexual misconduct are unacceptable. Harassment includes unfair treatment, abusive words, imagery, or expressions, or intimidating behavior aimed at any member of the NWT community based on an aspect of identity. Examples of unacceptable behavior include—but are not limited to—unwelcome or offensive verbal comments related to age, appearance or body size, employment or military status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, individual lifestyle, marital status, national origin, physical or cognitive ability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, race, or religion. Sexual misconduct includes unwanted sexual behavior, abuse in a relationship, and stalking.

***Don't ignore it!*** If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or have witnessed any such behavior, please report your concerns (see ***How do I report a concern?***). If you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or any violations of the code of conduct, please report your concerns. Please notify one of the parties listed below even if you don't know the identity of the person who caused the harm, if you are unsure whether it is something that NWT or the University could address, or if you think it's not serious enough.

***How do I report a concern?*** Notify any of the following: Nancy Emery (PI, [Nancy.Emery@colorado.edu](mailto:Nancy.Emery@colorado.edu)), Katharine Suding (co-PI, [suding@colorado.edu](mailto:suding@colorado.edu)), Marko Spasojevic (Chair Diversity and Equity committee, [markos@ucr.edu](mailto:markos@ucr.edu)), Alexa Esler (program coordinator, [aternwt@colorado.edu](mailto:aternwt@colorado.edu)) or any NWT staff member with concerns. Confidential options are also available for reporting harassment, discriminatory actions, and sexual

misconduct, and for dispute resolution through the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (303-492-2127, <https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/>). The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at CU addresses concerns about protected class discrimination or harassment and sexual misconduct through formal investigation, informal resolutions, and remedial and protective measures. Anonymous NWT LTER specific concerns or suggestions can be reported using the following form: <https://forms.gle/r5fniw7sq2iphRFU8>

***How do I get support?*** University of Colorado Office of Victim Assistance (OVA) offers support services for undergrads, grad students, staff, and faculty following a traumatic, disturbing, or disruptive event. You can reach the OVA by calling 303-492-8855 or sending an email [assist@colorado.edu](mailto:assist@colorado.edu). More information about this office is provided at <https://www.colorado.edu/ova/>.

***What do I do if I am notified about a concern?*** If someone's actions infringe on our ability to provide a safe, welcoming, and productive research environment, we encourage you to take appropriate action. All CU employees who have the authority to hire, promote, discipline, evaluate, grade, formally advise, or direct faculty, staff, or students are considered "responsible employees" and are required to report concerns related to sexual misconduct and protected class discrimination and harassment to OIEC. If you are not a CU employee please follow your employer's guidelines.

***Consequences.*** The NWT LTER executive committee, in consultation with appropriate CU offices, reserves the right to enforce this Code of Conduct in any manner deemed appropriate. In cases not covered by the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance, anyone violating the Code of Conduct will first be asked to cease these behaviors. Failure to comply with this request will lead to expulsion from further participation in the NWT LTER program.

## **Community Engagement Guidelines<sup>1</sup>**

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As our code of conduct lays out, we have absolutely no tolerance of harassment of any kind. Over and above this commitment, we strive to actively counter unconscious biases and disparities that occur along gender, race, sexual orientation, class, and other lines in our communities. We are committed to increasing equity in research, training, and outreach.

***Follow the principles of scientific academic integrity.*** As scientists and communicators, we have special obligations to society. We follow the seven principles from Professor Sir David King, then chief scientific advisor, outlined to the British government in 2008:

- Act with skill and care, keep skills up to date
- Prevent corrupt practice and declare conflicts of interest
- Respect and acknowledge the work of other scientists
- Ensure that research is justified and lawful
- Minimize impacts on people, animals, and the environment
- Discuss issues science raises for society
- Do not mislead, present evidence honestly

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<sup>1</sup> We base this section on the excellent resource of Massive Science ([massivesci.com](https://massivesci.com))

***Be an amplifier for others.*** In science and society, women, LGBTQ+ people, people of color, and other marginalized groups have a harder time having their ideas recognized and, when they are recognized, receiving proper credit for them. Amplify good ideas and credit the originators.

***Step back and step up.*** Society tends to give more space to privileged individuals – in particular, in positions of power in the academic hierarchy or in the programmatic framework of NWT. Be aware of the level of your contributions, and make sure all voices can be heard. If you find yourself contributing a lot, consider stepping back on occasion and letting others respond or, better yet, inviting others to join the conversation. On the flip side, if your tendency is to sit back, your voice is important to us; please join the conversation or find other ways to communicate your ideas.

***Give and take.*** Our project runs on being community minded and giving to the larger good. Unfortunately, women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups often are asked and take on more of these community-minded roles, often to the detriment of their individual success. We ask that everyone be mindful of reaching an appropriate balance contributing both to their individual gain and to the larger gain of the project as a whole.

***Learn from mistakes.*** If someone isn't following these guidelines, ask them to remember these guidelines. If someone suggests that you might change how you engage with others, don't become defensive: listen, seek a constructive way to proceed, and learn, rather than assuming the other person meant to criticize or attack you.

***Look for opportunities and be open to dialog.*** Like every community, our identities – including gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and others – infuse our science. We expect and welcome open discussions and engagement with these issues and expect everyone part of NWT to follow the above guidelines. If you see ways where we can better support efforts of equity and inclusion at the project level, please share your suggestions to further our commitment to taking action.