

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE GRAN SASSO SCIENCE INSTITUTE¹

Art. 1

General Provisions

1. This Code of Ethics has been adopted to implement the provisions of art. 2, paragraph 4, of Law no. 240/2010, and contains the ethical principles on which the rights and duties of the members of the university community of the GSSI are based.
2. The Code constitutes an integration and specification of the principles set out in the legislative, statutory, or regulatory texts to which reference is made.

Art. 2

Recipients

1. The GSSI Code of Ethics is addressed to all those who are part of the university community, i.e., professors, researchers, technical and administrative personnel and students, as well as all those who work, even temporarily and occasionally, in the GSSI facilities.

Art. 3

General Principles

1. This Code is inspired by the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity in access to education and employment, promotion of merit, freedom of research, teaching and study, transparency, integrity, and confidentiality.
2. The GSSI guarantees every member of the university community the right to protection from any act or behaviour detrimental to the dignity of the person and takes steps to promote mutual respect for the inviolability of the person through training, information, and prevention.
3. The GSSI, in compliance with art. 54-a of Legislative Decree no. 165/2001 concerning the protection of employees who report offences, guarantees those who report violations of this Code the right to confidentiality and not to be subjected to direct or indirect retaliation.
4. Failure to comply with the above principles on the part of the obligated parties, in addition to causing serious damage to the decorum of the GSSI, shall be sanctioned in accordance with art. 14 of this Code and art. 18 paragraphs 2 and 3 of the GSSI Statute, to which reference should be made.

Art. 4

Principle of non-discrimination

1. Each member of the GSSI community has the right to be treated with respect and not to be subjected to discrimination, based on one or more factors, such as religion, gender, sexual orientation, personal beliefs, physical appearance, language, ethnic or social origin, citizenship, personal and health conditions, pregnancy, disability, family choices, age, as well as role in the university. In particular, discriminatory behaviour enacted through specific actions or through public verbal or written expressions, including through the use of personal social profiles, is not permitted.
2. Discrimination occurs when a person, because of one or more of the factors referred to in paragraph 1, is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation.
3. Discrimination also occurs where an entire category of persons, as a result of the factors listed in the first paragraph, is disadvantaged as a result of an apparently neutral practice or standard of conduct, unless that practice or standard is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are considered necessary and appropriate.

¹This document is the English translation of the GSSI “Codice Etico” (D.R. n. 152/2020). In the case of discrepancies between this language version and the Italian document, the Italian version shall prevail.

4. The GSSI repudiates and undertakes to inhibit any form of abusive, persecutory or discriminatory conduct by a member of the Community, whether or not he/she is in a superior position, towards another person, and which takes the form of psychological persecution or moral violence such as to lead to a deterioration of working conditions, or which may compromise the health, professionalism or dignity of the person in the workplace.
5. The GSSI encourages initiatives to protect the disadvantaged and to enhance individual and cultural diversity.
6. The prohibition of discrimination is governed first and foremost by Legislative Decree no. 198/2006 containing the "Code of equal opportunities between men and women, pursuant to article 6 of Law no. 246 of 28 November 2005" and, in employment relationships, by article 57 of Legislative Decree no. 165/2001, as amended.

Art. 5

Harassment

1. The GSSI condemns and prosecutes any behaviour related to sexual and moral harassment and any other kind of harassment since they are disparaging and damaging to human dignity.
2. Sexual harassment is defined as all unwanted physical and/or verbal requests with sexual content, as well as any type of behaviour concerning the personal sphere of sexuality and degrading the dignity of the person. This practice is even more serious if required as a condition for admission, employment, continuation, or academic or career advancement. An aggravating circumstance occurs if the behaviour described above is carried out by faculty members toward students and, in general, by GSSI employees toward their subordinates.
3. All members of the GSSI community are expected to conduct themselves in compliance with the rules governing civil coexistence. In particular, the GSSI condemns the use of vulgar and/or aggressive language, which can constitute a disciplinary offence, and calls for respect for roles and mutual professionalism.

Art. 6

Abuse of one's position

1. The GSSI condemns all types of behaviour that take the form of psychological persecution or moral violence.
2. The GSSI condemns the abuse of one's own academic position or office, or any behaviour aimed at inducing others to perform services that are not part of a specific legal obligation, which would result in a profit for the requesting person or others with whom there are common interests.
3. The GSSI condemns and punishes all forms of favouritism, i.e., the behaviour of those who, taking advantage of their position, facilitate someone regardless of the objective assessment of his or her qualities. An aggravating circumstance is nepotism, i.e., where the perpetrator and the beneficiaries of the misconduct are related by blood or marriage, affinity, or stable cohabitation.
4. These practices constitute a demonstration of disloyalty on the part of those who implement them; they represent a damage to the right of everyone to obtain equal opportunities and hinder the achievement of levels of excellence to which GSSI aspires.
5. The GSSI protects and guarantees, according to the norms in force, anyone who, witnessing and/or being disadvantaged by episodes of favoritism, discloses such episodes.

Art. 7

Equal opportunities in access to education and employment

1. The GSSI guarantees equality and equal opportunities between men and women in access to employment, study, training and professional promotion and treatment at work.
2. In interpersonal relationships, each member of the GSSI community must be inspired by the principles of freedom, dignity and equality and is required to conduct him or herself in accordance with the principles of fairness towards colleagues, users and third parties.

Art. 8

Merit recognition

1. The recognition of quality and its enhancement are a fundamental objective of the GSSI in all areas of its activities related to training, research, and administration.
2. The GSSI is a guarantor of human and professional growth of its community, promoting the development of skills, involvement in decision-making processes, the attitude of cooperation and co-responsibility.
3. The GSSI recognises and values individual merit as an essential criterion for human and professional advancement and supports the individual in his or her individual and group activities as factors of growth, development, and competitiveness, to the benefit of the entire community.

Art. 9

Freedom of research

1. The GSSI protects and promotes the freedom of research, both individual and in group, which is inspired by the principles of respect for the dignity of all persons involved, responsibility, fairness, diligence, and transparency.
2. Research must pursue the goal of increasing knowledge, for the benefit of society and without causing harm.
3. The researcher must perform his/her work in compliance with research procedures and data management, paying particular attention to research subjects, protocols, observance of confidentiality, and all applicable national and EU research regulations.
4. The GSSI requires absolute transparency in defining objectives, describing procedures, and interpreting research data.
5. Research content must always be fully and accurately communicated. Researchers must be fair in providing references to the work of others, giving them proper credit. Plagiarism of research and documentation and unauthorised use of others' data is considered a serious violation on the part of GSSI members.
6. Researchers must also responsibly exercise supervision of PhD students, if any.

Art. 10

Freedom of teaching

1. In compliance with current regulations, the GSSI identifies, as essential duties of teachers, disciplinary competence, and continuous updating, together with adequate attention to educational aspects, including those relating to fair evaluation.
2. Teachers are expected to perform their teaching duties with diligence, assiduity, punctuality, and regularity. Their activity must be marked by rigour, clarity, and respect for students, their rights, and their culture.

Art. 11

Freedom of study

1. The GSSI students are expected to observe the regulations and civil rules of coexistence and to respect and promote the core values of the GSSI.

2. Students must avoid any form of conduct that may distort the objective evaluation of their performance in their studies or that infringes the right to teach.
3. Students are expected, along with faculty, to relate to each other with fairness and loyalty while respecting each other's roles in order to ensure fruitful learning.
4. It is the duty of the students to take the utmost care of the environments, infrastructures, library materials and technological and scientific equipment at their disposal.
5. The student, unless there are constraints imposed by funding through specific research projects, has the freedom to choose a dissertation advisor among the members of the faculty, or to agree with the faculty on the choice of an external advisor, and to agree with him/her on a dissertation project within the research lines of the GSSI, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation on PhD courses of the GSSI.

Art. 12

Transparency, Integrity and Confidentiality

1. The members of the University community must contribute to maintaining the integrity of the GSSI by observing laws and regulations, complying with contractual obligations, and refraining from any behaviour that is not inspired by good faith and compliance with the principles and standards of this Code.
2. The tasks entrusted to each must be carried out with commitment and a sense of responsibility, according to the principle of loyal and effective collaboration with the other university components.
3. Technical-administrative personnel are committed to respectful, trusting, and cooperative relationships with students, faculty, and the public. They also undertake to respond courteously to requests, using the means of communication at their disposal, in a complete and timely manner. For access to administrative documents, office managers shall not place greater limits on other members than those provided for in applicable law.
4. Academic bodies and members of the community must maintain the confidentiality of the information they are made aware of in the course of their institutional activities; each one, in relation to the specifics of the information he or she handles, must implement all useful measures to avoid any undue leakage of confidential information or documents. Special, though not exclusive, consideration shall be given to the right to confidentiality of persons or entities whose protected information is held by the University, as well as confidentiality requirements relating to data or information learned through participation in the activities of academic bodies.
5. The members of the university community are required to comply with the obligations of transparency and publicity as established in current legislation.

Art.13

Conflict of Interest

1. The faculty and members of the technical-administrative staff must be professionally loyal to the University and to its purposes, which are summed up in the achievement of excellence in teaching, education, and research.
2. Any type of personal, professional, and financial interest of an individual member of the University community that interferes or may interfere with the fulfillment of his or her duties and responsibilities and that conflicts with the interests of the GSSI must be reported to the Rector or the Director General. If persons with a possible conflict of interest are members of governing bodies, they are required to abstain from voting on such resolutions or decisions.
3. Failure to report a conflict of interest is considered a violation of this Code and will therefore be sanctioned in accordance with article 14 below.

4. For matters not provided for in these Conflict of Interest Regulations, reference should be made to the GSSI Code of Conduct and applicable legislation.

Art. 14

Assessment of violations, proceedings, and penalties

1. Violations of this Code of Ethics by members of the University community should be reported to the Rector, who will make a preliminary assessment of the merits of the reports, ordering the dismissal of those relating to manifestly insubstantial violations.
2. Without prejudice to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Disciplinary Board for violations of the Code of Ethics that constitute a disciplinary offence, the Academic Senate decides on other violations, upon the initiative and proposal of the Rector.
3. The Academic Senate may order dismissal or impose, depending on the seriousness of the violation, one or more of the following sanctions:
 - a) Confidential reprimand;
 - b) Public reprimand;
 - c) Disqualification and/or exclusion for a period of up to four academic years from the GSSI bodies, from commissions and from any other position;
 - d) Exclusion from eligibility for election for a period of up to four academic years;
4. Reports may also concern violations committed by those who, for various reasons, operate, even temporarily and occasionally, in the GSSI facilities.
5. In the case of alleged violations of the Code of Ethics attributable to the Rector, all the functions and activities referred to in this article shall be carried out by the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Board.

Art. 15

Trusted Advisor

1. The Rector, by his/her own decree, may appoint a Trusted Advisor, appointed with providing advice and assistance to the GSSI community in matters of discrimination, harassment, bullying, psycho-physical discomfort, problems of a relational nature, as well as failure to respect the values and rules set forth in this Code of Ethics and the GSSI Code of Conduct.
2. The Trusted Advisor is a person external to the GSSI, appointed from among those who have skills, professional and personal experience suitable to carry out the envisaged tasks (knowledge of civil and labour law, conflict management skills, equal opportunities, reconciliation of work and family time, etc.). The Trusted Advisor has a *super partes* position and, within the scope of his/her competences, operates with full functional autonomy in favour of equal opportunities, the enhancement of workers' welfare and against discrimination.
3. The Trusted Advisor works in collaboration with the Guarantee Committee (Comitato Unico di Garanzia - CUG), towards which he or she has propositional and consultative duties.
4. The Trusted Advisor shall intervene upon formal or informal request by the concerned party. He or she acquires all elements necessary to evaluate the case and suggests appropriate actions and measures to resolve the conflict. May be involved in the formal procedure initiated by the Manager in charge, the Director General, or the Rector in cases of disciplinary relevance, which may conclude with the adoption of the related sanctions provided for by the regulations.
5. The Administration shall provide the Trusted Advisor with all pertinent information regarding cases brought to his/her attention and shall endeavor to cooperate with the Advisor in the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

6. In carrying out his or her functions, the Trusted Advisor may use the collaboration of experts through the procedures defined by the Administration.

7. Those who contact the Trusted Advisor are entitled to complete confidentiality at every stage of the process.

Art. 16

Final Provisions

1. This Code is to be interpreted in accordance with the regulatory provisions in force at the time.

2. In compliance with the provisions of art. 2, paragraph 4, of Law no. 240/2010, if the same conduct results in a disciplinary violation and a violation of the Code of Ethics, only disciplinary action is taken.

4. This Code of Ethics is issued by GSSI Rector's decree and enters into force on the day following the date of publication on the GSSI Official Register.