Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

The POD Network is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, professional environment free of discrimination and harassment.The POD Network expressly discourages and, where possible, prohibits its employees, contract workers, volunteers, and members from engaging in discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, culture, religion or creed, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, mental health, military status, gender identity and expression, or any other unlawful criterion or circumstance.

This policy applies at all POD Network hosted or sponsored events or forums, whether online or in person; online could include discussion groups, email, texts, instant messages, or communications via new media of any kind.

All POD Network members are responsible for complying with this policy. Members at every level of the organization will receive a link to this policy when joining and upon annual membership renewal. Conference attendees will also receive a link to the policy.

The POD Network strictly prohibits verbal, physical, or visual conduct that shows an aversion or hostility towards an individual based on the above characteristics, and that has the purpose or the effect of:

- Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
- Unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or ability to carry out a task;
- Adversely affecting an individual's employment or volunteer status within the POD Network; or
- Causing a fellow member of the POD Network to rescind membership or consider rescinding membership.

The following list, while not exhaustive, includes examples of unacceptable behavior: slurs, jokes, threats, or derogatory comments relating to the characteristics noted above. Examples of inappropriate physical harassment that violate this policy include, but are not limited to: assault, unwanted touching, or impeding or blocking movement. Similarly, the display or circulation of derogatory or demeaning posters, cards, cartoons, emails, texts, videos, and graffiti which relate to characteristics noted above violate this policy.

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In addition, sexual harassment, unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and conduct of a sexual nature is expressly prohibited under this policy. Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. Sexual harassment is defined under the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines as verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature where: (i) there is an attempt, either implicit or explicit, to make submission to such conduct a term or condition of an individual's employment; (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment-related decisions; or (iii) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

POD Network members who experience or witness incidents of harassment are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the Executive Director, or any member of the Executive Committee (President, Past President, President Elect, or Finance Committee Chair) to ensure that our events and forums are inclusive and free of harassment. If POD members witness harassment at events or in forums not sponsored or co-sponsored by the POD Network, the member should follow the host organization policy.

The POD Network strongly urges the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. Normally, reporting and response will follow the procedure outlined below (in future, the procedure will likely be moved to the POD Network Governance Manual, Section III.A.1.) The availability of this process does not preclude individuals who are subject to harassing conduct from promptly advising the offender that the behavior is unwelcome and requesting that it be discontinued.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated promptly by the Executive Committee. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation to the extent possible consistent with an adequate investigation and response.

Should you have any questions regarding the above stated policy, please contact any member of the Executive Committee (Executive Director, President, Past President, President Elect, Finance Committee Chair).

1. **Reporting Acts of Harassment or Discrimination**
   a) The POD Network affirms that a variety of individuals may report an act of discrimination or harassment, including:
      - Subject/Recipient/Survivor
      - Program or Session Facilitator
      - Witness/Bystander
   b) Initial complaints should be communicated to any member of the Executive Committee, or if none of these individuals are present, to the presenters or facilitators who

represent the POD Network at sponsored events (e.g., Organizational Development Institute, Institute for New Educational Developers). The POD Executive Committee includes:

1. Executive Director
2. Presidents (current, past, elect)
3. Finance Committee Chair

2. POD Network Response to Report

a) Responsibility. The Executive Committee is responsible for responding to the complaint in accordance with the authority delegated to this committee in the POD Network bylaws. Decisions will be guided by POD Network values and the [Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers](#).

b) Process. Upon receipt of a complaint, the following steps will normally be taken:

1) The Executive Director or President will convene (in person or virtually) at least three members of the Executive Committee to investigate the incident, including factors not limited to impact, degree, frequency, and intentionality. If the incident involves one of these individuals, the other has the authority to move to the next step on their own.

2) Communicate with the subject/recipient of the harassment or discrimination about the report.
   i) Identify policy & process (this document)
   ii) Describe POD Network's proposed response (see options below)
   iii) Honor recipient request to not respond, if possible
   iv) If the response is not immediate, the recipient or bystander will be informed within one month of the POD Network's response

3) Determine the response, which may include one or more of the following:
   i) Contact law enforcement (if danger is imminent and/or laws might have been broken)
   ii) Immediate dismissal or removal from the event or forum
   iii) Temporary or permanent expulsion from POD membership and/or events
   iv) Restorative justice* (If the decision is for a restorative justice process, the Executive Committee will submit an off-cycle budget request to contract with a trained facilitator, preferably from outside the POD Network to ensure neutrality)
   v) Warning and/or discussion with the offender
   vi) Study, reflection, and offender apology

4) Contact, inform, and collect information from the accused offender as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours of the complaint.

5) Create a written record of the incident in order to be able to identify and address patterns.

3. Debrief

The Executive Committee will debrief any incident(s) at then next Core meeting and adjust this process as appropriate.

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* Restorative justice is a process of intervention that typically involves face-to-face dialog in which the following are acknowledged and root causes addressed:
- harm caused by the offense to the victim/survivor, community, and offender;
- needs of the victim/survivor, community, and offender; and
- obligations of the offender to the victim/survivor and community, but also of the community towards the offender.

Restorative justice may result in an apology, reparation, or some sort of community service. Restorative justice can be used in response to an incident and/or as a way to improve encourage positive behavior.

Adapted from Restorative Justice, Examples of Alternatives to Detention, UNICEF. Accessed 2-28-2019, https://www.unicef.org/tdad/index_56370.html.

Reporting

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Is violence, danger, or threat imminent?
       Yes ─── No
   Call 911      Ask offender to stop
                 or leave the location
                          ↓
If recipient       Inform recipient of
requests that the  harassment/discrimination
incident not be    about POD policy
reported, please          ↓
honor the          Report incident to any member
request. But let   of POD Executive Committee.
them know that     If possible provide:
another witness    • Name(s), if known
might report it.   • Date, time, location
                   • Description of incident
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Response

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POD Executive Director or President
convenes 3 members of
Executive Committee

   Investigation       Inform offender
                       of complaint
        ↓
    Decision
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