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EVENTS AND MEETINGS PROTOCOL

We request that attendees at SoA events and meetings -- whether online or in person -- and all those who interact with the SoA, understand and adhere to this Events and Meetings Protocol, our Standing Orders for Meetings and our Dignity and Respect Policy.

Adhering to this policy means that together we will:

- Interact considerately with dignity and respect at all times. This includes respecting diversity, different roles, professional boundaries, and avoiding giving offence.
- Respect the authority of the Chair or the person in charge of the event or meeting.
- Make points of principle and state disagreement but understand that personal attacks on other attendees or members are unacceptable.
- Not interrupt speakers for any reason unless the speaker has indicated that they will accept questions and comments during their presentation.
- Report any breach of this Protocol, Dignity and Respect Policy or our Standing Orders, which takes place during an SoA event or meeting, to the Chair or to the person in charge, whether in person or online.

Additionally, Management Committee and Group Committee members, judges and assessors are expected to honour the content and spirit of a Code of Conduct. Management Committee and Group Committee members are also expected to adhere to the SoA's Rules of committee meetings.

Note: any complaint raised in a committee meeting is usually dealt with at the time by that committee.

THE ROLE OF CHAIR

For the smooth-running of events and meetings, all SoA events have an event Chair or named person in charge. The authority for the event or meeting is with the Chair and we ask that respect is at all times paid to their authority. The ruling of the Chair or the person in charge of the event or meeting is final.

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The Chair has a responsibility to remain neutral, to facilitate the event or meeting and to enable as many parties to speak as possible. The Chair or named person in charge is expected to honour the content and spirit of our Code of Conduct and the Book and Publishing Industry Values.

The Chair or the person in charge of the event or meeting has the authority to:

- Decide on the conduct of all business and points of order, competence and relevance. This includes discretion to rule on all questions of procedure or content where no express provision is made elsewhere.
- Rule on who speaks and when. This may mean limiting speakers' time or contributions in order to keep
  to agendas or manage time constraints.
- Rule on any instances of interruptions by attendees or of continual irrelevance, tedious repetition,
  unbecoming language or behaviour or of any breach of any of the SoA's policies or standing orders.
- Act immediately if notified that the Dignity and Respect Policy has been breached during an SoA event or meeting. They may use any or all of the powers available to them as outlined below.

DISRUPTIONS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

The Chair or person in charge of an SoA event or meeting may:

- direct an attendee of such event or meeting to discontinue speaking;
- seek an apology;
- order a short adjournment of such event or meeting;
- ask the attendee to leave the event or meeting.

If an attendee is asked to leave an SoA event or meeting and refuses to do so, the attendee acknowledges that the person in charge of the event may, in very extreme and rare circumstances, be required to call the police to have the individual removed.

FEEDBACK OR COMPLAINTS

If you, as a member or service user*, have feedback about this protocol, a complaint about an alleged breach of this Protocol, or our Dignity and Respect Policy, please use our complaints procedure.

**A service user is someone who makes use of our advisory or other services, attends our events or meetings, applies for our prizes and grants or interacts with us in any way, for example, acting as a judge or an assessor in relation to something connected with the SoA or who receives a communication from us directed to them personally.*

Version: 1 November 2023