

Year 1 Public Description of Work for  
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Argonne National Laboratory

**Updated Research Integrity Code of Conduct**

**This Action Applies to Rubric Item:**

11, Response, Treating Sexual Harassment as a Violation of Research Integrity

**Description of Work:**

In mid-2019, Argonne explicitly added the following section to its existing Research Code of Conduct:

*When dealing with others, I will:*

- *Be honest and professional in my interactions which includes being cognizant of, and vigilant against, the negative consequences of conscious or unconscious bias;*
- *Create an environment in which sexual and other forms of harassment are not tolerated in order to avoid potential risks to my own research integrity and that of my colleagues;*
- *Foster a diverse and inclusive research environment that welcomes a diversity of thought and approaches;*
- *Welcome constructive criticism of my personal scientific research and offer the same to my colleagues in a manner that fosters mutual respect and objective scientific debate; and*
- *Mentor new colleagues, students, and guests on the Argonne Research Code of Conduct, leading them by example on how to conduct and report their research in an ethical manner.*

Argonne took this action to specifically and explicitly acknowledge that the prevention of sexual harassment and recognition and understanding of bias are key elements of research integrity.

To accomplish this change, Argonne's Research Integrity Ombudsperson first reviewed the recommendations from the 2018 National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Report, consulted with Argonne researchers, and benchmarked against other similar institutions with existing research codes of conduct. The Research Integrity Ombudsperson then presented the proposed additions to the Research Code of Conduct to Argonne's senior leadership team. This presentation included a discussion of the importance of preventing sexual

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harassment and the harm that sexual harassment causes to research integrity. It specifically referenced the findings and related recommendations on these points in the 2018 NASEM report. Argonne's senior leaders concurred with these recommendations and Argonne implemented the change by posting the updated Research Code of Conduct on Argonne's public-facing website and incorporating it into new-hire orientation.

Once implemented, Argonne's Research Integrity Ombudsperson and other internal stakeholders (like the Human Resources and Legal Departments) highlighted this change when speaking to employees about the content of the Research Code of Conduct and/or the importance of preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.

During this same period of time, Argonne also added professional resources to the Employee Relations section of Human Resources, the group at Argonne responsible for handling investigations and related training on discrimination and misconduct, including sexual harassment. With these additional resources, Argonne has continued to foster internal mutual understanding about the importance of preventing sexual harassment and how sexual harassment damages research integrity, among and between the areas that oversee research integrity and those who handle compliance, investigation, disciplinary, diversity, and ethical issues. The steps described were new for Argonne in 2019 and, as of July 2020, have been fully implemented.

Moving forward, Argonne plans to reinforce the connection between the prevention of harassment and research integrity by explicitly discussing that connection and the updated Research Code of Conduct in a training session that all Argonne employees will be required to complete by the end of 2020. If and when future harassment investigations substantiate misconduct by researchers, Argonne will sanction and discipline those researchers in a manner that communicates that harassment is an activity that harms research and is inconsistent with the level of research integrity required of Argonne researchers.

**Website for further information:** <https://www.anl.gov/research-code-of-conduct>

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