



Waterborne Technology Platform V.Z.W.
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Code of Conduct

Message from the Board of Directors

Why do we need a code of conduct?

WATERBORNE has been set up as an industry-oriented Technology Platform to establish a continuous dialogue between all waterborne stakeholders, such as classification societies, shipbuilders, shipowners, maritime equipment manufacturers, infrastructure and service providers, universities or research institutes, and with the EU Institutions, including Member States. Waterborne has become a well-known organisation to facilitate discussions regarding RD&I for and by the European waterborne sector as well as to develop common R&D visions and Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (SRIAs).

Our status has been built on quality of work and integrity, both being a prerequisite for working with a large number of stakeholders. The Code of Conduct has been developed considering the requirements of these stakeholders, while also considering the economic, social and environmental challenges that impact our work.

The Code of Conduct defines how we conduct ourselves at the Waterborne Technology Platform (WTP). It defines how we function as an organization, and how (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners of the WTP interact with public entities, colleagues, suppliers and other stakeholders. It outlines the fact that we are bound to the Code of Conduct even if it means losing an important project or contract. The Code of Conduct is more than an acknowledgment of the rules. It reflects a personal commitment to take responsibility for our actions and to always work with integrity.

All (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners of the WTP, and those acting on behalf of WTP, shall follow this Code of Conduct. The future success and results of WTP depend on its reputation as a trusted and reliable partner. If anyone sees inconsistencies with our code, they are empowered to report misconduct.

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Brussels, 14 April 2021



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Summary

Applicability. The WTP Code of Conduct applies to WTP (contracted) employees, Members of the Board of Directors, members and partners that act on behalf and within WTP. This applies also to all meetings of WTP.

Responsibilities. All WTP (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners shall read, understand and comply with WTP Code of Conduct. They shall ask for help when they are not sure if any activity is compliant with the code of conduct. They shall understand they are obliged to report any of such activity. WTP board of directors and the WTP Secretariat shall ensure the implementation of the Code of Conduct among the (contracted) employees, Board of Directors, members and partners.

Reporting a misconduct. All WTP (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners are required to report any suspected or observed activity that is not compliant with the Code of Conduct or if they are asked to do something that might be a violation of the Code of Conduct. Reports shall be made to a dedicated team of compliance officers. This team will be appointed by the General Assembly.



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Our (contracted) employees, members of the Board of directors, members and partners

WTP combines people from different countries, nationalities and cultures. We treat each other with respect and dignity and behave accordingly when interacting with one another. We encourage good manners, polite approach and privacy and do not tolerate any kind of discrimination, bullying or harassment. This applies to our (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners as WTP is judged by outsiders according to the way they are treated and because – as a Belgian based non-profit making association – there are obligations to respect Belgian law on these matters. Clear and regular communications, diversity, equality of opportunity and upholding health and safety are essential to foster a work environment in which everyone will feel welcome and comfortable.

Our way of working

We work with each other in a polite, reliable and consistent manner to build a long term relationship that is the crucial foundation for future success. This applies to our (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners. **We take responsibility of the way we:**

- **help each other and our members to succeed** by adding value through our performance and services. We build trust by being transparent and honest. We do not act in a manner that unfairly favors or benefits one partner or stakeholder over another;
 - **work with each other in a fair and polite manner** where the same standards apply to everyone. We do not pursue things that create conflict of interest of any kind. We apply transparent job recruitment processes to select the most suitable employees. We use transparent public tendering processes to choose most suitable consultants and agencies to help us in our work. Commissions or fees paid to consultants or agents must be reasonable in relation to the services provided. In addition, WTP applies the Chatham House Rule to all its meetings;
 - **safeguard WTP assets**, equipment, confidential information, information systems, and intellectual property must be handled with care to avoid loss, theft or damage. Information sharing or information systems must be used in a manner that does not violate the rights or interests of WTP (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members, partners or any other stakeholder. We avoid or manage conflicts of interest and take the necessary actions;
 - **interact with stakeholders like the European Commission Services, Member States, media, NGOs, other institutes and organizations**. WTP (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners know and comply laws and regulations and must not contact these stakeholders unless it is within their mandate. Influencing their objective decision making is forbidden. WTP has nominated people to work on stakeholder relations. Gifts and complimentary acts of courtesy or hospitality in favor of representatives of public institutions and any other stakeholder may only be permitted when these
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prove to be of reasonable value and, as such, do not compromise the integrity or reputation of one of the parties concerned and could not be interpreted by an impartial observer as aimed at securing advantages in an improper form. In any case, this type of expense must be authorized at an adequate level, properly documented and comply with the Code of Conduct applicable in the organization of the recipient;

- **fulfill social responsibility** in complying with all laws designed to protect environment, safety and health and promoting a sustainable approach in daily work. Corporate Social Responsibility implies that WTP treats all stakeholders in a socially responsible manner. If issues of legal compliance arise, WTP will act responsibly and abide by the final decisions rendered by the courts;
- **communicate to public** openly and in an organized manner. WTP has mandated dedicated persons responsible for communication and this mandate should be respected in all forms of communication;
- **report activities and issues that are not compliant with the Code of Conduct**. In case of indication that non-compliant activities may be undertaken, all (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, partners and members have the responsibility to report this activity to the compliance officers;
- **Perform our accounting** based on comprehensive and precise information, attestable and consistent with the organizational structure. If deemed necessary, a regular check of the accounting can be conducted on request of the members.

Acting in accordance with relevant legislation

For WTP employees, (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members, partners and other stakeholders, adherence to the law is a matter of course and an integral part of their activities. What matters the most, when it comes to compliance, is the adherence to competition law and all other relevant laws. WTP services include providing a platform, advice and project coordination for companies that also may be competitors. WTP, among other things, draws up and represents matters of common interest. These activities and the provision of services for its membership must be in line with the rules that ensure undistorted competition.

Violation of any applicable law may be subject to severe consequences and adversely affect, members of the Board of Directors, (contracted) employees, members and partners. Various decisions of the European Commission resulted in the levying of substantial fines on companies and associations, with sometimes devastating economic impact. Anti-trust authorities are also getting more and more critical when it comes to co-operation between competitors – inside or outside of associations. WTP (contracted) employees, members of the Board of Directors, members and partners and any other stakeholder must keep this in mind.



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Penalties for violation

Each WTP (contracted) employee, member of the Board of Directors, and any other WTP member or partner is responsible for fully complying with the applicable laws, this Code of Conduct and WTP policies. WTP applies zero tolerance and will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or membership, against employees or members who violate the law, this Code of Conduct or WTP policies.

Contact us

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