



Policy BIG-19

CODE OF CONDUCT

	NAME	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
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1. INTRODUCTION

BIG is an international non-profit organization for academic breast cancer research groups from around the world. BIG's mission is to facilitate and accelerate breast cancer research at the international level by stimulating cooperation between its member groups and other academic networks, and collaborating with, but working independently from, the pharmaceutical industry.

BIG is committed to its vision of finding a cure for breast cancer through global collaboration and research, its mission to facilitate breast cancer research internationally, and to conduct its research following specific academic principles (Policy BIG-01, "BIG Mission & Principles of Research Conduct").

In line with BIG's vision and mission, which aim ultimately to better and extend the lives of patients confronted with breast cancer, BIG strives to reflect the following values in all that it does: accountability, integrity, selflessness, objectivity, transparency, honesty, leadership, trust, solidarity, respect, fairness, and excellence

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance about BIG's expectations concerning appropriate professional and ethical behavior in the context of conducting business under the umbrella of BIG, as well as to enforce its compliance.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to BIG Executive Board (EB) members, BIG Headquarters (HQ) Staff, Official Representatives of BIG Member Groups, BIG Study Principal Investigators, BIG designated Advisors, or any other individuals appointed as a (co)-Chair or member of a BIG working group, task force or committee, or other activity ("BIG Business") in which s/he directly or indirectly represents BIG (collectively referred to as "BIG Members" for the purposes of this guideline).

3. POLICY

3.1 Mission

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members (including the BIG EB), and BIG HQ, will

- continuously strive to uphold BIG's mission, principles of research conduct, and values
- work and behave in a spirit to support and defend academic research principles in order to protect BIG's reputation and to avoid contributing to the impression that BIG or any of its members are "disguised" contract research organizations (CROs)
- be committed to excellence in breast cancer research with the objective of working in the best interests of patients.

3.2 Legal Compliance and Governance

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members, including the BIG EB and BIG HQ, will

- work within the law
- work within BIG's articles of incorporation ("statutes") and related governance documents (e.g., function-specific charters)

- respect confidentiality and privacy as required in the agreements, charters, policies or statements as provided in the context of information made available on such a basis
- respect the confidentiality of information presented or provided during BIG Scientific, General Assembly or other meetings, or as otherwise disseminated confidentially through various communications channels to BIG members
- comply with BIG's Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption Policy (LEG-07).

In conducting BIG Business, BIG HQ, will

- respect privacy and handle personal data in compliance with privacy laws and BIG's Data Privacy Policy (LEG-06).

3.3 Professional Integrity and Accountability

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members (including the BIG EB), and BIG HQ, will

- work in the best interests of BIG as an organization, rather than pursuing personal agendas
- agree that when presenting a study concept in a BIG Scientific Meeting, the intention is to run it under the BIG umbrella according to one of the BIG trial models, and not taken outside of the BIG network (unless it is confirmed that there is no interest in the study)
- if serving on a committee, working group, task force, as a BIG Study principal investigator or otherwise engaged in BIG Business, commit to
 - Working in good faith to accomplish the objectives and responsibly carry out the role attributed
 - Preparing for and attending (or apologizing for) meetings and engaging constructively and sensitively in related discussions and decision-making, participating in a vote whenever required
 - Accepting the decisions taken according to the majority (or super-majority, as the case may be) decision and not take individual and contrary action
 - Gaining a sound and up-to-date knowledge of BIG and the activity engaged in by reading information provided for that purpose or participating in any induction and training provided
- be responsible and accountable for own actions and decisions taken
- protect BIG's assets and reputation
 - Use computers, phones or other property for legitimate business purposes and not for private activities or personal gain
 - Agree to proper use of email, internet and social media, meaning that it must not be used for illegal, offensive, disruptive or discriminating content
 - Protect BIG's intellectual property and use it only according to legally agreed upon terms
 - If expressing a personal opinion rather than a position of BIG, clearly make this distinction
- be open to scrutiny and sanction.

In conducting BIG Business, the BIG EB and BIG HQ will

- be accountable to BIG members, collectively represented in the General Assembly

3.4 Responsible Stewardship

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members (including the BIG EB), and BIG HQ, will

- ensure that spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fill the mission of BIG; this includes being frugal and working within approved budgets and guidelines in order to protect the financial health of BIG
- raise and use funds in a manner that are ethical, compliant with donor intent, and coherent with BIG's role as a healthcare and non-profit organization
- comply with BIG's Travel and Expenses Policy (Policy BIG-04) or comparable study-specific expenses policies whenever required
- follow compensation policies that are in line with industry practice and appropriate for BIG as a non-profit organization
- have effective accounting systems in place, with appropriate controls and factually accurate and complete reporting.

3.5 Disclosure and Transparency

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members will

- comply with BIG's Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure policy (Policy BIG-03) whenever required
- not allow personal interests to conflict with the duty to act in the interest of BIG; if there is the potential for perceived or actual conflict of interest, declare this proactively so that it can be managed according to the governing policy
- retain all data and records according to legal requirements and industry standards.

In conducting BIG Business, BIG EB and BIG HQ will

- ensure that communication with BIG Groups is open and transparent in order to create and maintain an environment of trust.

3.6 Relationships

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members (including the BIG EB), and BIG HQ, will

- establish relationships on the principles of mutual respect, fairness, support, professionalism and trust.
- not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, humiliation, denigration, abuse (verbal, physical, sexual or other) or other action intended to intimidate or manipulate.

In conducting BIG Business, the BIG EB and BIG HQ commit to

- working as a team in a relationship of mutual respect, and acknowledging the distinction and complementarity in their roles
- interacting with BIG Members in a spirit of fairness and respect, ensuring that participation in BIG activities is based on merit and other, transparently communicated, objective criteria
- providing equal opportunities within the organization, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation or geography.

3.7 Corporate Social Responsibility

In conducting BIG Business, BIG HQ will

- make best efforts to make efficient and responsible use of resources, and commits to recycling and reducing waste whenever possible

- strive to be an excellent employer, providing its staff members and any other individuals involved in BIG business with a safe, healthy and otherwise positive working environment that includes regular training and opportunities professional development
- be cognizant of work-stress related hazards such as “burn-out” and commits to vigilance of this and to support an appropriate work-life balance.

3.8 Staff

In conducting BIG Business, BIG Members (including the BIG EB), and BIG HQ, will

- be expected to understand, accept, and respect the difference in roles between the EB, and the Management of BIG HQ, ensuring that the EB and the BIG HQ team work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the organization, and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship.

In conducting BIG Business, the BIG EB will

- not undermine the delegation of authority given to the CEO by word or action, both individually and collectively.

In conducting BIG Business, the BIG EB (in the case of the CEO) and BIG HQ (for all other cases) will

- act fairly and in accordance with good employment and equal opportunities principles in making decisions affecting the appointment, recruitment, professional development, appraisal, remuneration and discipline of the CEO and other staff.

3.9 Scrutiny and Sanctions

- All individuals engaged in activities on behalf of BIG are subject to scrutiny with regard to their performance and behaviour; this means compliance with requirements of any agreements or charters governing the respective activity, or working contracts and position descriptions
- Any concerns should be directed as follows:
 - About a BIG EB Member: to the BIG Chair, unless it is the Chair, in which case to the other officer(s)
 - About a BIG HQ CEO: to the BIG Chair
 - About any other BIG HQ staff member: to the CEO
 - About a BIG Member Group, BIG Study Principal Investigators, BIG designated Advisors, or any others designated as a member of a BIG working group, task force or committee or other activity in which s/he directly or indirectly represents BIG: to the CEO, who will escalate as needed to the BIG Chair / EB
- All issues will be reviewed in a fair and objective manner, in consideration of the facts available and the views of each party involved, and with the objective to be resolved in an amicable manner
- In case an issue cannot be resolved in a productive manner, a third-party mediator may be consulted

- If it is deemed that a serious breach has been committed, or that the issue at hand cannot be resolved and/or presents a serious threat to BIG’s reputation, the individual or Group concerned will be required to step down from his /her position / leave BIG.

4. INTERNAL REFERENCES

BIG Articles of Incorporation / “statutes”

Policy BIG-01 “BIG Mission and Principles of Research Conduct”

Policy BIG-03 “Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure Policy”

Policy BIG-04 “Travel and Expenses Policy”

Policy LEG-06 “Data Privacy Policy”

Policy LEG-07 “Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption Policy”

5. CHANGE HISTORY

New version	Effective Date	Significant Changes
1.0 / 19-Mar-2018	02-Apr-2018	Initial Policy
2.0 / 04-Jul-2022	04-Aug-2022	Update after approval at General Assembly meeting dd. 22 nd June 2022