

Lancet Countdown Code of Conduct

BEHAVIOURAL STANDARDS POLICY

INTERNAL POLICY DOCUMENT – NOT TO BE SHARED EXTERNALLY

Last update: 9th of February of 2025

Note: this is an internal policy document of the *Lancet* Countdown on Health and Climate Change. It should not be shared beyond the approved contributors to the collaboration

The *Lancet* Countdown is an international, multidisciplinary research collaboration dedicated to providing rigorous scientific evidence to inform critical actions in addressing one of the greatest challenges of our time—climate change—and promoting a healthier future. Central to this mission is the collective effort of researchers from a broad range of diverse technical disciplines, nationalities, cultural backgrounds, and professional seniority. As an evidence and knowledge broker, the *Lancet* Countdown facilitates regular engagement with key stakeholders in the climate change and health sectors.

A collaborative, constructive, and safe working environment is essential to the success of the *Lancet* Countdown's work. Given the nature of its work, which often addresses challenges faced by underserved, minoritized, and underrepresented populations, it is imperative that all contributors uphold the highest standards of professional conduct when representing – or when being perceived to represent – the *Lancet* Countdown's work.

This policy lays out the behavioural standards expected from all members of the *Lancet* Countdown collaboration, including indicator report authors, members of its secretariats, and members of its governance bodies, and outlines expected conduct and the procedures for addressing policy breaches. It was developed in alignment with the policies of the *Lancet* Countdown's grant and host institutions, and informed by input from members of the collaboration,

All contributors to the *Lancet* Countdown's work must carry appropriate conduct with peers and promote a positive and welcoming research environment by:

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- A. Ensuring that, whenever representing the *Lancet* Countdown, they behave in a professional and respectful manner to all people, treat individuals with dignity and respect, and display a high level of personal integrity and ethical behaviour;
 - B. Delivering work for *Lancet* Countdown in a respectful way, that protects the personal and professional integrity of colleagues both within the *Lancet* Countdown, as well as external stakeholders;
 - C. Encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion among all people involved in the *Lancet* Countdown, by promoting a safe, open, inclusive and equitable work environment free from any discrimination, in adherence to principles laid out in [Wellcome's Equity, diversity and inclusion policy](#);
 - D. Engaging in academic exchanges respectfully, regardless of the academic seniority of participants, and acknowledging and honouring the diverse experiences, expertise and perspectives of colleagues within the *Lancet* Countdown;
 - E. Encouraging two-way communication in all interactions, choosing the optimum time and approach to maximise their impact, using effective questioning and listening skills and adapting their approach and style to individuals and audiences' needs, as well as maintaining confidentiality;
 - F. Actively involving and valuing the expertise of authors from historically underrepresented groups in public health research, especially when their background, professional expertise and lived experience is relevant to an indicator or topic of discussion;
 - G. Regularly collaborating and respectfully sharing expertise and opinions, thereby promoting the learning and professional development of authors;
 - H. Sharing feedback on the work of colleagues in a respectful manner, ensuring to safeguard the professional integrity of peers, and give praise and credit to others as appropriate;
 - I. Accepting and appreciating feedback on their own work, whenever done respectfully and constructively;
 - J. Cultivating a supportive and collaborative work environment by addressing any behaviours and effectively manage any conflict that may undermine these principles, confidentially raising problematic behaviour, and actively supporting one another in maintaining a positive atmosphere for collaboration and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of *Lancet* Countdown colleagues.
 - K. Adhere to principles of anti-bullying and harassment, sexual misconduct, and anti-racism, in accordance with the following policies:

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- I. [UCL's Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
 - II. [Wellcome's Bullying, harassment, abuse and harm policy](#)
 - III. [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#)
 - IV. [Harassment under the Equality Act 2010](#)

It is important to note that harassment occurs even if the harasser perceives his/her behaviour as being harmless and without malice. What matters is how the behaviour makes the recipient feel, and not what the perpetrator's intentions were.

With the purpose of keeping everyone in the collaboration safe, any behavioural concerns will be handled confidentially, initially addressed by the Working Group Lead with the individual in question. If necessary, the concern will be escalated to the respective centre Director and, if needed, further addressed by the Board. This process ensures that concerns are dealt with in a fair and appropriate manner, prioritizing the well-being and professionalism of all involved. Any breaches of this commitment could result in individuals being removed from the *Lancet* Countdown network for future iterations of the report, and with behavioural challenges being raised with an individual's host institution.

In addition, the *Lancet* Countdown shall inform Wellcome's Director of Research Funding, as set out in Wellcome's Bullying, harassment, abuse and harm policy, of any formal investigation into an allegation of bullying, harassment, abuse and harm. All members of the *Lancet* Countdown should be aware and agree that personal data may be shared with Wellcome as part of such disclosure.

Outside of these criteria, the *Lancet* Countdown regularly acknowledges the work of contributors in the acknowledgements section, through other research outputs (national policy briefs, case studies, blogs, and other communications materials).

Further Resources:

1. Green, B. and Johnson, C. (2015) [Interprofessional collaboration in research, education, and clinical practice: working together for a better future.](#)
2. Morton, B. et. al. (2021). [Consensus statement on measures to promote equitable authorship in the publication of research from international partnerships.](#)
3. Costello, A. (2000) [Moving to research partnerships in developing countries.](#)
4. [UCL Core Behaviours Framework](#)