CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE COMMUNITY OF CITIZEN SCIENCE HUB

A. PURPOSE

Vilnius Tech Citizen Science Hub organizes, promotes and facilitates events to enable all participants, members and non-members, to learn about, share and discuss open and citizen science practices. Professional exchange on the topics of open and citizen science is the core purpose of the community.

In the Citizen Science Hub community, **we welcome openness, transparency, sharing of experience and co-creation.** This implies that we welcome diverse opinions and free discussions from various stakeholders. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to enable an environment in which diverse individuals can collaborate and interact with mutual respect. We recognize a shared responsibility to create and maintain that environment for the benefit of all. Everyone's opinion is welcome within the boundaries of this Code of Conduct which aims to ensure a positive, equitable and open culture.

B. SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies both within Hub (online and offline) spaces and in public spaces when an individual is representing the Hub or its community. Examples of representing the Hub or community include using an official project e-mail address, posting via an official social media account, or acting as an appointed representative at an online or offline event.

C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vilnius Tech Citizen Science Hub is a bottom-up platform by and for researchers, citizens, policy-makers and other stakeholders to exchange knowledge and know-how on open and citizen science practices. The Hub aims to connect people from a wide range of experiences around one shared purpose: advancing knowledge through research and monitoring done by, for, and with members of the public. Hence, the Hub is inclusive:

1. Researchers and citizens are the primary audiences of Hub, but policy-makers, industry, NGO representatives and others that are interested in (conducting) research are also welcome to join the community;
2. No prior knowledge is required to be part of the community, nor are members in any way required to commit to certain open and citizen science practices.

The core underlying principle of this code of conduct is respect. Everyone in the community should feel safe and welcome. The topics engaged by this community can arouse debate, and strong disagreements may occur. We see this as an asset – it is our explicit mission to set up a space so that these discussions can occur. Remember that disagreements and differences in opinions are inevitable sometimes and try to be constructive and solution-oriented in your communication. The following sections outline the expected and discouraged behaviour together with ways how to respond to unacceptable actions by the community members.

D. EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR

The following behaviours are encouraged in the activities of the Hub Community:

- (+) All participants are treated with respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.

- (+) Communicate openly and thoughtfully with others and be considerate of the multitude of views and opinions that are different from your own.

- (+) Be respectful and thoughtful in your critique of ideas.

- (+) Use the pronouns people have specified for themselves.

- (+) Ask permission to take pictures of others and post those on social media.

- (+) Speak your own narrative, from your own unique experiences. Do not speak for others.

- (+) Stop, listen and ask for clarification if someone perceives your behaviour or presentation as violating the Code of Conduct.

- (+) Use accessible language to talk about your area of expertise. If others in the group seem confused, slow down, stop and ask for input.

- (+) Give everyone a chance to talk, only interrupting if absolutely necessary – for example, for time updates.

E. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Some behaviors are specifically prohibited in the activities of the Hub Community:

- Discrimination based on gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, lactation responsibility, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin, or culture.

- Harassment and intimidation, including any verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens, intimidates or coerces another participant.

- Exposing culturally sensitive data, images, locations or other information when you have not received explicit permission from the group for use in such a way, e.g., photos or stories in presentations.

- Any real or implied threat of physical harm.

- Initiating or simulating physical contact without consent, even if it seems normal.

- Uploading photos of others online without their consent.

- Advocating or encouraging any of the above behaviours

- Falsely reporting harassment or other unacceptable behaviours. Critical examination of beliefs and viewpoints does not, by itself, constitute hostile conduct or harassment.

F. CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately. Upon review of circumstances, possible consequences for violation of the Code of Conduct include: (1) being asked to leave the online or offline events without refund; (2) being barred from future Hub meetings and online spaces; and (3) not being considered for service on Hub boards or committees.

G. RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

Say something. If you are the target of, or witness unacceptable behavior, and do not have reason to fear for your or others' safety, call out that behavior in a calm, matter-of-fact manner that does not escalate the problem. Sometimes people do not realize their impact on others and need help to learn better ways to interact.

Report it. If someone makes you or anyone else feel unsafe or unwelcome, or if you believe a harassment problem exists, please report it as soon as possible to the enforcer of this Code of Conduct, Head of Citizen Science Hub at Vilnius Tech, Monika Mačiulienė at monika.maciuliene@vilniustech.lt. The target of the complaint will not be involved in handling or resolving the incident. Every code of conduct violation report will be treated with seriousness and care.

⚠️ **If there is an emergency and there's a threat of imminent harm, contact police or law enforcement immediately.**

H. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUB MANAGERS

The Hub Managers are responsible for clarifying the standards of acceptable behavior and are expected to take appropriate and fair corrective action in response to any instances of unacceptable behavior. The managers have the right and responsibility to remove, edit, or reject comments, commits, code, wiki edits, issues, and other contributions that are not aligned with this Code of Conduct, or to ban temporarily or permanently any contributor for other behaviors that they deem inappropriate, threatening, offensive, or harmful.

REFERENCES

This Code of Conduct was adapted from the following sources: Code of Conduct by The Open Science Community Delft (OSCD), Community Covenant v1.0, The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, Code of Conduct by eu-citizen.science.