LEADERSHIP VICTORIA

Program Participant Code of Conduct

Objective	The objectives of this policy are to establish the ethics, practices, and standards Leadership Victoria (LV) expects from program participants.
Scope	This policy applies to all Leadership Victoria program participants.
Owner and Responsibilities	The document owner is LV's Chief Executive Officer. The Programs Team is responsible for the implementation of the Program Participant Code of Conduct. All program participants are responsible for: • Adhering to the Code of Conduct; and • Reporting suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct to an LV staff member.
Definitions	For the purpose of the Code of Conduct: • Program participant: a person enrolled in an LV program. • LV staff: all persons engaged by or on behalf of LV, including employees, program speakers, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers, student placements. • Chatham House Rule: See *Appendix 1*.
Expected Standards of Behaviour	Leadership Victoria requires all program participants to demonstrate respectful, ethical and responsible behaviour throughout their participation in LV programs. Participants are expected to: **5.1 Respect and inclusion** • Treat all participants, LV staff, speakers, facilitators and others with courtesy, dignity, and respect. • Value diversity and respect differences in backgrounds, identities, experiences, perspectives and opinions. • Contribute to an environment where people feel welcome, included and able to participate meaningfully. **5.2 Integrity and accountability** • Act honestly, ethically and in good faith in their interactions with others • Take responsibility for their words, actions and decisions. • Be open to feedback, reflect on their behaviour and acknowledge the impact their actions may have on others. **5.3 Constructive participation and learning** • Participate actively and constructively in program activities and discussions. • Listen respectfully to different perspectives, and engage in disagreement in a considered and constructive manner. • Approach learning with curiosity, openness and a willingness to challenge assumptions and reflect on personal leadership practices. • Allow others the opportunity to contribute without dominating discussions or dismissing alternative viewpoints.

5.4 Professional conduct and boundaries

- Engage respectfully with LV staff, speakers, and facilitators at all times, including when program content raises challenging, sensitive, or potentially triggering topics.
- Treat fellow participants with courtesy, dignity and consideration, recognising that individuals bring different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and personal circumstances to the program.
- Ask questions, express different views and challenge ideas constructively, without personal attacks, intimidation, hostility or disrespectful conduct.
- Express disagreement constructively, without personal attacks, belittling, intimidation or attempts to undermine another participant.
- Approach difficult situations and conversations with curiosity and seeking to learn and grow from the experience.
- Respect the personal, professional and emotional boundaries of others. Participants must not engage in behaviour that is threatening, coercive, intrusive or otherwise inappropriate whether in person, online or in other program-related interactions.
- Maintain respectful communication across all program-related settings, including formal settings, informal gatherings, emails, messaging platforms and other digital communications.
- Consider the impact of words and actions on others, respond appropriately to feedback about their conduct and respect any reasonable directions given by LV staff to maintain a safe respectful program environment.

5.5 Confidentiality and trust

- Respect the privacy of other participants and the sensitive or personal information shared during program activities.
- Observe the Chatham House Rules, in accordance with *Appendix 1*.
- Refrain from sharing personal information, discussions or contributions outside the program where doing so would breach an applicable confidentiality expectation or another person's privacy.

5.6 Safety and shared responsibility

- Respect the rights, wellbeing and reasonable boundaries of others.
- Raise concerns about behavior that may breach this Code with an LV staff member.
- Cooperate respectfully and in good faith with LV when concerns about conduct are addressed.

The behavioural standards outlined in this Code of Conduct support LV's commitment to maintaining a safe learning environment compliant with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic).

Unacceptable Behaviour	Leadership Victoria is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all program participants, LV staff, speakers, facilitators and others involved in LV programs. The following behaviours are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in connection with LV programs or activities, whether they occur in person, online, during formal sessions or in informal program-related settings. **6.1 Abuse, aggression and intimidation** • Physical violence, assault, unwanted physical contact or threats of physical harm. • Verbal abuse, aggressive or threatening language, yelling, intimidation or hostile behaviour directed towards another person. • Personal attacks, insults, humiliation, belittling or behaviour intended to demean, threaten or undermine another person. • Threatening, coercive or intimidating conduct, including conduct that causes another person to reasonably dear their safety or wellbeing. **6.2 Disrespectful conduct and inappropriate boundaries** • Disrespectful, hostile or aggressive behaviour towards LV staff, speakers, facilitators, or fellow participants. • Personal attacks on a speaker or participant in response to a topic, presentation, opinion or perspective that is challenging, sensitive or distressing. • Repeated unwanted contact, intrusive behaviour or failure to respect another person's expressed boundaries. • Disruptive or confrontational behaviour that prevents others from participating safely and constructively in program activities. • Refusing to comply with reasonable directions from LV staff intended to maintain safety, respectful conduct or the orderly delivery of a program. **6.3 Bullying, harassment and discrimination** • Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination or victimization of any person. • Unwelcome conduct that demeans, humiliates, intimidates or targets another person. • Conduct that targets a person on the basis of their identity, personal characteristics, background or beliefs, or any other attribute listed under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). **6.4 Breaches of confidentiality and privacy** • Sharing confidential program discussions, personal disclosure or information about another participant without appropriate permission or authority. • Breaching the Chatham House Rules where it applies. • Recording, photographing or distributing images, audio, video, or private communications involving others without appropriate consent or authorisation.

	6.5 Inappropriate use of communications and technology • Sending abusive, threatening, harassing or intimidating emails, messages or other communications. • Using digital platforms, group chats, or social media associated with an LV program to target, ridicule, threaten or harass another person. • Sharing another person's personal information, images or communications in a manner that breaches their privacy or causes harm. **6.6 Other conduct that compromises the program environment** • Behaviour that creates a safety risk or significantly compromises the wellbeing of participants, LV staff, speakers or others involved in the program. • Retaliation against a person for raising a concern in good faith, participating in a review of an alleged breach or supporting another person who raises a concern. • Any other conduct that is inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or applicable LV policies.
Raising Concerns and Reporting Breaches	Leadership Victoria encourages all program participants to raise concerns about behaviour that may be inconsistent with this Code of Conduct. Early reporting can help LV investigate and respond to concerns, support those affected and maintain a safe, respectful and constructive learning environment. **7.1 How to raise a concern** Participants who experience, witness or become aware of a possible breach of this Code should raise their concern with LV as soon as reasonably possible. Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing with the LV Program Facilitator, or LV Programs and Events Coordinator. If a participant is uncomfortable raising a concern with either person, or the concern involves them, they can approach the LV CEO. Where a concern involved the CEO, participants should be provided with an alternative reporting contact. Participants do not need to prove that a breach has occurred before raising concern. When a concern is raised verbally, the LV staff member receiving it will document the details in writing. Where practicable, the person raising the concern will be given an opportunity to check that the record is accurate. Participants are encouraged to provide relevant details, including what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved and whether anyone witnessed the incident. Participants may speak directly to the person involved if they feel safe and comfortable doing so. However, this is not required, and concerns can be raised directly with LV at any time.

7.2 Responding to concerns
LV will take concerns about suspected breaches seriously and respond in a timely, fair and appropriate manner, having regard to the nature and seriousness of the concern.

Depending on the circumstances, LV may:

- Seek further information from the people involved and any relevant witnesses
- Take reasonable steps to support the immediate safety of those affected, including identifying appropriate support options where needed.
- Implement interim measures to manage risks while a concern is being assessed
- Determine whether further review, investigation or other action is required
- Take appropriate action in accordance with this Code and relevant LV policies and procedures

Participants are expected to cooperate honestly and respectfully with any process undertaken by LV to address a concern.

Leadership development can involve challenging or emotionally demanding discussions. While LV aims to provide a respectful and supporting learning environment, the LV team does not provide clinical mental health care or counselling. Participants experiencing distress are encouraged to seek support from an appropriately qualified external professional or counselling service.

7.3 Confidentiality and privacy
LV will handle concerns sensitively and respect the privacy of all people involved. Information will be shared only with those who reasonably need it to assess, respond to or manage the concern, support those affected, or meet applicable legal or other obligations.

Participants and others involved in a concern are expected to respect the privacy of those involved and refrain from sharing information about the matter unnecessarily.

LV cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in all circumstances, as information may need to be disclosed to ensure a fair process, manage risks or meet applicable legal obligations.

Records relating to reported concerns all personal and sensitive information collected during a complaint process will be handled, stored, and destroyed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and LV's Privacy Policy.

7.4 Protection from retaliation
LV does not tolerate retaliation against any person who raises a concern in good faith, reports a suspected breach of this Code, participates in a review or investigation, or supports another person who raises a concern.

	Retaliation may include threats, intimidation, harassment, exclusion, adverse treatment or other conduct intended to disadvantage a person because they have raised or supported a concern. Any retaliation against a person for raising or supporting a concern may itself constitute a breach of this Code and may result in further action by LV in accordance with *Section 8, Managing Breaches and Consequences*. **7.5 Immediate safety concerns** Where behaviour presents an immediate risk to the safety or wellbeing of any person, participants should notify an LV staff member as soon as it is safe to do so. Where there is an immediate threat to life or physical safety, participants should contact emergency services. LV may take immediate and reasonable steps to manage safety risks, including separating individuals, directing a participant to leave a session or activity, or temporarily restricting participation while the circumstances are assessed.
Managing Breaches and Consequences	Leadership Victoria takes breaches of this Code of Conduct seriously. Where a concern or suspected breach is reported, LV will assess the circumstances and determine an appropriate response, having regard to the nature, severity and impact of the alleged behaviour. **8.1 Assessing and managing breaches** LV will consider the circumstances of each reported concern before deciding whether a breach has occurred and what action is appropriate. In responding to a suspected breach, LV may consider: • The nature and seriousness of the alleged behaviour • The impact on the person/people affected, including any safety or wellbeing concerns • Whether the behaviour was intentional, repeated or continued after concerns had been raised • Whether the participant acknowledges the behaviour and demonstrates a willingness to take responsibility for their actions • Any relevant contextual information • Whether the behaviour presents an ongoing risk to participants, LV staff, speakers or others involved in the program LV will seek to respond fairly and appropriately, taking reasonable steps to understand the circumstances before determining an outcome. Where necessary, LV may take interim measures to manage risks while a matter is being assessed. **8.2 Possible outcomes and consequences** Depending on the circumstances, LV may take one or more of the following actions: • Provide informal feedback, guidance or a reminder of the expectations set out in this Code

- Issue a formal warning outlining the behaviour of concern and the expectations for future conduct
- Require the participant to engage in a discussion with LV staff regarding the breach and the actions required to address it
- Establish conditions for continued participation in the program
- Restrict participation in particular activities or events where reasonably necessary
- Suspend or remove the participant from the program
- Take any other reasonable action consistent with LV's policies, procedures and applicable obligations

The actions taken will depend on the circumstances and seriousness of the breach. LV is not required to apply these outcomes in a particular order and may take more serious actions where warranted by the nature of the conduct or the risks involved.

8.3 Serious breaches
Serious breaches of this Code may result in immediate action, including suspension or removal from an LV Program.

Serious breaches may include but are not limited to:

- Physical violence, threats of violence or credible threats to another person's safety
- Serious verbal abuse, intimidation, harassment or threatening behaviour
- Bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination or other serious misconduct
- Retaliation against a person who raises or supports a concern
- Serious or repeated breaches of confidentiality or personal boundaries
- Repeated breaches of this Code, particularly where previous concerns or warnings have not resulted in a change in behaviour

LV may take immediate interim action where necessary to manage a safety risk. Such action does not, in itself, constitute a final determination that a breach has occurred.

8.4 Procedural fairness
Where appropriate to the circumstances, LV will provide the participant concerned with an opportunity to respond to the allegations before making a decision about the outcome.

LV will consider the information available, including the participant's response, before determining whether a breach has occurred and what action is appropriate.

LV may adapt the process to the circumstances, particularly where immediate action is required to manage a safety risk or where other obligations apply.

8.5 Communicating outcomes
LV will communicate relevant decisions and any expectations for future conduct to the participant concerned.

	Where appropriate, LV may also communicate any relevant information to other people affected by the matter, while respecting privacy and confidentiality obligations. LV will maintain appropriate records of reported breaches and actions taken in accordance with its applicable policies and procedures.

Date Created	Date Approved	Date Revised	Version Control	Approved By	Amendment details
5/11/2020	16/11/2020	-	1	CEO	New Statement
		23/04/2024	1.1		Corrected errors
		23/10/2026	1.2		Amended layout & clarification

Appendices	**Appendix 1: The Chatham House Rule** Leadership Victoria adopts the Chatham House Rule at its program and events to encourage open, honest and constructive discussion, including on challenging or contentious topics. Under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use information received during a discussion but must not disclose the identity or affiliation of the speaker or any other participant, or identify any person as the source of particular information, without their permission. The rule is intended to create an environment in which participants can share experiences, perspectives and information openly, without concern that their contributions will be attributed to them or their organisation outside the discussion. All people attending LV programs and events, including program participants, guest speakers, participants' guests and LV staff, are expected to observe the Chatham Houe Rule. The Chatham Houe Rule does not remove the obligation to comply with applicable laws or other relevant LV policies, including requirements relating to reporting concerns, responding to safety risks and protecting personal information. It should not be interpreted as preventing a person from raising a concern about conduct that may breach the LV Code of Conduct. Participants are expected to exercise sound judgement when using information shared during LV programs and to respect the privacy, trust and professional boundaries of others.