

Code of Conduct

1. Mission statement

ImprovWorks Berlin is dedicated to creating a respectful, warm, and welcoming environment in which people of all backgrounds and identities can thrive. This includes but is not limited to members of any sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, social and economic class, educational level, color, immigration status, sex, age, size, family status, political belief, religion, mental and physical ability and any other legally protected characteristics.

ImprovWorks Berlin is committed to maintaining a community free from harassment and discrimination based on any of these characteristics and increasing the diversity of voices on Berlin's stages.

ImprovWorks Berlin is especially committed to creating a safer space for people from under-represented groups and marginalized communities and to challenging existing systems of oppression.

In cases of harassment or discrimination ImprovWorks Berlin commits to responding sensitively and respectfully to grievances, treating them with confidentiality and taking appropriate action based on the policies laid out in this document.

2. Relevant Personnel & Decision-Making

Decisions and resolutions related to this Code of Conduct will be made as a consensus of the Community Committee. This is comprised of:

Andrew Rae Lefoley, Executive Director of ImprovWorks Berlin.

Katharina Pretscher, Community Liaison.

Ally Young, Community Member.

The decisions and resolutions of the Community Committee are final.

Should either the Executive Director or Community Liaison have a clear conflict-of-interest in a matter before the Community Committee, they will recuse themselves from any decision, resolution or interpretation related to that conflict.

Summer Banks and Minimi Dubilier are Core Curriculum teachers. The Community Committee may sometimes request their advice and input.

3. Scope of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all members of the ImprovWorks Berlin community. This includes instructors, guest instructors, occasional, visiting or substitute teachers and coaches, staff and students of ImprovWorks Berlin.

4. Expected behaviour

- Participate in an authentic and active way. In doing so, you contribute to the health and longevity of this community.

- Improvise from a place of fun, love, kindness and respect for your fellow improvisers and audience.
- Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions.
- Support each other, on stage and off stage.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert instructors or staff if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this Code of Conduct, even if they seem inconsequential.
- Respect physical and sexual boundaries and refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Safety, trust and support is always more important than the temporary existence of an improv scene. So if in doubt, stop the scene, and you won't be made to feel bad for doing so.
- Recognize that we all have unconscious biases and that we all have learning to do.

5. Unacceptable behavior

Any of the following behaviors as defined below are considered unacceptable and will be subject to consequences as laid out in chapter 5.

- Verbal harassment** includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's age, nationality, origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, physical ability, socio-economic or educational status, family or marital status, appearance or other protected characteristics including epithets, slurs, derogatory comments, negative stereotyping, pigeonholing or unwanted comments and jokes.
- Nonverbal harassment** includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, physical ability, sexual identity, marital or other protected characteristics.
- Physical harassment** includes jostling, slapping, hitting, striking, pushing, punching, kicking, and any unwanted physical contact that is not perceived to be of a sexual nature.
- Verbal sexual harassment** includes innuendos, suggestive comments, or jokes of a sexual nature after being asked to stop or being made aware of someone's discomfort; sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Non-verbal sexual harassment** includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters and notes, facsimiles, e-mail, photos, text messages, tweets and internet postings; or other form of communication that is sexual in nature and offensive.

- F. **Physical sexual harassment** includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing and fondling and forced sexual intercourse or assault.
- G. **Discrimination** includes any form of unequal treatment based on the characteristics listed in the Mission Statement, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but disadvantage certain groups of people. Discrimination may take obvious forms, or it may happen in very subtle ways. Even if there are many factors affecting a decision or action, if discrimination is one factor, that is a violation of this policy.
- H. **Retaliation** includes any hardship, loss, benefit, or penalty imposed on a community member in response to reporting unacceptable behavior.

6. Student/teacher relationships

- People in a position of ongoing structural power at ImprovWorks Berlin (e.g. Andrew & Summer) are prohibited from starting new sexual/romantic relationships with any current student.
- Should a pre-existing romantic partner of Andrew or Summer become a student, the Community Liaison must be informed.
- Occasional, visiting or substitute teachers and coaches at ImprovWorks Berlin are prohibited from starting romantic/sexual relationships with students in their classes or groups, and further prohibited from starting romantic/sexual relationships with any Level 1 student.

7. Reporting unacceptable behavior

All members of the ImprovWorks community have the right to report instances of unacceptable behavior. People making reports have the right to

- have their reports taken seriously and treated with as much privacy as possible.
- describe the incident to as few people as possible and not be required to unnecessarily repeat a description of the incident.
- participate in a process that is fair, impartial, and provides adequate notice and a meaningful opportunity to be heard.
- be free from any suggestion that the individual experiencing harassment or discrimination should have acted in a different manner to avoid such harassment or discrimination.
- be protected against retaliation for reporting unacceptable behavior.

Reports of unacceptable behavior can be made

- to the Executive Director by email at improvworksberlin@gmail.com or in person
- to the Community Liaison by email at katharinapretscher@gmail.com or in person
- via the feedback box at <https://www.improvworksberlin.com/equity-diversity>

- to bar staff or instructors of ImprovWorks Berlin

Bar staff and instructors are required to inform the Community Committee of any report they receive.

Anonymous reports

Anonymous reports will be taken seriously and be kept for future reference. We will witness with you and for you by keeping an eye on the person reported. However, anonymous reports cannot be responded to or investigated.

Formal reports

Formal reports will be taken seriously and handled by the Community Committee. The confidentiality of the reporter will be protected during any investigation and/or actions taken as a result of the report.

Immediate reports

In the case of immediate reports in the context of in-person events, the instructor or staff member will determine the appropriate immediate response. The Community Committee will then follow up with the individuals involved and determine whether any further measures or resolutions are necessary. All non-immediate reports will be forwarded to and handled by the Community Committee.

Measures and resolutions

The Community Committee will set up an initial meeting with the reporting individual in order to gain a fuller understanding of the matter and determine if a restorative resolution is appropriate. If a satisfactory restorative resolution is not possible the Community Committee will conduct a formal investigation on the matter and decide on other measures as appropriate.

8. Immediate measures

When a report is made immediately in the context of in-person events, the instructor or staff member present may take appropriate immediate measures to help ensure the safety and well-being of the community, prevent retaliation and avoid an ongoing hostile environment. Immediate measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the instructor or staff member present and may include removing the person engaging in unacceptable behavior from the premises. Instructors and staff present are also available to help community members engage with local law enforcement if they wish, or to otherwise help those experiencing unacceptable behavior feel safe. If a community member affected by these immediate measures disagrees with the instructor's or staff member's decision, they may appeal to the Community Committee.

9. Restorative Resolutions

These may include an apology, a mediated conversation or using the situation as a learning opportunity.

10. Formal resolution

These may include the temporary or permanent exclusion of the person engaging in unacceptable behavior from the community, requiring an apology, a written warning in a staff member's personnel file or requiring a staff member or instructor to take an anti-oppression class.

11. Competing Rights

Should the rights provided to different people by this Code come into conflict, the Community Committee will weigh those rights according to the facts available to them on a case-by-case basis, and with special care for creating safer space for people from under-represented groups and marginalized communities and to challenge existing systems of oppression.

HEALTH RESOURCES