SDSS Best Practices for an Inclusive Collaboration

SDSS promotes effective communication between its projects and the broad science community. SDSS welcomes passionate, detailed, thoughtful disagreement, and discussion about ideas. This free exchange of ideas and differing perspectives benefits the community and our work. An inclusive, collaborative, environment is necessary to support a broad, diverse group of individuals as they contribute their best efforts.

The following document highlights recommended practices to follow for a rich and respectful collaborative environment. The SDSS Code of Conduct describes official SDSS policy towards issues and concerns raised by its members regarding inappropriate behavior within the collaboration.

Recommended Guidelines

Respect Your Colleague's ...	Do	Do Not
Agency	Allow them to express themselves.	Interrupt them nor talk over them.
Sensibility	Speak kindly and politely.	Say anything to your colleague that you would not want said to you.
Intelligence	Treat them as your equal.	Speak condescendingly to them, nor patronize them.
Personal Space	Maintain a respectable boundary.	Approach them in extreme proximity, nor engage in any contact considered uncomfortable.
History	Be considerate towards their personhood. Express respectful interest in their background, culture, or identity.	Assume a history or state of your colleague based on outward appearances or supposed background. You are not aware of their personal experiences and identifications.
Trust	Respect their choice to confide in you.	Share their personal information with external parties. Do not take away their choice to do so of their own accord.

Elements of SDSS Workplace Culture

1. **Respect** - Inclusive environments foster excellence by challenging us to consider a variety of viewpoints and approaches. We honor alternate
viewpoints as opportunities for discussion and learning, and therefore
treat others with respect, even if we disagree.

2. **Kindness** - SDSS realizes the impact of kindness to empower
individuals to act in ways that strengthen ourselves, our relationships
and our communities.

3. **Trust** - An inclusive, collaborative environment is best achieved
when there is mutual trust, based upon honest behavior, throughout the
community

4. **Diversity** - Valuing diversity recognizes differences between people and acknowledges that these
differences are an asset, bringing strength to a community through new ideas, innovation, and creativity.

5. **Inclusion** - By being inclusive, SDSS strives to create an
environment of involvement, respect, and connection that values and
benefits from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Grey Zone Situations

There are many situations in which certain behavior may initially be
considered ok, but upon reflection, are actually inappropriate. You are
not the only judge of your behavior. If someone informs you that your
behavior has made them or the situation uncomfortable, take heed of
their comments. Good intentions are not an excuse if offense is taken.
The best practice is to apologize fully and learn from it in future
interactions.

Example Grey Zones

- Person A is interested in dating Person B, who is a colleague.
Person A should remain professional at work, and only make advances
socially outside of work.

- Person A is upset with the science of Person B. Person A should
refrain from personal attacks and should be aware of the appropriate
audience (Person B and co-authors) to bring up complaints about
Person B's science. They especially should not "mob"
(lead/organize/encourage group attacks) Person B.

- Person A is excited by the scientific ideas expressed by Person B.
Person A should follow the working groups and publications
guidelines to ensure that they are not stealing Person B's work.

- Maintain professionalism during conferences or meetings. Do not
stalk or make inappropriate comments.

- In a group setting, refrain from non-inclusive jokes (e.g. against people of a certain religion or of a certain race, etc).

- Person A comes from a culture where it is common to greet another with an air kiss. Person B finds that greeting too intimate for a work setting. Person A should refrain from the kiss-and-greet method with Person B.

Grey Zone-specific resources:

- Ethics: The "Grey" Situations

- The Ethical Grey Zone

- Perceptions of Appropriate Behavior Between Students and Advisors in Astronomy

SDSS is committed to creating an inclusive, collaborative environment and endorses guidelines regarding professional behavior, bullying, and harassment of the American Physical Society (APS), and American Astronomical Society (AAS). We expect that participants in SDSS will read and abide by these guidelines, linked below.

Further Resources

- Inclusive Astronomy - The Nashville Recommendations

- AAS Ethics Code

- AAS Anti-Harassment Policy

- The APS Guidelines for Professional Conduct

- Existing Code of Conduct for SDSS

- bensbells.org - Be Kind-Ben's Bells