



**Victorian
Cardiovascular
Research Network**

VICTORIAN CARDIOVASCULAR RESEARCH NETWORK CODE OF CONDUCT

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network (Vic CVRN) is a cross-institutional, multi-disciplinary network of people with an interest in the cardiovascular research sector in Victoria. Established in 2023 with support from the National Heart Foundation of Australia (Heart Foundation) and the Stroke Foundation, the Vic CVRN aims to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration across Victorian institutions and to promote cardiovascular research for the benefit of the Victorian population.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline the rules and standards set by the Vic CVRN on how to behave whilst serving on a Vic CVRN committee or sub-committee, attending Vic CVRN events or similar, representing the Vic CVRN on an external committee, at an event organised by an external stakeholder or in any other capacity. It applies to all individuals who are registered members of the Vic CVRN through submission of the online [Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network Membership Application](#) form.

2. CORE VALUES

The Vic CVRN commits to the values of integrity, transparency, excellence, and respect for diversity. These values guide our interactions and decision-making processes.

3. MEMBER BEHAVIOUR

All members are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism, ethical integrity, and respect towards others. This includes adhering to the highest standards of honesty, avoiding any form of discrimination, and fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment. Members must not make any public comment on behalf of the network unless asked to do so by the Vic CVRN Steering Committee.

4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members must disclose any potential, actual, or perceived conflicts of interest as per the [Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network Conflict of Interest Policy](#). This includes interests that may influence or appear to influence their capacity to make impartial decisions.

5. CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary actions, including verbal or written warnings, suspension of committee duties, or termination of membership, depending on the severity of the breach.

6. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Who Can Report: Anyone can report a breach of the Code of Conduct, whether they are part of the Vic CVRN or not.

How to Report: Reports must be in writing and sent to the Chair of the Vic CVRN Executive Committee. Include what happened, when and where it occurred, who was involved or affected, and who is making the report.

Reporting Against the Chair: If the report involves the Chair, send it to the Vic CVRN Manager instead.

Ensuring Confidentiality: The reporting process will be strictly confidential to protect the privacy of all parties and encourage transparent reporting.

Investigation Process:

- The Executive Committee will choose 3 members to form an investigation panel.
- Panel members will have no conflicts of interest with the case.
- The investigation may include collecting evidence, interviewing relevant parties, and reviewing documentation, ensuring a thorough and fair process.

Decision Making: After reviewing all information and speaking with everyone involved, the panel will decide if there was a breach and what action should be taken.

Timeframe and Communication:

- The investigation will aim to be completed within a specified period, such as 30 days from receiving the report, to ensure a prompt response.
- Communication of Findings: Upon conclusion, the outcome of the investigation will be communicated to all relevant parties, maintaining confidentiality as needed. This will include a summary of the findings and any subsequent actions.

Provision for Appeal: An appeal process will be available, with clear guidelines and a set timeframe for those wishing to contest the decision.

Record-Keeping: Detailed records of the investigation will be maintained in a confidential manner, aiding in process review and potential appeals.

7. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

Committees should be structured to effectively manage their responsibilities, with clear roles and responsibilities for each member. Leaders, such as chairs and deputy-chairs, are expected to actively guide their committees in achieving their objectives.

8. MEETING MANAGEMENT

Meetings should be conducted efficiently with clear agendas distributed in advance. They should be focused on achieving the set objectives and encourage active participation from all members.

9. MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Members are encouraged to actively participate in committee activities, contributing their expertise and perspectives. Continuous professional development and learning are promoted within the network.

10. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Committees will conduct regular self-assessments to evaluate their effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and align their activities with the network's goals.

11. REVIEW, AMENDMENT, MODIFICATION OR VARIATION

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed and endorsed annually by the Vic CVRN Steering Committee. It may be amended, modified, or varied after consultation and agreement by a majority vote of Vic CVRN Steering Committee members.

12. REVIEW AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Type	Governance Policy	Function Owner	Vic CVRN
Version Number	1.0		
Approved Date	18/03/2024	Review Date	18/03/2025