



Women in Film,
Television & Media
Italia

Rules for Ethical Behaviour in the Audiovisual Field

This initiative is sponsored by Women in Film, Television & Media Italia (WIFTMI), an association that represents industry professionals and promotes gender equality and cultural diversity in all areas of the audiovisual industry.

The Proposal for the Rules for Ethical Behaviour was created to prevent abuse and promote dignity in any workplace or area of study related to the audiovisual field. This charter aims to prevent any abuse of power; whether it be sexual, physical or verbal. This is needed because:

*“All citizens have equal social dignity and are deemed equal in the eyes of the law without distinguishing sex, race, language, religion, political affiliation, or personal/social conditions.”
(Article 3 of the Italian Constitution)*

- Principles and Purposes -

Everyone has the right to work in a healthy and civil workplace.

Freedom and inspiration are the milestones of the audiovisual field's working artistic atmosphere. In order to break through boundaries, everyone must be free to create, play and experiment without hesitation or trepidation.

Thus it is necessary to create a workplace based on mutual respect and collaboration. Every employee, freelancer, executive, management personnel, intern, scholarship recipient, volunteer and consultant must understand that each person has a right to an encouraging and dignified working environment free from abuse of any kind.

Creating such an environment is the **responsibility of EVERY single person**. Sexual abuse, discrimination or aggression in our workplace cannot be ignored and must be reported, especially in the cases where the victims are fearful to speak for themselves.

Anyone who witnesses acts of abuse or discrimination must stand with the victims. This will not only support victims but also help to eradicate the cycles of inappropriate behavior.

No one should take advantage of their position of power or hierarchical superiority with subordinates to commit acts of discrimination, violence or sexual harassment.



Victims of harassment and/or any act against any culture, race, religion or sexual orientation have rights to be protected by their employers which can include the ceasing of the undesired behaviour, appropriate sanctions and legal action.

These same victims must be informed of their rights and assisted through the process of reporting the abuse.

- Definitions and Criteria -

Gender discrimination - treating an individual or a group of individuals differently in regards to gender, violating the principle of equality and disregarding dignity.

Sexual harassment - a single or repeated unwelcome act sexual in nature that includes physical touch, verbal and non verbal actions that hurts the inviolability and dignity of a person in his/her study or work place creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or abusive environment. Unwelcome and/or repeated defines a behavior as harassing, while accepted and reciprocal behaviours are defined as friendly.

Body Shaming - the action or practice of humiliating someone by making mocking or critical comments about body shape, size, make-up, hairstyle or clothing not conforming to parameters unduly established.

- Sexual Harassment includes verbal treatment of someone's body as a sexual object, with violent, inappropriate and abusive acts tended to unwanted physical contact, which may take place in the workplace or any other professional environment such as: meetings, business trips, social gatherings or other occasions which require interactions with colleagues and business partners, including social media, correspondence, phone calls. No one should feel vulnerable during a job interview, a selection, or especially during an audition, moreover if nudity of any kind is requested or expected.

- Sexual Harassment includes any behaviour which is unwanted, ambiguous or evocative, inappropriate and abusive, non consensual and not requested, particularly when addressed to a colleague in a subordinate position or when there is no clear acceptance or agreement. Such acts become aggravated in nature when they suggest negative consequences on job security and their scope or effect is that of violating the dignity of the person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or abusive climate.



Gender-based violence - any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to an individual based on their gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (specifically for 'violence against women', see art. 1, United Nations declaration re: elimination of violence against women).

Gender discrimination - "Working women are entitled to equal rights and, for comparable jobs, equal pay as men" (Article 37 of the Italian Constitution).

- The nature of our sector is creative and thus the creative process is of utmost importance. In some environments, 'personal contributions' are fundamental in the creation and realization of a project. Thus the sharing of personal experience in this atmosphere must be exchanged in free agreement, with the full trust and confidentiality that it is reserved for the creative purposes. Sharing must also be done in complete willingness and full understanding of the circumstances.

- Harassment perpetrated in the study or work place in relation to hiring, giving assignments/roles, job security, promoting, remunerating and thus creating a humiliating and threatening environment is considered of peculiar gravity.

This list is not limited only to these acts. Undesired acts and discriminations may assume different and diversified forms and may take place in the most varied circumstances. Any victim is entitled to be listened to, believed, supported and assisted in the process of verification and reporting, even when certain perceived acts of harrassment or discrimination do not seem addressed in this document.

- Scope and Commitments -

These Rules for Ethical Behaviour apply to all figures (paid and unpaid) involved in the creation, production, distribution, commercialization and promotion of the audiovisual field and everybody who is studying and working in schools and other places of continuing education.

The subscriber of this Rules adhere to its content and endeavor to:

1. Treat every person present in the workplace with respect and oppose any form of harassment, intimidation or abuse. Every person is responsible for their actions and any form of threatening, intimidating, aggressive or abusive behavior, be it physical or verbal, must be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action, depending on the act committed.



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2. Speak as a witness to acts of harassment, violence, shaming and aggression when they occur, especially when the victim is not able to speak on their own.
3. Not conceal information in regards to a person or persons being removed from the work or school environment due to abusive behavior, but rather to declare and make explicit the reason for the professional removal of the perpetrator.
4. Develop a communicative atmosphere around the policies stated in these Rules. To facilitate open discussions in order to create a trusting climate where victims can come forward without shame or fear, as well as to become vectors of change for a better work and cultural climate.
5. To take in all accusation of abuse, discrimination or harassment with prudence and to ensure they are properly addressed and not covered up.
6. To communicate, support and circulate this document so as to make it a useful instrument for all figures who work within the audiovisual sector.

- A Contact Person of Trust -

The undersigned pledge to designate an internal contact person within their company, place of work, school or structure, preferably a female identifying person – as recommended by the European Parliament – to aid in the reporting of such misconduct.

This person of trust, will take on the handling of any complaint in connection with these Rules and act as an advocate informing agreements with both the victim and the structure where the alleged acts occurred to ascertain appropriate actions to put an end to the harassing behavior in question.

The assessment of the harassment will give rise to an internal procedure which will be escalated to the appropriate authorities if necessary.

To this end, WIFTM, in collaboration with the non-profit association “Differenza Donna” and various anti-violence centers, will set up an independent **hotline** (phone and email) composed of experts and lawyers to provide individual advice and guidance, to which the victim will be directed and/or will be able to reach out autonomously.



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- **Confidentiality** -

All persons involved in reported harassment cases and with regards to what has been stated in these Rules, have the right to request for confidentiality and anonymity during the entire reporting process.

- **Positive Actions and Information** -

WIFTM is committed to regularly carrying out informative and training events in regards to 'unconscious bias,' and in creating preventative seminars in regards to harassment, discrimination and abuse in the audiovisual workplace.

To adopt this document, contact WIFTMI at info@wiftmitalia.it.