### **Code of Conduct for Public Contributors and Researchers**

#### Introduction

We value the contributions of everyone involved in our Public Involvement groups. Our aim is to create safe, inclusive, and collaborative spaces where people from all backgrounds feel respected, heard, and empowered.

This Code of Conduct sets out the shared values and behaviours expected of everyone involved in our activities, including public contributors, researchers, and staff to help build a culture of mutual respect, emotional safety, and learning.

#### 1. Respect, Inclusion and Equity

* **Embrace Diversity**: We celebrate and respect diverse perspectives, backgrounds, experiences and communication styles. Every participant should feel valued and included and should be given the time and space to comment.
* **No Discrimination**: Discrimination, harassment, or bullying based on race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic is not tolerated.
* **No Aggressive or Rude Behaviour:** Aggressive, intimidating, or disrespectful behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and may result in removal from the group.
* **Respect personal experiences**: Understand that lived experience, including of trauma, disability, marginalisation, or discrimination, may influence how people engage.
* **Ensure emotional safety**: Contributors should only share information they feel comfortable with and are not obliged to disclose health conditions or personal details. We will create space to pause or take breaks during difficult conversations.

#### 2. Integrity and Honesty

* **Be Honest**: Share accurate information and let the group know of any potential conflicts of interest.
* **Give Credit**: Properly acknowledge the work and ideas of all contributors and collaborators.

#### 3. Confidentiality and Privacy

* **Respect Privacy**: Protect the privacy and confidentiality of all members of the group, anything personal discussed stays in the meeting. Personal information should only be shared with explicit consent.
* **Secure Data**: Handle all data securely, in line with relevant data protection laws and guidelines.
* **Identity Verification:** To ensure the safety and integrity of the group, participants may be asked to verify their identity. This may include turning on their camera in online meetings to confirm who they are.

#### 4. Professionalism

* **Collaborate Kindly**: Engage in open, respectful, and constructive dialogue. Resolve disagreements amicably.
* **Be Reliable**: Try to be on time and if you are unable to attend a meeting let the organiser know as soon as possible.
* **Stay on Topic**: Talk about things relevant to the group's goals and understand if the chair moves the conversation on to allow for this.
* **No Distractions**: Phones should be silent or off during meetings. Only use them if something urgent comes up.
* **Be present:** Where possible, we would prefer cameras to be on during online meetings. If this isn’t possible, please discuss this with the meeting organiser before the meeting. Participants should remain present throughout the meeting.

#### 5. Communication

* **Feedback**: How the views of the group have been used to influence the research is important and we will always try to share this with public contributors once the project is complete
* **Regular**: Where possible, the research team will share meeting information with adequate time for diary planning. However, it is also important to note that this is not always possible due to the last-minute nature of deadlines, but this should not be a regular occurrence.
* **Accessible Communication:** Public contributors are expected to engage meaningfully with the research. The method of communication (e.g. written, verbal, digital) can be adjusted to suit individual needs, and support will be provided where possible.
* Listening: You have the right to speak and to be listened to by our staff and by each other. Please remember this is not a forum to share issues about your care and complaints. We ask that feedback is constructive and related to improving the quality of research.

***By receiving this Code of Conduct and continuing to engage with the (insert organisation), you are acknowledging and accepting the expectations and principles outlined in this policy.***