

Bylaws to GRONEN Statutes

GRONEN's Statutes are legally required by Dutch law to establish a nonprofit association. They follow a specific template provided by the Dutch government. GRONEN's Bylaws accompany these Statutes. They provide additional governance details about how GRONEN is organized and governed. Each Article, below, refers directly to the GRONEN Statutes and the Bylaws offer additions and clarifications to these Articles. GRONEN's Bylaws are ratified internally within the association and do not require approval by the Dutch government.

The bylaws consist of multiple addendums to Statutes articles (page 2-5), articles specific to the GRONEN association (page 6-10), and the GRONEN Code of Conduct (page 10-15).

Addendum (Add.) to Statute Article 2 – Purpose

- A. GRONEN's values are:
 - a) To generate organization and sustainability research with the highest levels of scholarly rigor;
 - b) To encourage innovative thinking to create transformative sustainability solutions;
 - c) To promote collegial interactions among members across all levels of the profession and across fields;
 - d) To learn from geographical, methodological, and paradigmatic diversity, while actively fostering an inclusive environment that embraces and respects diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and identities;
 - e) To develop impact through promoting engaged scholarship and teaching.
- B. The association is politically neutral and has no religious denomination. It does not have any commercial objectives.
- C. GRONEN's Purpose shall be realized through the following:
 - a) Facilitate professional interactions between researchers across all career levels and fields, researching organizations and sustainability;
 - b) Facilitate research and teaching approaches at the nexus of organizations and sustainability;
 - c) Initiate and support GRONEN's biennial conference;
 - d) Develop activities and programs through GRONEN Teams;
 - e) Initiate and support ancillary activities outside those developed by GRONEN Teams;
 - f) Strive to partner with an academic press to support publications of GRONEN members;
 - g) Raise funds to support the development of the GRONEN activities.

Add. to Statute Article 3 – Membership

- A. Members may take part in a GRONEN Team or propose forming a new GRONEN Team.
- B. Members may participate in GRONEN Conferences, Workshops, and other activities.
- C. The finance sources of the association are:
 - a) Membership fees;
 - b) Gifts, legacies, donations or other grants (see restrictions article 12.2 of Statutes);
 - c) Contributions from organizations;

- d) Earnings from the association's assets;
 - e) Possible revenues from conferences or other associations activities;
 - f) Public contributions.
- D. Liable for the association's commitments is solely the wealth of the association; the personal liability of the members is excluded.

Add. to Statute Article 4 – Termination of Membership

- A. A member can be expelled if they violate GRONEN's Code of Conduct (see Appendix 1).

Add. to Statute Article 7 – Membership fees

- A. A limited number of 2-year membership fees for PhD students and individuals from low-income countries may be waived.

Add. to Statute Article 8 – Executive board: composition and appointment

- A. The Executive Board ensures that GRONEN operates effectively and remains focused on its Purpose and Intent while adhering to ethical standards and legal requirements. The Executive Board chairs the association and oversees its management and strategic direction.
- B. The Executive Board shall be the competent body to interpret the precepts of these statutes and to cover any gaps, always subject to the legal regulations in force regarding associations.
- C. Members of the Executive Board must be GRONEN members.
- D. The GRONEN President typically will have served as Vice President to be eligible for election to the role of President.
- E. The Conference Coordinator shall have organized one GRONEN research conference (typically the most previous one) to be eligible for the role of Conference Coordinator.

In addition to the executive board and general membership meeting, the Leadership Committee is also part of GRONEN's administrative bodies.

- F. The following individuals are entitled to take part in GRONEN's Leadership Committee and vote on operational decisions:
 - a) The members of GRONEN's Executive Board;
 - b) GRONEN Team Directors and Co-directors;
- G. Leadership Committee members must be GRONEN members.
- H. Termination of membership to the Leadership Committee follows the same rules as termination of GRONEN membership (see Statutes). Additionally, membership to the Leadership Committee may be terminated for failure to fulfill expected responsibilities. Termination requires a majority vote by the Executive Board.
- I. Leadership Committee meetings are convened at least twice per year.
 - a) Leadership Committee members are summoned at least 14 days in advance by an official invitation of the Executive Board. The invitation should include agenda items.
 - b) Additional meetings of the Leadership Committee can be requested by two means: (1) the Executive Board may request a meeting; (2) the Executive Board may receive a written petition signed by at least one-third of all Leadership Committee members.

Add. to Statute Article 10 – Executive board: convening, meetings, decision-making

- A. Each Leadership Committee member has one vote. Votes can be transferred to an authorized proxy by written notification (including email) and upon notification to the Executive Board.
- B. For Teams with more than one Director, Co-directors will designate *only one* of its Team Co-directors to vote on matters at hand.
- C. All Team Co-directors (even those who are non-voting) are encouraged to attend the Leadership Committee meeting.
- D. Decisions require a simple majority of all votes.
- E. Non-participation without authorized proxy is interpreted as abstention from voting.
- F. Any member of the Leadership Committee may request a quorum call, in which case the request must be granted. A quorum consists of more than one-half of all Leadership Committee members. If no quorum call is requested, then all votes taken at a properly called meeting are considered valid.

Add. to Statute Article 12 – Executive board: duties and powers

- A. The Executive Board is responsible for making major decisions, setting policies, and ensuring that the organization meets its goals. More specifically, it is expected to:
 - a) Make day-to-day decisions about the organization;
 - b) Prepare and convene the Leadership Committee;
 - c) Prepare and convene the Strategic Advisory Council;
 - d) Nominate the organizer of the GRONEN research conference. Ideally, the selection of the next conference organizer and location is announced at the preceding conference;
 - e) Draft an annual budget and deliver a statement of accounts;
 - f) Appoint interim Leadership Committee Directors and Leadership Members, as needed, if these appointments fall outside of GRONEN's regular election cycle;
 - g) Appoint ad-hoc committees, as needed;
 - h) Adjudicate decisions on whether and who to grant a limited number of membership fee waivers;
 - i) Administer all other tasks that are not specifically allocated to other members of the Leadership Committee or another body of the association;
 - j) Provide official minutes of Leadership Committee and Strategic Advisory Council meetings within four weeks of the convention. Minutes may be conveyed by way of video transcription or digital note assistance.
 - k) Annually review GRONEN's Code of Conduct policy (see Appendix 1) and propose updates/amendments to be reviewed/approved by the Leadership Committee.
- B. The **President**'s responsibilities include the following tasks:
 - a) Provide strategic direction for GRONEN;
 - b) Represent the GRONEN Association both internally and externally;
 - c) Convene the Strategic Advisory Council;
 - d) Chair the Executive Board and Leadership Committee meetings;
 - e) Coordinate with other scholarly associations in the field;
 - f) Review existing and developing GRONEN activities;
 - g) Convene the Leadership Committee and the Nomination Committee;
 - h) Participate in other GRONEN activities as needed;

- i) Liaise with publishing companies that have formal or are seeking formal relationships with GRONEN.
- C. The **Vice President**'s responsibilities include the following tasks:
- a) Support the GRONEN President in the administration of the association's affairs;
 - b) Maintain the list of GRONEN members and liaise with the designated third party vendor that collects GRONEN membership fees;
 - c) Oversee GRONEN accounts (in coordination with the Treasurer; see Section XIII.);
 - d) Coordinate the overall activities of GRONEN Teams (see Section XI.);
 - e) Participate in the Leadership Committee and the Nomination Committee;
 - f) Participate in other GRONEN activities as needed.
- D. The **Conference Coordinator**'s responsibilities include the following tasks:
- a) Suggest suitable organizers and host institutions for the GRONEN research conference to the Executive Board;
 - b) Support the incoming GRONEN research conference organizers;
 - c) Create, document, and update the GRONEN Conference Guidelines based on the experience from previous conferences;
 - d) Participate in the Leadership Committee and the Nomination Committee;
 - e) Support the GRONEN President in the administration of the association's affairs as needed.
- E. The **Treasurer**'s responsibilities include the following tasks:
1. The treasurer is accountable for an ongoing review of GRONEN's financial affairs and an audit (if needed) of the statement of accounts.
 2. The treasurer assists in preparing the annual budget, ensuring that the budget aligns with the association's goals and is financially feasible.
 3. Other duties include:
 - a) Monitoring the association's financial health, including budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting;
 - b) Ensuring accurate and up-to-date financial records, including income, expenses, and donations. Providing regular financial reports to the Leadership Committee, outlining the association's financial status, and any concerns;
 - c) Ensuring that GRONEN complies with financial regulations and reporting requirements, including tax filings;
 - d) Overseeing the association's bank accounts and ensuring the accounts are managed responsibly;
 - e) Helping develop long-term financial strategies to secure GRONEN's future;
 - f) Working closely with the Leadership Committee, especially the Executive Board, as well as the Conference Committee, to align financial practices with GRONEN's purpose;
 - g) Along with the GRONEN Vice President, the Treasurer liaises with a third party vendor who collects the association's membership dues and ensures that membership dues are deposited into GRONEN's bank account.
- F. The **Leadership Committee** has the following responsibilities:
- a) Make proposals for new GRONEN policies and modify existing policies, including changes to the articles of association and voluntary dissolution of the association;
 - b) Make decisions on any other issue that is put on the agenda of the Leadership Committee;

- c) Appoint members to the Nomination Committee

Add. to Statute Article 18 – The general membership meeting: decision-making

- A. GRONEN's election process is designed to maintain a fair, democratic structure for leadership transitions in the organization. The positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Conference Coordinator are elected by GRONEN Members.
- B. All Executive Board members stand election every 2 years, with the Vice President from the most previous election running only against a write-in (or write-ins) for President, and the Conference Director(s) from the most previous year running only against a write-in (or write-ins) for Conference Coordinator.
- C. All Team Directors and Co-directors are elected by GRONEN Members. Team Directors and Co-directors' terms are 2 years in length, and typically can succeed themselves only twice. To maintain continuity across the team, new Directors/Co-directors typically would have had significant involvement with the team in prior years.
- D. Nominations (including self-nominations) are solicited from the membership electronically in winter of the election year with nominations being open for at least 3 weeks. Nominations for individuals who have been previously involved in the respective teams are especially encouraged so as to maintain continuity within the team. Nominations for groups of individuals who wish to serve as Co-directors for a team are also encouraged. In such instances, the group of individuals runs for the leadership position together and GRONEN Members vote yes/no for the entire group. The Early Career Team should include at least one early career scholar.
- E. Nominees should be made aware of their potential 2-year leadership commitment. Team Directors and Co-directors should also be made aware that, if elected, they are expected to remain involved in an advisory capacity for at least one year after their term ends by serving as a Team Advisor who offers Team Leaders guidance, as needed. They may also serve on the Strategic Advisory Council.
- F. Once nominations are received, the Nominations Committee finalizes the ballot based on the nominee's interest, GRONEN membership status, and experience relative to the position.
- G. All nominees on the ballot should submit a short bio and statement indicating what they hope to accomplish in their position, if elected. In instances where a group of individuals is running for a Team leadership position (as Co-directors), the group should also submit a statement of their goals.
- H. Elections typically occur in spring of the election year and are open at least three weeks. The criterion for winning the election is a majority of votes received by the deadline stated in the electronic ballot.
- I. All official announcements of elections should be made during the business meeting held at the biennial conference.
- J. In the event that the largest vote totals are equivalent for two or more candidates for Vice President or Team Director/Co-directors, a run-off vote will be conducted by the Nominations Committee within two weeks after the results of the original election.

GRONEN's administrative and advisory bodies also include the GRONEN Teams, the Strategic Advisory Council, the Conference Committee, the Code of Conduct Committee, the Nomination Committee, and ad hoc committees.

Bylaws (BL) Article 1. GRONEN Teams

- A. GRONEN Teams engage association members through workshops, meetings, and communication. They also provide Team updates at GRONEN Leadership Committee meetings.
- B. GRONEN Teams typically consist of between one to four leaders that form a Team Director and/or Co-director(s). Teams may also include volunteers who assist with team functions and serve as Team members. Team Leaders may invite guests to participate on a Team in an intermittent role. Guests need not be GRONEN members.
- C. For teams with Co-directors, Co-directors decide amongst themselves which tasks each will lead. Team Co-directors are responsible for notifying the President of their governance choices
- D. Team Directors and Co-director(s) typically have been involved actively in the Team prior to seeking nomination for their leadership role.
- E. Upon the end of their term, Team Directors and Co-directors are expected to remain involved with their respective team for at least one year by serving as Team Advisors who offer Team Leaders guidance, as needed.
- F. All GRONEN Team leaders are elected by the broader GRONEN membership.
- G. GRONEN Team leaders and members must be GRONEN members.
- H. Proposals to form and dissolve a new GRONEN Team are submitted to the Executive Board and voted on by the Leadership Committee. New Team proposals should include information about the Team's mission, responsibilities, and Team leadership.
- I. Teams that remain inactive for a period of 2 years may be removed as a GRONEN Team by the Leadership Committee.
- J. Teams typically consist of the following:
 - a) Communication Team;
 - b) Early Career Team;
 - c) Reading Group;
 - d) Teaching Sustainability Team;
 - e) Workshop Team.

BL-2. GRONEN Teams Responsibilities

- A. Team Directors have leadership responsibility for their respective teams. In the event that a Team does not have a single designated director, the Team's Co-directors will share leadership responsibility for the Team. Leaders of all GRONEN Teams are responsible for coordinating team activities, including selecting Team volunteers.
- B. Team Directors and Co-directors should encourage GRONEN members to become involved as Team volunteers and cultivate their leadership potential.
- C. GRONEN Team descriptions and responsibilities follow:
 - a) **Communication Team** – enhances the association's visibility and engagement. It disseminates information about GRONEN's activities across multiple platforms including the GRONEN website, email lists, and social media.

- b) **Early Career Team** – focuses on creating a supporting professional setting for early career scholars. At least one Team member should be an early career scholar. Team members organize periodic workshops and communication centered on issues specific to early career faculty, postdocs, and PhD students. Workshops typically involve a small group of experienced faculty coming together with early career scholars in an online form to discuss a range of career-development topics.
- c) **Reading Group** – discusses sustainability-related papers at the ‘revise & resubmit’ or ‘reject & resubmit’ stage. The Team organizes events that include manuscript authors and a group of diverse sustainability scholars who serve as discussants committed to providing constructive and developmental feedback to authors. The Team solicits authors and discussants, tracks papers that are published after receiving feedback in Team sessions, and coordinates with the Communication Team to disseminate this information.
- d) **Teaching Sustainability Team** – shares approaches to sustainability teaching. The Team provides teaching support and exchange of new teaching methods, resources, best practices and experiences among the GRONEN association especially through GRONEN’s conference and professional development workshops and informal sharing.
- e) **Workshop Team** – provides professional support to the GRONEN community more broadly. Workshop topics are centered on research skills, teaching skills, and career skills. To intensify the exchange across the GRONEN community in between the biennial research conference, the Workshop Team aims to organize at least one physical workshop in non-conference years.

BL-3. Strategic Advisory Council

- A. GRONEN’s Strategic Advisory Council includes individuals who provide guidance and advice to the GRONEN Executive Board and Leadership Committee on GRONEN’s long-term strategic goals and initiatives, helping to ensure that strategic decisions are informed and aligned with the organization’s vision.
- B. The Strategic Advisory Council consists of individuals who have previously held GRONEN Executive Board roles. Membership to the Strategic Advisory Council consists of previous GRONEN leaders who served during the prior two election cycles:
 - a) Prior 2 GRONEN Presidents;
 - b) Prior 2 Vice Presidents (post-Executive Board);
 - c) Prior 2 Conference Coordinators (post-Executive Board);
 - d) Prior 2 Treasurers
 - e) Prior 2 Directors of each GRONEN team. In instances where a Team has Co-directors, all Co-directors may serve on the Strategic Advisory Council.
- C. The Strategic Advisory Council decides via consensus or simple majority vote who will serve as chair.
- D. Strategic Advisory Council members must be GRONEN members.
- E. The GRONEN President, with the assistance of the Executive Board, is responsible for contacting eligible members of the Strategic Advisory Council annually to renew their position. Council members must opt-in to serve. Non-responding Council Members are assumed to forfeit their position.

F. Meetings

- a) Meetings take place at least once per year;
- b) The President summons the Strategic Advisory Council at least 14 days in advance. The invitation should include agenda items that are coordinated in advance with the Strategic Advisory Council Chair;
- c) Additional meetings can be requested by three means: (1) the Executive Board may request a meeting; (2) the Executive Board may receive a written petition signed by at least one-third of all Leadership Committee members; (3) the Chair of the Strategic Advisory Council may request a meeting. The President is responsible for summoning the meeting. In instances where the President is unable to fulfill this responsibility, other members of the Executive Board may summon the meeting;
- d) The Strategic Advisory Council may meet independently of the Executive Board and Leadership Committee for internal planning and discussion. The Council Chair is responsible for summoning and presiding over these meetings.

G. In instances where the Council as an advising body chooses to vote on an issue:

- a) Each Strategic Advisory Council member who served as the sole leader of their former leadership position has one vote.
- b) In instances where Strategic Advisory Council members were elected as a Co-director, the Team will designate *only one* of their Team Co-directors to vote on matters at hand.
- c) All former Team Co-directors (even those who are non-voting) are encouraged to attend Strategic Advisory Council meetings.
- d) Votes can be transferred to an authorized proxy by written notification of the Executive Board;
- e) Decisions require a simple majority of all votes;
- f) Non-participation without authorized proxy is interpreted as abstention from voting;
- g) Any member of the Strategic Advisory Council may request a quorum call, in which case the request must be granted. A quorum consists of more than one-half of all Strategic Advisory Council members. If no quorum call is requested, then all votes taken at a properly called meeting are considered valid.

H. Termination of membership to the Strategic Advisory Council follows the same rules as termination of GRONEN membership.

I. The Council's responsibilities are to offer advice to the GRONEN Executive Board and Leadership Committee. It does not develop policy but may offer policy advice that affects GRONEN's long-term strategic goals and initiatives. The Council helps ensure that strategic decisions are informed and aligned with the association's Purpose.

BL-4. Conference Committee

- A. The Conference Committee is the central organizing body for organizing and overseeing the successful execution of GRONEN's biennial conference. The Conference Committee consists of a chair or co-chairs who are selected by the Executive Board, in consultation with the Leadership Committee.
- B. Conference Committee members are selected by the Conference Committee Chair who take on larger roles related to conference planning, logistics, communication, and program development. The Committee may also choose

to work with volunteers who while not part of the planning team have important targeted tasks.

- C. The Committee coordinates with and receives support from the GRONEN Conference Coordinator.

BL-5. Conference Committee Responsibilities

A. The **Conference Director(s)** responsibilities include:

- a) Setting the overarching goals and theme of the biennial conference to align with GRONEN's mission and strategic objectives.
- b) Assembling and leading committee members who are responsible for managing aspects of the program, logistics, sponsorship and other tasks, such as selecting keynote speakers, managing the call for papers, and ensuring a diverse and relevant set of sessions.
- c) Managing the conference budget, in coordination with GRONEN's Executive Board.
- d) Attending relevant Leadership Committee meetings and informing the Leadership Committee about conference planning activities.

B. **Conference Committee** responsibilities include:

- a) Coordinating with the event planning team to secure the venue, handle contracts, and manage relationships with vendors (e.g., catering, A/V services), oversee the integration of virtual tools (for hybrid or virtual events), manage registration platforms, and ensure smooth execution of the technical aspects.
- b) Facilitating Conference Committee meetings, ensuring clear communication and progress tracking.
- c) Developing a communication plan in coordination with the GRONEN Communication Team that includes promoting the conference to target audiences, ensuring high registration and fostering a welcoming environment for attendees.
- d) Overseeing post-conference feedback from attendees, generating post-event reports, and conducting financial reconciliation.
- e) Attending relevant Leadership Committee meetings and informing the Leadership Committee about conference planning activities.
- f) Involving volunteers in conference planning who focus on more limited tasks and are not formal members of the Conference Committee.

BL-6. Code of Conduct Committee & Responsibilities

- A. The Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) helps ensure that GRONEN's Purpose and its values are upheld.
- B. The CCC shall consist of the President, Vice President, and the Chair of the Strategic Advisory Council.
- C. GRONEN's Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) is responsible for addressing violations of its Code of Conduct and will be convened only as needed.
- D. The CCC is responsible for following the procedures detailed in the association's Code of Conduct (See Appendix 1).

BL-7. The Nomination Committee & Responsibilities

A. The Nomination Committee consists of at least six members:

- a) The current President;
- b) The current Vice President;
- c) The current (or previous) Conference Coordinator or the Treasurer;

- d) At least three additional GRONEN members, who can include members of the Leadership Committee, Strategic Advisory Council, or any other GRONEN member who has actively contributed to the organization.
- B. Membership of the Nomination Committee shall be mindful of gender balance.
- C. Members of the Nomination Committee are appointed by the Leadership Committee for the duration of each election cycle.
- D. All communication and decision-making can be done virtually, e.g. through email, video conferencing, online surveys, online polls/ballots.
- E. The task of the Nomination Committee is to identify suitable candidates for vacant Executive Board and Leadership Committee positions. All candidates must agree to adhere to GRONEN's Code of Conduct (see Appendix 1).
- F. The Nomination Committee is also responsible for managing and executing GRONEN elections in accordance with GRONEN's Elections Process, which typically takes place in 6 months prior to GRONEN's biennial research conference.
- G. Committee members who are proposed for nomination may not participate in the decision making related to their nomination

BL-8. Ad-hoc Committees

- A. The Executive Board may appoint ad-hoc committees as needed to carry on the business of GRONEN.
- B. In general, the duration and terms of service, selection or appointment of Ad-hoc Committee Chair, and other provisions as described for GRONEN Teams are also applicable to these committees. However, some discretion may be exercised in view of the ad-hoc nature of these committees.

APPENDIX 1: GRONEN Code of Conduct

1. Background

In pursuing its Purpose and Intent (see Section II.), GRONEN is committed to an inclusive and productive environment, allowing all members and guests (e.g., invited speakers, guest editors, etc.) to exchange ideas and do their best work.

GRONEN seeks to ensure that all its settings and activities are free of inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to, discrimination (both intentional and unintentional), harassment, intimidation, and violence directed at individuals or groups based on, but not limited to, race or ethnicity, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, class, political affiliation, nationality or immigrant status, ability, or religion.

Leaders of GRONEN, including the Executive Board, Leadership Committee, and Strategic Advisory Council, are expected to set a high standard of behavior for the organization. They pledge to serve as ambassadors of GRONEN's Purpose and Intent (see Section II.). This requires GRONEN leaders to be prepared and fully engaged at all times, behave with respect and civility in all discussions and debate, make decisions based on the merit of issues, and act honestly, transparently and ethically. This code defines inappropriate conduct, sets forth a process for reporting such conduct, and defines how GRONEN may respond to such reports. It also lays out expectations about behavior by GRONEN leadership. By joining GRONEN and through participating in GRONEN activities, members and participants agree to comply with this code.

2. Definition of Inappropriate Conduct

Inappropriate conduct may include, but is not limited to, bullying, slurs, epithets, name calling, physical assaults or threats, unwanted touching or persistent unwanted attention or invasion of personal space, inappropriate jokes, repeated, deliberate and inflammatory discussions of divisive issues such as religion, sex, politics, culture or other topics not in any way related to GRONEN policies or agenda, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, and insults and put-downs. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is engaged in without clear affirmative consent. These actions are prohibited both when they are directed at specific individuals and groups or when they create a hostile environment. All members of GRONEN and participants in GRONEN activities agree not to engage in inappropriate conduct. Although anyone can be a victim of inappropriate conduct, GRONEN recognizes that harassment and sexual assault disproportionately target women; people of color; trans and gender non-conforming individuals; and disabled people.

3. Scope of Coverage

Violations of the Code of Conduct in GRONEN spaces (meetings, activities) may be reported to the Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) (see Sections XIX., XX) of the GRONEN Statutes). In addition, the CCC can consider complaints about members or regular conference attendees for violations of the Code of Conduct that occurred outside of GRONEN spaces if there is public and substantial evidence of professional misconduct that has been sanctioned by an employer. GRONEN will not initiate investigations of behavior that occurs outside of GRONEN spaces.

4. GRONEN's Response to Inappropriate Conduct

As an organization dedicated to fostering excellence and the exchange of ideas, GRONEN takes seriously any report, formal or informal, of inappropriate conduct related to GRONEN activities and will investigate any formal report. We will make every effort to ensure that this commitment is manifest in the policies, programs, and practices of the organization. GRONEN expressly prohibits retaliation against individuals who report inappropriate conduct and will take action against those who retaliate.

5. Code of Conduct Committee

GRONEN's Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) will be convened when a problem occurs. It shall consist of the President, Vice President, and the Chair of the Strategic Advisory Council. It will elect a Chair for the term of one year. Members of this committee are required to disclose any conflicts of interest in particular activities undertaken. In the event that the CCC is not gender-balanced, additional members of the SAC will be appointed to create gender balance.

6. External Consultant

GRONEN will engage an External Consultant, who is not a member of GRONEN, and is selected and approved by the CCC, if the CCC deems an outside party is necessary for investigation and deliberation. This consultant will be compensated on an as-needed basis and will have experience responding to and investigating inappropriate conduct claims within organizations.

7. Reporting a CCC Violation

Reports of inappropriate conduct or retaliation can be made via email to any member of the Executive Board. The Executive Board will notify the CCC Chair. The Chair and the other CCC members will then determine if the matter needs to be referred to the external consultant for review.

The process of reporting differs depending on whether the violation occurred in GRONEN spaces.

8. Reporting Violations that Occur in GRONEN Spaces

Individuals in GRONEN spaces who experience or witness a violation of the code of conduct in GRONEN spaces have the following options:

- a) Request a confidential consultation with the CCC Chair with a request for resources, information about reporting/resolution options, and to seek support. Reports will be held confidential to the extent allowed by law. (Some behaviors will have to be reported to appropriate authorities, such as those involving a minor or those involving criminal behavior.)
- b) Make a confidential inquiry to the CCC Chair with a request for screening/review and recommendation for resolution (e.g., through a mediated meeting) with the option, but without obligation, to file a formal report.
- c) Make a formal report to the CCC Chair with a request for an investigation or fact-finding inquiry, with possible sanctioning of the accused party. All formal reports will result in a formal investigation unless withdrawn by the complainant.

Elements of a Formal Report. A report should include, to the extent possible, the following information in writing:

- a) The name and contact information of the complainant;
- b) The name and contact information of the subject of the complaint;
- c) A statement that other legal or institutional proceedings involving the alleged conduct have not been initiated or, if initiated, the status of such proceedings;
- d) A full description of the conduct alleged to have violated the code of conduct including the sources of all information on which the allegations are based;
- e) Copies of any documents supporting the allegations;
- f) Names and contact information of potential witnesses/references.

Investigation/Fact-Finding. Formal reports containing the details noted above will be investigated by the CCC and, if necessary, an External Consultant. The accused party will be notified of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. Each party's statement will be shared with the other. Both parties may provide contact information for individuals to serve as witnesses/references.

Timeframe. Formal Reports (other than those addressing violations occurring during the Fall Conference) will be acknowledged as soon as possible by the chair of the CCC and responded to within 30 days. The chair will respond to all reports at the conference.

Resolution, Outcomes. The CCC will keep a written record of the process and submit a written final report that will be shared with both parties. Potential outcomes of investigations include the following:

- a) Negative/Inconclusive Finding: If the CCC's finding is inconclusive or negative, the CCC Chair will inform both parties of the finding in writing.
- b) Finding of Code of Conduct Violation: If the CCC finds that a violation has occurred (and has recommended the appropriate sanctions), the CCC Chair will convey the finding and the sanctions in writing in the form of a recommendation to the CCC. Once reviewed and approved (with or without amendment) by the CCC, the CCC Chair will inform both parties of the finding and sanctions in writing.

9. Reporting Violations that Occur Outside of GRONEN Spaces

Individuals who wish to report a publicly documented violation of the Code of Conduct that occurred outside of GRONEN spaces should make a formal report via a form on the GRONEN website. The formal report should include the following information in writing:

- a) The name and contact information of the complainant;
- b) The name and contact information of the subject of the complaint;
- c) A full description of the conduct alleged to have violated the code of conduct and the sanctions levied by another organization (employer, professional organization, or legal body);
- d) Copies or links to any publicly available documents supporting the allegations.

In cases of behavior that occurred outside of GRONEN spaces, the CCC will review all relevant documents that are public or can be obtained through a request related to the situation. This may include articles in the media, published findings from other organizations, and reports that can be made public on request. GRONEN CCC will not conduct original fact-finding activities for reports of misconduct outside of GRONEN spaces, but they can opt to consult with the external consultant or others when deciding whether to impose sanctions.

10. Sanctions

Based on a finding of inappropriate conduct, inside or outside GRONEN spaces, sanctions may include but are not limited to any of the following:

- a) Removing the party from a meeting or event without further advance notice or refund
- b) Prohibiting participation in future GRONEN events
- c) Revoking membership or removal from leadership positions
- d) Rescinding awards
- e) Barring from leadership positions
- f) Reporting to appropriate legal authority and/or to that person's home institution
- g) A public statement from the Leadership Committee acknowledging the findings and sanctions

11. Appeal

Either party may appeal the findings of the investigation within 30 days of receiving the report. Appeals will be made to the past President (if not a member of the CCC), who may form an appeal committee. The Strategic Advisory Council serves as the adjudication body for appeals. Strategic Advisory Council members who also serve on the CCC cannot be part of the appeal process. Grounds for appeal include a claim of procedural error, substantive or significant, new evidence which was not previously available, evidence of the use of impermissible criteria or objective evidence of bias in the fact-finding and decision process.

12. Informal Ethics

As GRONEN's Code of Conduct is implemented, leadership will reinforce the code via informal ethics components. Below is a list of options suggested by Eden (2024)¹:

- a) Role models and heroes: GRONEN should consider integrity-based awards to encourage role models. Also helpful is some form of recognition of individuals who demonstrate one or more of the values of the organization.
- b) Norms: GRONEN should have norms that support a culture of integrity. Examples may include discussions of the Code of Conduct, speakers on ethics topics such as "small cheats/weak cheating." Both proscriptive and prescriptive norms should be discussed. The organization should encourage "when in doubt, give a shout" (i.e., contact an ethics counsellor if members have questions).
- c) Rituals: The organization should create rituals out of ethical compliance activities such as signing the Code of Conduct. Ethics should be celebrated in the organization, for example, by setting up rituals, integrity awards and case competitions. An endowed program in ethics could be another example. The organization could also share stories about ethical situations and how they were handled, without naming names. These stories could be shared during orientation and training sessions.
- d) Myths/stories: GRONEN should create a way to tell its Code of Conduct story, for example, by setting up an integrity website, creating a history of its ethical activities.

¹ Eden, L. Virtuous circles in the academy: insights from AIB's ethical organizational culture. *J Int Bus Policy* (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-024-00198-z>

- e) Language: GRONEN should create a communications strategy using messages, newsletters and signage to communicate its ethical culture throughout the organization and to its stakeholders.

13. Policy Updates and Approval

This Code policy and its enforcement will be reviewed by the Executive Board on an annual basis, updated/amended with the Leadership Committee approval as deemed necessary and appropriate and without notice.