



Code of Conduct for AirTree Ventures

Purpose

This is the code of conduct for AirTree Ventures (**AirTree**). Our goal is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for people who share our values of tolerance and inclusivity. To that end, we have adopted this code of conduct in order to support and welcome everyone to our community, particularly members of marginalised groups, including people from marginalised racial or ethnic groups, women and non-binary people, sexual minorities including gay, lesbian, trans, bisexual, and asexual people, disabled people, neurodivergent people, marginalised religious groups, higher weight people, parents and caregivers, and members of lower status.

We recognise that the power relationship between investors and the people they may invest in is heavily weighted in favour of the investor, similar to the employer/employee or teacher/student relationship, even when no investment has been made (yet). As such, we are especially aware of the potential for abuse or harm by the more powerful person, the investor or anyone who influences the investment decision. We encourage investors to take into account this imbalance of power in all of their interactions with founders and be especially careful to avoid using their power to coerce the founder, intentionally or unintentionally.

Scope

We expect everyone associated with AirTree to abide by this code of conduct, including employees, contractors, founders, funders, investors, mentors, advisors, students, volunteers, speakers, and attendees of our events. This code of conduct applies to all of these people in any setting associated with AirTree, including offices, work events, social outings, conferences, homes, lodging, phone calls, video conferences, emails, chat, social media, blogs, or other online communication. AirTree may take action against a person based on other information or behaviour outside the community if, in our judgement, there is an unacceptable risk to its membership from that person.

Unacceptable behaviours

Discrimination

- Comments or behaviour that discriminates against, stereotypes, or harms members of marginalised groups, including people from marginalised racial or ethnic groups, women and non-binary people, sexual minorities including gay, lesbian, trans, bisexual, and asexual people, disabled people, neurodivergent people, marginalised religious groups, higher weight people, parents and caregivers, and members of lower status. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Disparaging remarks about marginalised racial or ethnic groups

- Racial or ethnic slurs
- Misogynist comments
- Homophobic or transphobic comments or slurs
- Deliberate misgendering (e.g., using different pronouns than requested)
- Deliberate use of names people have asked others not to use
- Negative comments about body size or shape
- Discriminating against pregnant people or mothers
- Discriminatory comments against members of marginalised religions as a group
- Negative comments or discriminating based on age or family role

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which a reasonable person in the circumstances would find humiliating, intimidating or offensive. Sexual harassment doesn't have to be repeated or ongoing. Sexual harassment takes many forms, from sexual comments to actual physical violence. Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

- Creating a sexualised environment. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Sexual or sexually suggestive comments, jokes, insults, metaphors, pranks or gestures.
 - Discussing the sexual attractiveness or exploits of yourself or others, even if intended to be a compliment
 - Unsolicited comments on someone's body to them or to others, even if intended to be a compliment
 - Unsolicited comments on someone's self-presentation (dress, shoes, makeup, hair) that are sexually suggestive
 - Detailed discussion of sexual preferences or activities (i.e., mentioning the gender or existence of your partner(s) is fine, discussing sexual preferences in hair colour or body shape or type of sexual activity is not)
 - Displaying sexual images where others can see them, including your personal computing devices if others might be able see their screen
 - Viewing or discussing sexually explicit or arousing content
 - Patronising or discussing personal patronisation of sex workers (use caution and judgement when discussing sex workers or sex work in other contexts)
 - Meeting in sexualised environments (e.g., strip clubs, dance clubs, pick-up bars)
 - Organising business-related activities which require less or no clothing (e.g., meeting in hot tubs or saunas, throwing company pool parties)
 - Creating an environment where people feel pressured to flirt, allow touch, dress in a sexualised manner, or otherwise engage in sexual or sexualised activity (e.g. in order to maintain access to networks or funding)
 - Requesting others to keep your sexual activity secret or help cover it up
- Sexual advances when they are clearly unwelcome, or in a context where it is difficult for the recipient to say no to your advances. Specifically, this code of conduct bans all sexual advances initiated by a person with significant power over the recipient, such as a person who influences funding decisions towards a person seeking funding, a conference organiser towards a speaker, or a co-worker towards another co-worker if they have influence over their career advancement. We strongly recommend that people in positions of greater power turn down sexual advances from someone they hold significant power over. Sexual advances (or circumstances which may give rise to sexual advances) include but are not limited to:
 - Invitations to meet one-on-one in a situation not suited for business or for mainly non-business purposes (e.g., meeting at a bar with loud music and

- dim lighting, meeting and talking about business for 5 minutes, then asking personal questions)
 - Invitations to meet one-on-one in a private space such as a hotel room, home, apartment, home office, or an office when no one else is likely to be present
 - Showing up uninvited to someone else's private space, such as their hotel room, their home, apartment, and home office
 - Making sexual comments, in person or by sending text messages, emails, voice messages, letters, or other form of communication
 - Sending sexual photos or videos or sounds, of yourself or others
 - Unsolicited questions about someone's marital or relationship status or sexual preferences, directly or indirectly (e.g., "do you have kids," "will your boyfriend be going to the party," "do you like girls")
 - Unsolicited sharing of intimate information (e.g., "my wife and I barely have sex," "don't have kids, it kills your sex life")
 - Implying sexual availability (e.g., "my wife will be out of town," "I get lonely in my hotel room")
 - Sexually themed gifts
 - Unsolicited private messages on social networks (if you must send a private message, ask publicly first if you may send a private message)
 - Significant non-consensual escalations of intimacy without a business purpose (e.g., after receiving a group business email, replying to just one person to ask a personal question not directly related to business)
- Sexual assault or coercion, including sexual activity under pressure or threat, for a reward, or in a context where it is difficult for the recipient to say no. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Any sexual activity or touch without the express consent of all participants
 - Implicitly or explicitly requesting sexual activity in exchange for reward including funding, referrals, future employment, promotion, or invitation to exclusive events
 - Retaliating, threatening to retaliate, or implying retaliation against someone for refusing sexual advances (e.g. defaming, firing, withholding promotion, blocking interviews, giving negative reviews, or blocking funding)
 - Beginning a sexual relationship with someone you have significant power over
 - Non-consensual sexual activity of any kind, including with people you know or suspect to be underage, trafficked, forced, coerced, threatened, unconscious, mentally impaired, or unable to say no easily for whatever reason
 - Creating an environment where people feel pressured to use drugs or alcohol, such as refilling someone's drink when they aren't looking, pressuring people to use drugs or drink more, engaging in drinking games, asking why people aren't drinking or using drugs, withholding rewards if people don't drink or use drugs
 - Giving anyone any drug (including alcohol) without their fully informed consent (exception for medical personnel or life-threatening emergencies)
 - Deliberately exposing one's genitals
 - Engaging in sexual activity when you know that other non-consenting people can see or clearly hear it
 - Using threats to reveal sexual activity, information, or photos to control someone
- Unwanted physical touch, restraint, assault, or threats. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Deliberate touch that is inappropriate for a business relationship (e.g. intentionally brushing up against someone, touching someone to get their attention unnecessarily, caressing someone's face)

- Physical violence, threats of physical violence, or incitement of physical violence towards any individual or marginalised group
- Encouraging self-harm
- Physically pinning or trapping people (e.g., standing so that someone can't get out from behind a desk, pinning someone to the wall, or standing in a doorway and refusing to move)
- Not allowing a person to leave a room, vehicle, seat, or other space, except in an emergency or to prevent greater harm
- Harassment and stalking . Harassment and stalking includes but is not limited to:
 - Seeking out and/or publishing private information without consent such as previous names, home address, or names of family members ("doxxing")
 - Staring, leering, following without consent
 - Photography or video or sound recording of someone that is done to make someone feel surveilled, or surreptitiously, or when there is an expectation of privacy, or when the subject has explicitly asked to not be photographed or recorded (we highly recommend asking for consent for all recording)
 - Repeated (rejected) requests for dates
 - Continued contact after a request to stop contact, even if for some positive purpose such as apologising or making amends
 - Encouraging or enabling harassment by others

Other Unacceptable Behaviours

- Attempts to circumvent or weaken this code of conduct or its purpose. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Advocating for or supporting any unacceptable behaviour
 - Minimising, excusing, or defending any unacceptable behaviour (e.g. rape apology, blaming the victim, tone policing of victims)
 - Prioritising the comfort of certain persons over the safety of marginalised groups
 - Advocating for or supporting the oppression of marginalised groups
 - Criticising targets of oppression for having an inappropriate emotional state in response to an unacceptable behaviour (tone policing)
 - Deliberately making a false report alleging a breach of this code of conduct
 - Deliberately and repeatedly acting in a manner, either directly or indirectly, which is contrary to the terms (or the spirit) of this code of conduct
 - Threatening, rewarding, or otherwise coercing someone to not report or lie about a violation of the code of conduct
 - Engaging in any unacceptable behaviour satirically or ironically if you are not a member of the marginalised group being mocked (e.g. ironic racism by someone not a member of the targeted racial group, a man imitating a misogynist person)

Reporting and enforcement

We strongly encourage everyone to report any violations of this code of conduct in writing to the Code of Conduct Committee. We expect people in positions of power to be especially conscientious in reporting any violations they see, with the consent of the marginalised person involved, as they are less vulnerable to retaliation or pressure than people with less power. NOTE: do not make reporting mandatory for anyone; this has many documented failure modes and ends up creating a less safe environment than one in which people can use their own judgement to decide when to report.

Community members can report violations to the AirTree Code of Conduct Committee:

The code of conduct committee consists of [Craig Blair](#), and [James Cameron](#) from AirTree, and [Susan Horlin](#) from PwC.

If the person who violated the Code is on the committee, they will recuse themselves from handling that report.

We aim to acknowledge reports within 2 business days, and to complete handling a report within 10 business days. Actions we may take in response to a report include:

- Nothing
- Verbal warning
- Temporary ban from certain spaces or forums
- Permanent ban from certain spaces or forums
- Removal of responsibilities (e.g. replacement of the investor director or board observer from the board)
- Termination of employment
- Report to legal authorities

If possible and appropriate, we will make a statement about the report and any actions we took available to everyone who is aware of the original incident. We strive to protect reporters or targets from retaliation whenever possible.

License

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