

MBDH Event Code of Conduct

Expected Behavior

The Midwest Big Data Hub (MBDH) workshops and conferences are designed to provide learning opportunities and exchange knowledge across communities. Therefore, this is a harassment-free space, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and ability. Each person should feel valued in their ideas, styles, and viewpoints. Although not all viewpoints will align with our own personal viewpoints, we ask that all participants respect one another with differences in opinions. It is unacceptable to personally attack, use derogatory language, or use disruptive behavior during hosted events. Most importantly, we ask that all voices be heard, we encourage hearing new perspectives and activity listening, and we ask that all participants be inclusive in their interactions.

Responding to Unacceptable Behavior

Participants who are asked to stop their harassment behavior (including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault) are expected to comply immediately. Any member of the MBDH community can issue a verbal warning to participants whose behavior violates the anti-harassment policy. The verbal warning will be documented, and if the participant does not comply, removal from the event will happen and a record of the complaint will be issued through the host institution's protocols.

The MBDH expectation is that during all hosted events, participants will be respectful, clear, professional, inclusive, understanding, and accommodating to all participants' opinions in all environments where science is conducted. In failure to do so, we reserve the right to remove the disruptive participant from the event and action will be taken.

Reporting Process

If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or witness any such behavior during in-person or virtual MBDH events and the offender does not immediately comply with a request to stop their harassment behavior, please notify the event contacts: John MacMullen, MBDH Executive Director (wjohn@illinois.edu), and/or Armgard Haken, MBDH Associate Project Manager (aehaken@illinois.edu). If someone is in immediate danger at an in-person event or if an immediate and serious safety concern exists, call 911.

Confidentiality: If the person raising the concern, any identified individual target, or the accused or a witness asks an event contact for confidentiality of their identity while the concern is being addressed, reasonable steps will be taken to maintain it. However, if required otherwise (by law, safety, an investigation, or disconnecting/removing a participant from the

event), MBDH will not maintain confidentiality. Retaliation against any identified individual target, witness, or anyone who raises or helps resolve a conduct concern is considered a serious violation of this code of conduct.

When a conduct concern under this policy is raised to the event contact(s), the event contact(s) will first attempt a “simple resolution,” if possible, by communicating privately and separately with the individuals most directly involved and providing a warning and clear conduct instructions to the person accused of a violation of this policy. If the accused participant complies and the harassment behavior stops, the incident will be considered to have been resolved. If a simple resolution is not successful, the event contact(s), upon taking measures to verify that a violation of this code of conduct occurred, will impose the consequences detailed below. If it is determined that the reporting process was abused through false reporting, especially to retaliate or exclude, the participant making the false report will be subject to the same consequences detailed below.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

Upon determining that this code of conduct was violated, the event contact(s) will disconnect the violating participant from the event in the case of a virtual event, or have the violating participant removed from the event in the case of an in-person event. These consequences will also be implemented for any participant who uses generally disruptive behavior during the event and fails to stop their disruptive behavior immediately upon request.

If a disconnected/removed participant appeals the decision on whether a violation of this policy occurred and it is found that the violation decision was made in error, the accused participant will be refunded the event’s registration fee, if any. If, however, the decision of violation is upheld, no refund of the registration fee will be made.

Tips to Avoid the Likelihood of Zoombombing Disruptions

As we all have adopted the virtual event or workshop model over the last year, the Midwest Big Data Hub would like to provide some recommendations to make sure your Zoom event is as secure as possible for upcoming and future events. Although these items reference the Zoom meeting and webinar web conferencing services, these recommendations may be updated in the future to reflect new ways of handling unwanted Zoom visitors, also known as “Zoombombing.”

Obfuscation:

Avoid making the URL easy to find through basic web searchers and making it prominent on advertisements. We recommend hiding the session's URL by creating a shortened URL to help disguise the Zoom link.

Registration:

Register attendees ahead of time to collect names and emails of all participants. Doing this allows for vetting of registrants before they receive the link to the session. Once approved, the registrant receives a link to join the session. We recommend for webinar hosts to uncheck the "Allow registrants to join from multiple devices" option to prevent disruptive attendees from using the link to make multiple connections.

Authentication:

Zoom offers the option of requiring authentication via <https://zoom.us/>. This authentication allows for limited disruptive incidents.

Waiting Room:

Waiting rooms are suggested if registration is not required. The waiting rooms allow for vetting by the host and co-host. Hosts and co-hosts can admit attendees at their discretion. We highly recommend the Waiting Room feature to be used for all sessions, especially any session without registration.

Telephone Calls:

This feature allows users to dial in and make audio-only connections. We highly recommend collecting phone numbers at registration if you are going to allow attendees to dial in. Encourage attendees to download the Zoom app on their smartphones.

Screen Sharing:

This feature allows attendees to share content from their display. We recommend configuring the session such that only the host and co-host/panelist can share. We recommend configuring the session settings beforehand to select "only the user who is sharing can annotate" option on the session creator's account settings. This will prevent display sharing from unwelcome guests.

Recording:

This feature records audio, video, and shared content. We recommend recording all sessions. In the event of a disruption, this can provide valuable information for the investigation. We also recommend displaying participants' names in the recording to help identify disruptive attendees.

How to respond to a disruptive event:

The host should immediately end the session and notify all attendees who were there why the session was canceled. After a Zoom disruption of a discriminatory nature, the host institution should issue a statement detailing the event and the institution's planned response.

Report the incident:

Report the disruptive behavior to your institution's Offices of Diversity and Ethics and the Midwest Big Data Hub (info@midwestbigdatahub.org).