

Youth RISE's ethical
guidelines

**FOR
RESEARCH
AND
ADVOCACY**



WHY DO WE NEED ETHICAL GUIDELINES?

As advocates of evidence-based and human rights drug policy and harm reduction services for young people, Youth RISE is committed to promoting and conducting research and activities which put the safety and well-being of YPWUD (Young People Who Use Drugs) and other key populations as a priority.

Ethical guidelines also help to promote trust between key populations, advocates, researchers, donors, stakeholders and other civil society organisations. As well, this helps to ensure that studies are conducted under proper ethical circumstances and in a rigorous manner, thus, the results are reliable and, if desired, the research could be submitted to a scientific journal.

For that reason, we have created this guideline which aims to ensure ethical and responsible behaviour among IWG members and the management team, to protect the interest of those being studied or advocated by ensuring their rights, interests and integrity.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR ADVOCACY:

While advocating with YPWUD and other key populations is essential to prioritize:

1. Non-discrimination:

Advocates should not discriminate against any person based on their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation or use of substances.

2. Honesty: Advocates must be truthful in all aspects of their work, including their advocacy messages, activities, and relationships with stakeholders.

3. Confidentiality: Advocates should respect the privacy of individuals and organizations they serve and maintain confidentiality when appropriate.

4. Transparency: Advocates should disclose any significant conflicts of interest that may influence their advocacy work.

5. Professionalism: Advocates should conduct their work in a professional manner, adhering to high ethical standards and taking responsibility for their actions. This includes being aware of power dynamics and preventing exploitation of any type. Therefore advocates should be transparent about goals, methods, and potential benefits and continuously should assess power dynamics within the advocacy group and work to redistribute power when necessary, ensuring fair representation and decision-making.

6. Respect: Advocates should respect the dignity and rights of all individuals and groups and should value diversity and cultural differences.

7. Accountability: Advocates should be responsible for their actions and be accountable to their constituents and stakeholders.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR ADVOCACY:

8. Respect for autonomy:

Advocates must acknowledge the individual's right to make their own decisions and choices about their own lives. As well, advocates should provide adequate information to allow individuals to make informed decisions.

9. Community engagement:

Advocates should always ensure that advocacy is relevant and responsive to community needs and priorities.

It is also important in any case of advocacy interventions (meetings, conferences, trainings, workshops, among others), to take into account:

- 1. Avoid stigmatising** and discrimination through language, actions, or lack of action/consideration.
- 2. Create a supportive environment** where YPWUD feel comfortable without fear of possible repercussions.
- 3. Respect for Diversity:** do not practice, facilitate, or collaborate in any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, drug use, religion, national origin, political belief, mental or physical disability, migration status, or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition, or state.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR ADVOCACY:

4. Recognize cultural, individual, role differences, and power imbalances and behave appropriately to give recognition and actively end imbalances.

5. Actively work towards Inclusivity and accessibility. Ask about providing accommodations to reduce barriers for disabled and neurodivergent people in advocacy spaces. Foster a culture of mutual support that accepts different capacities depending on the advocacy intervention and offer alternatives when needed.



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS:

While doing research with YPWUD and other key populations the following is needed:

1. **Consent:** Before conducting any research, it is important to obtain the informed consent of the participants. This means that participants understand the purpose of the research and what is expected of them, and that they are participating voluntarily.
2. **Confidentiality:** At any time researchers should ensure that the identity of participants is kept confidential and that any data collected is only accessible to the research team if permission was given.
3. **Anonymity:** Participants should be given the option to remain anonymous during the research process. This means that their identity is not revealed and thus they cannot be identified.
4. **Privacy:** The participants' privacy is respected at all times, and their personal information is not disclosed without their consent.
5. **Respect:** At any time researchers should demonstrate respect for the dignity and well-being of all participants, and ensure that they are not harmed in any way as a result of their participation in the research.
6. **Informed consent:** Participants should be given clear explanations of the research process, including any potential risks involved, and be given the opportunity to ask questions and clarify any concerns they may have.
7. **Right to withdraw:** Participants should have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, without any negative consequences, and should be made aware of this right.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS:

8. Use of data: Researchers should be transparent in their use of collected data, and ensure that it is used only for the purpose for which it was collected. Any data that is not relevant or necessary should be destroyed or deleted.

9. Conflict of Interest: Researchers are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest (financial, personal or professional) when publishing their research, to avoid potentially influence or bias while conducting research.

10. Community Engagement: Researchers should involve the community in the research process from planning to implementation. Also is needed to inform the community regarding what was done with the data collected and to share the findings with the community members.

Informed Consent

WHO's informed [consent template](#)

