Code of Conduct and Social Media Policies

Background:
In a recent Survey of Meeting Experiences (SOME) of colleagues in STEM careers, 60% of the respondents reported that they had experienced harassment at a meeting at some point in their career. We want to offer a welcoming environment at all BSA-related activities and meetings, fostering an atmosphere that encourages the free exchange of ideas and expression. A number of scientific societies and associations have adopted Codes of Conduct for their annual meetings. We do not have one, although it has been discussed tangentially and comes up occasionally. These policies often consist of multiple parts dealing with:

1) Harassment and Discrimination
2) Social Media
3) Conflict of Interest Disclosure
4) Reporting an Incident

Here are some examples from other societies:

http://www.evolutionmeetings.org/conference-policies.html

http://meetings.aaas.org/policies/

www.geosociety.org/GSA/Events/Conduct.aspx

http://www.ams.org/about-us/governance/policy-statements/welcoming-environment-policy

http://www.aapt.org/aboutaapt/organization/code_of_conduct.cfm

We proposed adopting the following Code of Conduct or a something similar in nature.

The BOTANY conference is committed to providing a safe and productive meeting environment that fosters open dialogue and the exchange of scientific ideas, promotes equal opportunities and treatment for all participants, and is free of harassment and discrimination. All registrants, guests, volunteers, exhibitors, Society staff, service providers, and others in attendance are expected to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Disruption of presentations at oral or poster sessions, in the exhibit hall, on field trips, or at other events organized by the BOTANY conference at the meeting venue, hotels, or other meeting-contracted facilities is unacceptable. Harassment of any participant (attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, staff member, service provider, organizer, or meeting guest) will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior includes (but is not limited to) unwanted verbal attention, unwanted touching, intimidation, stalking, shaming, or bullying. Discrimination on the basis of gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, physical appearance, race, religion, national origin, or ethnicity will not be tolerated. Harassment presented in a joking manner is still harassment and constitutes unacceptable behavior. Retaliation for reporting harassment is also unacceptable, as is reporting an incident in bad faith.

People wishing to report a violation of this Code of Conduct should immediately contact any member of the Program Organizing Committee, by phone or in person. Incidents of harassment and discrimination are taken extremely seriously. Confidentiality will be maintained unless disclosure is legally required.

The meeting organizers, Society staff and Society executive officers reserve the right to enforce this code of conduct in any manner deemed appropriate. Anyone violating the code of conduct may be: (a) asked to stop, (b) expelled from the meeting (without refund), and/or (c) prohibited from attending future meetings. Establishing this code of conduct is intended to prevent incidents of harassment, discrimination, and violence, and to maintain the high quality of scientific discourse that our members have come to expect from BOTANY conferences.

Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety, or a criminal act is expected to contact 911. Those witnessing a potential criminal act should also take actions necessary to maintain their own personal safety.

Social Media Policy Examples:
http://plantbiology.aspb.org/attend/social-media-policy/

http://www.intlpag.org/2015/attend/social-media

http://meetings.aaas.org/policies/social-media-policy/

BOTANY Conference Social Media Policy

BOTANY permits and encourages the use of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and blogging as a way to summarize, highlight, excerpt, review, critique, and/or promote the presented materials, poster and exhibit materials, and the conference in general, provided that:

1. the material is not shared in full, and
2. the author or speaker is referenced and cited appropriately in each case.

Please keep in mind that our speakers have invested many hours in the research and development of this material and US copyright laws apply.

If a Presenter does not want information from his/her presentation to be broadcast, they should make this clear in their talk/poster and we ask that attendees respect their wishes.

Out of respect for the other participants, we ask that electronic devices be silenced, though they need not be turned off, so that they may be used to follow along with the materials, tweet, or take notes in accordance with the above stated social media policy.

We Encourage You To:

- Blog, post, and tweet highlights of and comments on the conference.

- Suggest sessions and workshops to attend and events to enjoy; discuss favorite speakers and posters; chat about products and services in the Exhibit Hall; post job openings and opportunities.
- Request the permission of speakers if you would like to take their photograph before or after a session.
- Provide feedback to Show Management and the Organizing Committee (perhaps discuss topics and/or speakers of interest for next year's conference, make suggestions for sessions, or comment on the format.)
- Keep criticism constructive!

Please Refrain From:

- Capturing, transmitting, or redistributing the bulk of the material presented in a session. Doing so infringes on the intellectual property rights of the speakers.
- Blogging, posting, and/or tweeting about the content of a plenary lecture, scientific session, workshop, etc. when the organizer or speaker has explicitly requested that some or all of the information presented is not to be captured or shared.
- Engaging in rudeness or personal attacks.