The Code of Ethics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences

Bratislava August 2025

Preamble

The Slovak Academy of Sciences and its organizations accept their institutional responsibility for the implementation of national and international standards of integrity and ethics in science and research.

The Code of Ethics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (hereinafter referred to as "the Code") is a collective expression of ethical commitments and requirements of research integrity, which are binding for all scientific, professional, and other employees of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and its organizations, including persons in doctoral studies.

The mission of this Code is to contribute to the general and integral compliance with demanding ethical requirements, as well as to the prevention of unethical and dishonest conduct and behavior in the field of science, research, and development conducted at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and thus to increase their quality and credibility in the domestic and international context.

The Code adopts the requirements of the Code of Research Integrity and Ethics in Slovakia[1] as a minimum standard and thus follows the legislation of the Slovak Republic, legally binding acts of the European Union, and international treaties and agreements, in particular the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. This standard is supplemented in the Code by specifics arising from the research context of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The Code applies and develops generally accepted ethical values, principles, and standards in the field of science, research, and development, as well as in academic, managerial, and organizational activities. The principles of academic integrity and ethics are an integral part of studies and education because they are an organic component of the holistic system of science and research.

1. Main principles and definitions

1. In addition to the integral methodological, technical, technological, didactic, and other requirements, work in the field of science, research, and development also has the requirement of moral character. It is based on the very nature of science and determined by the importance and contribution of professional and expert activities to the individual and the entire society. It is concerned with ethical discernment and guidance from the perspective of ethical values, principles, and norms generally respected in a democratic society.

2. The main principles of research integrity are accountability, honesty, respect, and reliability.

3. Research integrity is a fundamental prerequisite of quality scientific work; it comprises consistent adherence to the highest professional and moral standards. In this document, research integrity is defined as the summary of scientific integrity and academic integrity.

4. Scientific integrity is a set of principles and ethical values, deontological commitments, and professional standards that form the basis for responsible and fair conduct and behavior of those who conduct, fund, or evaluate scientific research, as well as the institutions that support and conduct it. Scientific integrity is a primary condition for quality research work, consisting of

[1] *Code of Research Integrity and Ethics in Slovakia* approved by Government Resolution No. 510/2024 on 28. 8. 2024, available at https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/KODEX_sk.pdf

strict adherence to the highest professional, moral, and ethical principles, standards, transparency, conducting research critically, without bias, and with absolute integrity in the practice and administration of research by individuals or research institutions.

5. Academic integrity is a set of values and rules regarding study and education that ensure that study and education are based on the principles of responsibility and honesty. Integrity is related to the morality and deontology of the students and teachers as well as the educational institution, based on good study and educational practice.

6. Good scientific and research practice is the international ethical and scientific standard for the planning, implementation, evaluation, and publication of the results of science, research, and development, as well as the ethical and scientific standard for the conduct and behavior of all actors in these fields.

2. General ethical values, principles, and standards

The general ethical values that are respected and implemented in research, development, innovation, teaching, and learning activities, as well as in managerial and support activities are:

a) freedom of scientific inquiry, research, development, study, and educational activities and the associated responsibility toward the SAS and its organizations, as well as toward individuals, groups, and the entire society,

b) independence of science, research, and education from political, ideological, or religious influences,

c) human dignity as the basis of human rights, civil liberties, and the prerequisite for the existence, functioning, and development of a democratic society,

d) human rights, civil liberties, and legitimate interests of individuals and societal groups in achieving the individual good and the common good,

e) promoting gender equality and equal opportunities,

f) ethical values, principles, and norms generally accepted and applied in a democratic society, such as consideration, respect, courtesy, and honesty.

3. Ethical values, principles, and standards of scientific and research practice

The implementation of good scientific and research practice, which also aims to achieve the integrity of research work and learning and teaching activities, requires the consistent application of relevant ethical values, principles, and standards, and is implemented in the following areas:

a) research environment,

b) training, supervision, and professional guidance,

c) research procedures,

d) ensuring safety and security,

e) data processing and management,

f) cooperation and coordination,

g) nondiscrimination, with an emphasis on gender equality and equal support in a scientific career,

h) publishing and disseminating scientific information and research results,

i) authorship of scientific discoveries and academic publications,

j) evaluation of the scientific and ethical quality of research results and outputs, final and qualification theses, peer review of scientific and academic publications, and editorial activities.

3.1. Integrity in the research environment

1. The SAS and its organizations promote awareness of research integrity requirements and institutional ethical standards and implement measures to ensure that a culture of research integrity prevails in research.

2. The SAS and its organizations create an environment that enables scientists and professionals to work according to the principles of good scientific and research practice, and to discuss ethical dilemmas freely and openly, as well as unintentional mistakes in the implementation of scientific research activities, without fear of possible consequences or punishments.

3. The SAS and its organizations support an adequate infrastructure for the management and protection of research data and research material in all its forms.

4. The SAS and its organizations do not tolerate bullying, humiliation, slander, defamation, and other expressions of hostility toward individuals or groups. They respond appropriately to any form of defamation related to scientific activity, scientific results, and their presentation, not only from within the Academy, but also from outside the Academy.

5. SAS staff do not abuse their position, authority, or power.

6. SAS employees preserve and promote the interests of their organization and the SAS, protect their intellectual and material property, and take care to preserve their reputation.

7. In research activities, as well as in managerial and support activities, SAS staff and PhD students act in such a manner as to exclude any possibility of conflicts of interest that would lead to diminishing the credibility of the organization, persons, achievements, publications, public appearances, peer-review and refereeing procedures, management, decision-making, and support activities.

8. Researchers do not engage in other work activities that interfere with the proper performance of their duties at the SAS. If they have multiple employment relationships, they declare which one is key to their scientific research activities.

9. SAS employees and PhD students appropriately observe the principles of this Code when carrying out a concurrent profession, occupation, or function outside the SAS so that their actions do not compromise the credibility of the SAS or its organization or undermine the integrity of science, research, and education.

3.2. Integrity of education, supervision, and professional leadership

1. The SAS and its organizations provide appropriate and adequate ethics and integrity education that ensures awareness of relevant codes, standards, and regulations, and discuss potential ethical issues and model cases.

2. Researchers, employees, and PhD students attend training in ethics and research integrity throughout their careers.

3. Researchers, employees, research leaders, principal investigators, and supervisors guide students and members of their teams, mentor them, provide professional training, guiding the development of their research activities, their design and structure, and strengthen the culture of research integrity by personal example.

4. Research team leaders and managers ensure fairness and openness in communication with subordinates, support their professional and qualification development, and require them to undertake appropriate research, publication, project, and organizational activities, as well as to develop cooperation with other scientists at home and abroad.

3.3. Integrity of research procedures

1. SAS scientists focus their activities on expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge and its use for the benefit of society, while being aware of their responsibility for the quality of research and the credibility of the results obtained.

2. Scientific research is conducted exclusively by means of scientific methodology with adherence to discipline-specific rules and regulations.

3. Scientific research is open to doubts, verification, and rational and justified criticism.

4. Therefore, scientific and professional SAS employees and PhD students:

a) consider the best available knowledge and practices in their research field,

b) design, conduct, analyze, and document research thoroughly and thoughtfully,

c) use research funding properly, efficiently, economically, and responsibly,

d) publish results and interpret research honestly, transparently, and accurately,

e) maintain confidentiality of data or findings when justified,

f) describe the results obtained and the methodology used (including the use of external services, artificial intelligence, or automated tools) in a way that allows the research to be validated or replicated and in accordance with the policies of the European Research Area,

g) contribute to strengthening the culture of research integrity, warn about its violations, and contribute appropriately to their resolution,

h) when possible, publish in open access models,

i) in their public appearances aimed at disseminating scientific knowledge and achievements, they are guided by the expertise in which they conduct their research, development, innovation, or teaching activities; through their public appearances, social networks, and internet portals, they disseminate only validated, confirmed, and current scientific information placed in the correct context, and

j) apply the principles of research integrity even when making public presentations that are not primarily aimed at disseminating scientific knowledge, bearing in mind that from their position of scientific authority and the resulting mission, they influence the general public.

3.4. Protection and safety in conducting research

1. SAS staff and PhD students comply with safety standards and regulations related to their scientific field and to the procedures, instruments, materials, and technologies used.

2. SAS staff and PhD students handle the subjects of their research, whether humans, animals, or physical, environmental, biological, or cultural objects, with appropriate respect and care and in line with the current legislative provisions and relevant ethical principles and standards.

3. SAS staff and PhD students act with due regard for the health, safety, personal dignity, and autonomy of collaborators and other people involved in the research, also considering the potential risks and impacts of the research on the entire society, including special consideration for marginalized, vulnerable, disadvantaged, or excluded groups.

4. SAS researchers and PhD students define and consider in advance the foreseeable risks that may be caused by their research, and develop procedures to minimize these risks during research planning.

5. SAS researchers and PhD students ensure that research protocols adequately take into account the importance of differences based on age, sex, social class, culture, religion, and ethnicity.

6. SAS staff and PhD students are responsible for informing and monitoring compliance with research integrity principles, safety standards, and regulations regarding procedures, equipment, materials, and technologies used in research in which persons not professionally involved in science (e.g., citizen science, participatory research) are actively engaged.

3.5. Integrity in the acquisition, processing, storage, and management of research data

1. The SAS, SAS organizations, SAS scientific and professional staff, and SAS PhD students ensure the appropriate management, acquisition means, processing, and organization of data and the disposal of all data, metadata, protocols, software, and other research material, including unpublished data, in accordance with the regulations, as well as their secure storage for a reasonable period.

2. SAS organizations, researchers, and SAS PhD students ensure that access to data is as open as possible within the necessary constraints and, where appropriate, in accordance with the principles of data governance (FAIR).

3. SAS scientific staff and PhD students provide transparent access and use of their data and research materials to others, whenever possible or when the obtained informed consent permits this.

4. SAS researchers and PhD students inform the subjects participating in the research about how their personal data will be protected, who will have access to them, for what purposes they will be used, how, when, and under what conditions they will be disposed; they shall address the consent of the subject to the processing of personal data in accordance with the applicable legal provisions.

5. The SAS, SAS organizations, SAS researchers, and SAS PhD students consider data to be legitimate research results that can be cited.

6. The SAS, SAS organizations, and researchers ensure that any contracts or agreements relating to research results contain fair terms and conditions for the use, ownership, and protection of the research results in accordance with intellectual property law.

7. The SAS, SAS organizations, and SAS researchers and PhD students respect the legislation and regulations related to data protection.

3.6. Cooperation and coordination of research, development, study and training activities

1. All research cooperation and coordination partners:

a) are jointly responsible for the research integrity of the joint research,

b) before commencing the research, agree in a binding manner on the objectives, methods, and conditions of the research (including the precise responsibilities of the individual partners), as well as on how to publish the results of the research and address intellectual property issues related to the joint research,

c) before commencing the research, agree in a binding manner to respect the principles and standards of research integrity; especially in the case of international cooperation, inform each other about the relevant laws and regulations for the protection of intellectual property; and further agree on how to resolve any problems or conflicts, including how to deal with violations of the principles of research integrity, as well as of the agreed upon terms and procedures,

d) before commencing the research, jointly assess the feasibility, potential impact, and ethical implications of the research.

2. The SAS, SAS organizations, and SAS staff and PhD students strengthen the institutional resilience of the SAS and its organizations and do not knowingly create opportunities for undesirable influence of foreign power.

3.7. Equality and nondiscrimination in science and research

1. The SAS and its organizations create an inclusive environment, support equal opportunities, and conscientiously follow the principle of equal treatment.

2. Persons employed or in other contractual positions, students, or persons conducting research within SAS cannot be discriminated against based on sex, religion or belief, race, nationality or ethnic affiliation, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, skin color, language, political views or other opinions, national or social origin, property, or gender or other characteristic, or based on the reporting of a criminal activity or other antisocial behavior.

3. In addition to direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and unjustified sanctions are prohibited. Giving the instruction to discriminate and inciting discrimination are also discrimination.

4. Nobody can abuse their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, slander, or defame other employees or students. Any verbal or nonverbal conduct that may exhibit characteristics of physical or psychological violence, coercion, or similar forms of behavior, including sexually motivated harassment and violence, or any expressions of hostility toward individuals or groups, is not tolerated.

5. No one can be harmed for exercising their rights or fulfilling their obligations, for example, by seeking protection from discrimination, giving testimony or explanations before the SAS authorities or at the level of SAS organizations, or reporting criminality, antisocial activity, or other violations of the internal rules of the SAS.

6. When accepting or promoting employees and PhD students, transparent procedures and selection are applied, and promotions are based on open competition and the objective evaluation of professional skills, intellectual abilities, and personal characteristics.

7. In accordance with the SAS Gender Equality Plan, the SAS and its organizations promote gender equality and the elimination of gender segregation in all areas of science, research, and education, including at managerial and decision-making levels and in recruitment and career development.

3.8. Integrity in publishing and dissemination of information and data

1. SAS researchers, professionals, and PhD students acknowledge that authorship of a scientific or professional publication is based on

a) the significance of the contribution to the research design, to the collection of relevant data and its analysis, or to the interpretation of the research results,

b) drafting and revising the manuscript and

c) approval of the final version of the manuscript.

SAS researchers, professionals, and PhD students accept responsibility for the entire content of the publication, including respect for relevant ethical principles and standards.

2. SAS researchers and PhD students agree on the order in which they will be listed as authors of the publication.

3. SAS researchers and PhD students agree on the definition of the responsibility and the level of contribution of the individual authors of the publication.

4. SAS researchers and PhD students ensure that their work is made available to their co-authors in a timely, complete, and transparent manner prior to publication.

5. The SAS, SAS organizations, SAS staff, and SAS PhD students act in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements when communicating with the public, as well as in print and on social media.

6. SAS researchers and PhD students acknowledge the importance and contribution of the work of other researchers and other authors and appropriately cite related works.

7. SAS researchers and PhD students indicate a contribution to a scientific result that does not reach the level of authorship in another way, usually by acknowledgment.

8. When using artificial intelligence (AI) in project design, data processing, or the formulation of scientific results, SAS researchers and PhD students indicate that they have used AI in accordance with the rules of research integrity and the policies of the European Research Area and identify the part of the research that has been assisted by AI and the extent and manner of use.

9. SAS researchers and PhD students declare potential or actual conflicts of interest and financial or other support received for research or publication of its results.

10. In publications, SAS researchers and PhD students properly identify the institutions where the research was conducted, as well as all sources of any external financial support for the research whose results are described in the publication, all in accordance with the requirements of the funder.

11. If necessary, SAS researchers and PhD students request the publication of a correction notice to the published work. In the event of serious errors or misconduct, they immediately request the retraction of the published work, following the procedure established by the publisher.

12. SAS researchers and PhD students do not publish in a questionable way, do not use untrustworthy publishing platforms (so-called predatory journals and conferences), and do not support predatory publishing in other ways (e.g., by serving on the editorial board of a predatory journal).

13. SAS, SAS organizations, SAS researchers, and SAS PhD students acknowledge that published so-called negative research results can be of equal importance and contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge as published so-called positive results.

14. In the potential application of the results, their social or economic use, and their patenting, SAS researchers and PhD students shall respect and protect the interests of the SAS and the respective home SAS organization.

3.9. Integrity in the professional review of research and development projects and evaluation of the results of research and development

1. SAS staff review and evaluate submitted research protocol proposals, applications for research and development grants, proposals for scientific and professional publications, as well as applications for employment, proposals for staffing of senior positions and proposals for special awards for outstanding researchers and academics based on predetermined, clearly defined criteria and in a transparent, predetermined procedure, while declaring and specifying in advance the manner, scope, and limitations of the use of artificial intelligence (AI) applications or appropriately validated automated tools in accordance with the policies of the European Research Area.

2. Researchers consider their participation in the review and assessment of protocol submissions, in the evaluation of research results, and in peer review of scientific and academic publications to be a serious professional commitment to the research community and to the entire field of research and development, and participate in these activities with full responsibility and in the spirit of appropriate ethical principles and standards, including the maintenance of professional confidentiality.

3. SAS employees as reviewers and evaluators of research projects and research findings, peer-reviewers of scientific and academic publications, editors of scientific and academic publications (periodical and non-periodical), and members of decision-making or advisory bodies (boards and committees) shall declare their potential or real conflict of interests, or their partiality or pressure exerted upon them in advance, and in such cases, their participation in the given evaluative, advisory, and decision-making processes will be reconsidered.

4. SAS, SAS organizations and groups publishing within SAS will ensure that the requirements for the exclusion of conflicts of interest are improved also for scientists from other institutions, in particular by modifying journal ethical codes and editorial board processes.

4. Violation of research ethics and integrity

1. Any conduct in violation of this Code is deemed a violation of research ethics and integrity.

2. Violations of the provisions of this Code as a result of unethical actions or behavior of natural or legal persons indicate a violation of research integrity, which may vary in scope and severity, but always damages the credibility of science, research, development, and study or educational activities, their proper quality and reputation, not only in the scientific community, but also within the general public. The list of violations of good research practice in the provisions of this article is demonstrative.

4.1. Serious violation of research integrity and ethics

1. Serious violations of research integrity and ethics deliberately misrepresent the procedure, results, and outcomes of research and development or their interpretation, or distort and impermissibly manipulate various research activities (in the design, conduct or review of research, or in the reporting of research findings), including the proper education, training, and mentoring of scientific, research, development, and other professional personnel.

2. In particular, the following are serious violations of research integrity and ethics:

a) fabrication of results as the deceptive creation of fictitious results and their recording, processing, and presentation as if they were real (obtained through the given research),

b) falsification as the deliberate deceptive manipulation of research material, equipment, or processes, or the deceptive changing, substituting, omitting, or suppressing of data or research and development results, using falsified data instead of real data,

c) plagiarism as the deceptive appropriation and use of the results of the work and ideas of others (usually without proper reference to the original source), thereby infringing the intellectual property rights of the original author or authors.

4.2. Questionable research practices

1. Questionable research practices constitute conduct or behavior that is contrary to the generally accepted requirements of research ethics and integrity, articulated also in this Code. These include, in particular, questionable scientific practices related to research data, practices related to publication and conference activities or submission of proposals for research or development or educational (grant) projects, practices related to research practice, practices related to evaluation work, and practices related to personal conduct.

2. Questionable data-related research practices include:

a) inadequate or deliberately improper or manipulative practices regarding research data, from acquisition through processing, storage, and disclosure, which are in violation of legislation, relevant professional recommendations, and generally accepted professional practices and standards,

b) inadequate security or improper storage of primary data, and

c) unjustified refusal to provide access to primary data, including information on how the data were obtained, or destruction of such data before the end of the (mandatory) retention period.

3. Questionable research practices associated with publishing and conference activities or submitting proposals for research, development, or educational (grant) projects include:

a) manipulation of authorship, such as fictitious authorship, unfair appropriation of co-authorship of a published work or project proposal (contract cheating or paper mills), failing to credit other researchers or developers on a given team by not indicating their

co-authorship, or arbitrarily giving unfair (lower or higher) co-authorship level on publications or project proposals,

b) using artificial intelligence applications or other automated tools without properly declaring them,

c) republishing substantial parts of own publications, including translations without properly referencing (citing) the original work (so-called self-plagiarism), as well as self-plagiarism when submitting project proposals in relation to approved or implemented projects,

d) increasing the number of own publications by dividing them into smaller parts without suitable justification and publishing them separately (the so-called salami publications),

e) deliberately providing false or inaccurate information in submitted project proposals, particularly information that could potentially disadvantage competing project proposals,

f) unfair attempts to influence the activities and decision-making of evaluating, assessing, or decision-making natural or legal persons, institutions, and organizations, including grant agencies and their respective expert or scientific committees and boards (e.g., by misusing knowledge of internal processes, specific criteria or specific persons involved in the evaluation, assessment, and decision-making, or of other potentially competing submitted projects - *insider information*),

g) unjustified, deceptive inflation of the budget of the submitted project,

h) selectively or purposely increased citations of selected papers in order to inappropriately support the results or findings of own research and development, or to purposely please editors, reviewers, or peers,

i) negligence of the editor in joint publications regarding the recognition of the rights of co-authors (changing their text without their knowledge, not informing authors that their text will not be accepted, etc.),

j) publishing research or development findings in dubious, pseudo-professional conferences or in periodical and non-periodical publications or other media that do not adhere to the generally accepted principles and standards of publication ethics and integrity (so-called predatory conferences, journals, and other publications), and

k) organizing, supporting, or participating in dubious, pseudoscientific, or pseudo-professional events that do not adhere to the generally accepted principles and standards of publishing ethics and integrity.

4. Questionable research practices associated with research practice include:

a) the use of inappropriate, harmful, unjustifiably risky, or unsafe research methods and procedures, including deliberately inappropriate statistical methods and their misuse,

b) an excessively factually or logically flawed or insufficiently, unclearly elaborated proposal for the methodology of the proposed research or development project,

c) purposive selection of research methods and procedures focused on obtaining results that do not reflect reality but the researcher’s wish (biased design),

d) violation of, failure to comply with, or unjustified and unapproved changes to the originally adopted research or development protocol, and

e) failure to obtain the approval of the relevant ethics committees on a research or development project proposal addressing ethically sensitive areas, when relevant.

5. Questionable research practices associated with review work include:

a) any violation of the required confidentiality,

b) superficial, poor quality, uncritical, and biased assessment of a publication, or research or development project proposal,

c) failure to declare a real or potential conflict of interest,

d) bias in the conduct of the assessment, evaluative, or peer-review activity (e.g., toward the authors, the workplace, the topic, or other aspects of the assessed, evaluated, or peer-reviewed work, publication, or project proposal),

e) any misuse of information obtained in the course of evaluation, assessment, or peer-review activities for their own benefit or for the benefit of a third party, and

f) recommending that authors deliberately expand their reference lists in an effort to increase the citation rate of their own or otherwise associated publications.

6. Questionable research practices associated with the conduct of the researcher, particularly a researcher in a leading or decision-making role within a research team or organization, include:

a) compromising the independence of the research process or the publication of its results (intentional bias, e.g., to gain undue advantage from funders or supporters of the research or development),

b) neglect of management, research leadership,

c) unjustified expansion of one's own bibliography,

d) nontransparent use of funding resources provided for the research,

e) making a manifestly unfounded accusation of a researcher of violating methodological or ethical rules of research,

f) deliberate withholding or misrepresentation of the results and outputs of research or development in relation to their application in practice or in further research and development,

g) purposely delaying or obstructing the work of other researchers,

h) abuse of professional position to deliberately violate the integrity and ethics of research, development, or educational activities,

i) ignoring or covering up violations of research integrity and ethics of research, development, or teaching and learning activities,

j) neglect of professional guidance, education, training, and mentoring of doctoral students, subordinate scientific, research, and development workers, especially workers in doctoral or other specialization or certification studies,

k) damaging or even sabotaging the preparation, implementation, evaluation, or publication of the results of research and development activities (e.g., deliberate failure to ensure timely servicing, certification, or accreditation of necessary instruments and methods, intentional failure to provide necessary resources, such as documentation,

instruments, and computer or other equipment, including operating programs, chemicals, or other materials needed by another researcher for their research),

l) creating barriers to career advancement for researchers and other staff,

m) direct or indirect sanctions against professionals, scientists, researchers, or PhD students who reported cases of potential or real violations of research integrity and ethics or cases of questionable scientific practices,

n) writing unjustifiably positive or negative letters of recommendation in order to purposely influence the employment opportunities of a given professional, research, or development worker and the relevant selection procedures, and

o) discriminatory, disparaging, or other inappropriate actions and behaviors.

5. The Ethics Committee of the SAS and the procedure for resolving contentious ethical issues

1. Possible violations of the ethical principles of research and development and other contentious ethical issues are addressed in cooperation with all parties involved, namely:

a) directly in the SAS organization. If the organization has an ethics committee with the competence to deal with the given ethical issue, the matter is addressed by the organization's ethics committee. Otherwise, the contentious ethical issue is addressed by the organization's director, who may establish an *ad hoc* ethics committee.

b) in the SAS Ethics Committee, if the solution is beyond the scope of the SAS organization or if the parties to the dispute are not satisfied with the conclusions reached in the organization,

c) in the SAS Committee for Equality if the violation of ethical principles consists of a violation of the principle of equal treatment or a failure to take sufficient measures for equal opportunities, and the matter has not been sufficiently addressed at the level of the SAS organization.

2. The integrity, independence, and objectivity of the dispute settlement procedures and their substance and purpose are scrupulously respected during the resolution of contentious issues. The utmost care is taken to protect the privacy, confidentiality, dignity, rights, and legitimate interests of persons and the reasonableness of the time of resolution, particularly when investigating violations of the Code.

3. The principle of the presumption of innocence until a violation of the Code has been adjudicated is respected in investigations of Code violations. The presumption of innocence does not include measures to ensure an objective examination of the Code violation, measures to protect the rights and legally protected interests of persons adversely affected by the alleged violations, and measures to protect the reputation of SAS.

4. The conclusions of the resolution of contentious issues must be communicated in writing to all parties involved. In case of a proven violation of the Code of Ethics, the conclusions must include a proposal for corrective or punitive measures proportionate to the seriousness of the reviewed violation.

5. A person whose proceedings before the SAS Ethics Committee have demonstrated a violation of the principles and standards of research integrity and ethics has the right to appeal against the conclusions of the Committee and to request their re-examination.

6. In the event that the alleged violation has not been proven, and there is a reasonable presumption that the proceedings before the Ethics Committee may cause harm to a particular person, the SAS Ethics Committee shall at the same time propose appropriate measures to clear the person's reputation and to repair their standing in the academic, scientific, or professional community of the organization or the SAS, as well as, if necessary, the publication of appropriate information to that effect.

7. A person who, in good faith and in a reasonable manner, has reported a reasonable suspicion of a violation of the principles and standards of research integrity and ethics to the appropriate structures of the SAS or its organization shall not suffer any negative consequences within the SAS or its organization in connection with such conduct and will be provided adequate protection and assistance, if necessary.

8. Within a time appropriate to the nature of the dispute, normally within six months, the SAS Ethics Committee and the SAS Committee for Equality verify the manner and extent to which their proposed measures have been implemented. In case of insufficient implementation of the draft measures, they may ask the SAS Presidium to take a position and enforce the proposed measures.

9. SAS also promotes alternative ways of resolving ethical conflicts, reflecting the needs of those involved and the repair of relationships, for example, by using elements of mediation.

6. Final provisions

The SAS Code of Ethics was approved by the Resolution of the SAS Presidium No. 49. C on 14. 8. 2025. It is part of the internal regulations of the SAS. The Code is valid on the day of its approval and comes into effect on the day subsequent to the day of its publication on the SAS website. At the same time, the Code of Ethics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences of 9. 7. 2015 is invalidated.

Bratislava, August 25, 2025

Mgr. Martin Venhart, DrSc.
SAS President