

best practice paper:

**model code of
professional
conduct for
designers**

ico-D. Leading creatively.

ico-D is the world body for professional design. It is a non-profit, non-partisan, member-based network of independent organisations and stakeholders working within the multidisciplinary scope of design and expanded media. Founded in 1963, ico-D actively promotes the value of design practice, thinking, education, research and policy, representing more than 140 organisations in 67 countries and regions globally.

ico-D's members believe in interdisciplinary collaboration and the effectiveness of a collective voice to represent the design industry.

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Object of the Code

The object is to state the principles for an international basis of ethical standards related to the practise of design which are accepted by all Member organisations of ico-D.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Code, the word “designer”

- shall deem to include:
 - all individuals who apply intent to create the visual, material, spatial and digital environment, cognizant of the experiential, employing interdisciplinary and hybrid approaches to the theory and practice of design.
- shall mean an individual, practising design as a freelance or salaried designer, or group of designers, acting in partnership or within other forms of association.

Obligations of Member organisations

ico-D Members accept that they and their individual members, when working in a country other than their own, shall observe the relevant code of practise of the Members pertaining to that country.

A designer's responsibility

to the community

- A designer accepts a professional obligation to further the social and aesthetic standards of the community.
- A designer accepts professional responsibility to act in the best interest of the ecology and of the natural environment.
- A designer shall act in keeping with the honour and dignity of the profession.
- A designer shall not consciously assume nor accept a position in which personal interests conflict with professional duty.

to the client

- A designer shall act in the client's interests within the limits of professional duties.
- A designer shall not work simultaneously on assignments which are in direct competition without informing the clients or employers concerned, except in specific cases where it is customary for the designer to work at the same time for various competitors.
- A designer shall treat all knowledge of the client's intentions, production methods and/or business organisation as confidential and shall not, at any time, divulge such information without the consent of the client. It is the designer's responsibility to ensure that all members of his or her staff are similarly bound to confidentiality.

to other designers

- A designer must not attempt directly or indirectly, to supplant another designer, nor must the or she compete with another designer by means of a deliberate reduction of fee or by other unfair inducement.
- A designer shall not knowingly accept any professional assignment upon which another designer has been acting without notifying the other designer.
- A designer must be fair in criticism and shall not denigrate the work nor reputation of a fellow designer.
- A designer shall not accept instruction from the client which knowingly involves plagiarism, nor shall he or she consciously act in a manner involving plagiarism.

A designer's remuneration

- A designer shall not undertake any work at the invitation of a client or participate in competition with peers for any work without payment of an appropriate fee. A designer may, however, undertake work without a fee or at a reduced rate for charitable or non-profit organisations at the invitation of a client, when the designer will be publicly recognised as a sponsor of the project for the full value of the fees. A designer has the right to withhold recognition as a sponsor.
- Before accepting an assignment, the designer shall define exactly and comprehensively to the client the basis on which total remuneration is calculated.
- A designer who is financially concerned with any company, firm or business which may benefit from any recommendations made by him or her in the course of the work shall notify the client or employer of this fact in advance.
- A designer who is asked to advise on the selection of a designer shall accept no payment in any form from the designer recommended.

Competitions

It is recommended that a designer not take part in any open or limited international competition which is not organised in accordance with the regulations established by ico-D, Icsid and IFI.

Publicity

- Any advertising or publicity material must contain only truthful factual statements. It must be fair to clients and other designers and in accordance with the dignity of the profession.
- A designer may allow the client to use his or her name for the promotion of articles he or she has designed or service which he or she has provided, but only in a manner which is appropriate to the status of the profession.
- A designer shall not allow his or her name to be associated with the realisation of a design which has been so changed by the client as to no longer substantially be the original work of the designer.

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ico-D International
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