

# THINK LOWESTOFT VIRTUAL CREATIVE HUB CODE OF CONDUCT

The Virtual Creative Hub and Think Lowestoft are committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all members, event participants and Think Lowestoft staff. We believe our online spaces, just like our physical spaces, should be free from harassment, bullying or hate. Our online spaces should be safe for all those using them, and everyone who participates in an online space has a responsibility to help us achieve this. Discussions and comments are meant to stimulate conversation, not to create contention.

All Members, speakers, hosts and volunteers on our Virtual Hub and at our online events are required to agree with the following code of conduct. We expect cooperation from all participants to help ensure a safe environment for everybody.

Whilst the Virtual Creative Hub exists as an informal group of creatives, East Suffolk Council are responsible for reviewing each members application to join and will make the final decision to include or withdraw a creative. Objections or appeals can be made by following [East Suffolk Council's complaints procedure](#).

## OUR VALUES

Throughout each interaction, we aspire to embody and champion the below values:

1. Be friendly and welcoming
  - a. Listen with purpose, create space for others' communication preferences
  - b. Ask yourself how you can make someone else's life easier
2. Be patient
  - a. Remember that people have varying communication styles and preferences
3. Be thoughtful
  - a. Think about how others will interpret your words
  - b. Remember that sometimes it is best to refrain entirely from commenting
4. Be respectful and inclusive
  - a. Respect differences of opinion
  - b. Seek to build bridges and understand, not condemn, or criticise
  - c. Make a conscious effort to include people who differ from you
5. Be open and curious
  - a. Assume good intent and interpret others' statements or questions in good faith
  - b. Ask questions to understand, not denounce
  - c. Focus on continuous learning - get better at the things you already know, tackle completely new things, and ask others about their expertise to deepen yours

## GUIDELINES

We have a zero-tolerance approach to conduct that could legitimately be perceived by its recipients as:

- Cyber Bullying/Stalking
- Trolling / Online Impersonation
- Excluding
- Harassment\*
- Discriminatory comments and behaviour
- Abuse and unwanted attention
- Threatening or violent behaviour or language

If you witness or experience harassment, please notify the Think Lowestoft team ([thinklowestoft@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:thinklowestoft@eastssuffolk.gov.uk)) so that steps can be taken to investigate. Members who display any harassing behaviour will be asked to leave the Virtual Hub and will be removed by the Project Managers.

\* Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion, technology choices, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.

Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate on any of our platforms of events, including talks, workshops, socials, or other event types. Members violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the Virtual Hub.

We expect all participants in virtual spaces to observe our guidelines:

- We welcome debate and dissent, but personal attacks and abuse will not be tolerated.
- Be aware that you may be misunderstood, so try to be clear about what you are saying, and expect that people may understand your contribution differently than you intended.
- We understand that people often feel strongly about issues and certain themes, but we will consider removing any content that others might find extremely offensive or threatening. Please respect other people's views and beliefs and consider your impact on others when making your contribution.
- Within chat areas, we reserve the right to redirect or curtail conversations based on ingrained bias or generalisations. We don't want to stop people discussing topics they are enthusiastic about, but we do ask users to find ways of sharing their views that do not feel divisive, threatening or toxic to others.
- Keep it relevant. We know that some conversations can be wide-ranging, but try not to stray off-topic to keep the conversation on track.

- We will remove or stop any content that may put us in legal jeopardy, such as potentially libellous or defamatory postings, or material posted in potential breach of copyright.

## HOW WILL WE ADDRESS INCIDENTS OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT?

Think Lowestoft will post a message out on the web platform where the incident has occurred, to state that the behaviour shown is not tolerated by the Virtual Hub and kindly ask members to keep the platform a safe space for everyone

In addition to this, or if the behaviour continues, Think Lowestoft will direct messaging the person (or people) to let them know that their comments are not acceptable on the web platform.

Think Lowestoft will keep a record of the behaviour, including, but not limited to, statements, emails and screenshots.

If the behaviour was posted online, Think Lowestoft will remove the comments to revert the Virtual Hub back to a safe space for students (make sure you have collected any evidence you need for later reference before removing).