



## **iRest Institute Ethics Committee Mandate**

### **Objectives of the Committee**

The fundamental objectives of the Ethics Committee (“Committee”) shall be to respond to grievances regarding ethical conduct of students, teachers, staff and associates of iRest Institute (“the iRest Community”), to guide and ensure the education of ethical standards of the iRest Community at the highest professional level, and to endeavor to protect the public against harmful conduct by any member of the iRest Community.

Regarding the decided outcome of all grievances that fall within the domain of ethical conduct, the Committee functions independently from the Executive Director and other members of the iRest Community. The Committee actions and decisions are made on behalf of iRest Institute and iRest Institute holds all liability for outcomes related to Committee operations.

### **Scope**

The Committee supports the maintenance of ethical standards by:

- reviewing, deliberating upon and determining the appropriate response to ethical grievances submitted to iRest Institute
- guiding the evolution of iRest Institute in terms of its ethical positioning and transparency
- making recommendations regarding the education of ethical standards of the iRest Community
- staying current with the national and global ethical climate

### **Activities**

#### **Cause for Activity**

The activities of the Committee are based on matters that are:

- submitted via the [Grievance Procedure](#)
- brought to the attention of the Ethics Committee by the Executive Director
- brought forward directly by the Ethics Committee

#### **Investigatory Activities**

Investigatory activities of the Committee as related to grievances are limited to:

- a request of further details from the complainant
- the review of any written response provided by the subject of the complaint
- a request of further details from the subject of the complaint
- a request for information from other parties involved, if deemed necessary by the Committee

The Committee may retain professional advisers to assist with their review of any grievance with written prior approval from the Executive Director.

### **Internal Items & Operations Relevant to Committee Activity**

The Committee may at its discretion review and recommend ethics-related changes or actions based on:

- iRest Certification Program and related documents
- iRest Level 1 & 2 Training ethics-related course content
- iRest Institute public communications regarding ethical matters
- ethics-related policy & document update recommendations

### **Recommendations & Reporting**

The Committee shall present recommendations on operational and program-related matters as well as findings on current ethical trends and/or news of public interest by way of periodic reporting to the Executive Director as matters come to attention and after discussion among the Committee.

### **Open Communication**

There is an open door policy for the Committee to report relevant matters to the Executive Director and for the Executive Director to make requests of the Committee for review and recommendations.

### **Committee Member Roles and Terms**

The Committee shall maintain a minimum of five members with a quorum of three. Additional individuals may at times support the Committee in an advisory capacity, but are not considered members under the same roles and terms. There is a two-year minimum term of volunteer service, followed by a one-year continuously-renewable term contingent upon Committee agreement and approval.

The Committee will have no chairperson as members will rotate case management on a per grievance basis, whereas administrative support is offered by an iRest Institute staff person who may or may not also be a voting member of the Committee.

The Committee meets quarterly, and on an as-needed basis, such as when a formal grievance is submitted to iRest Institute.

### **Committee Member Selection Process**

New Committee members are recruited, reviewed and invited by the existing Committee members, with the approval of the Executive Director.

Potential Committee members will be selected on a basis of

- prior ethics-related experience
- historical knowledge of iRest and iRest Institute
- supporting a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds on the Committee\*

\*iRest Institute is an educational non-profit that aims to be of service to the well-being of our global community. Infused in the iRest teachings is a great appreciation for the diversity of human life, with many different ways of knowing and being in the world. We continuously strive to make sure we walk our talk in the way we operate as an organization. We welcome and encourage individuals of any race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ability, age, or veteran status to volunteer with us.

Upon acceptance of an invitation by the Committee, new Committee members are supplied with an irest.org email address, added to the [ethics@irest.org](mailto:ethics@irest.org) email group, and given access to relevant Committee folders on iRest Institute's Google Drive. Onboarding consists of an informal welcome meeting and links to the Ethics Committee Mandate, Grievance Procedure, Grievance Form, iRest Institute Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and the iRest Institute Scope of Practice.

### **Administrative Support**

A member of the iRest Institute will support the Committee administratively by:

- taking meeting minutes
- updating documentation as needed
- managing the digital filing of recommendations and responses
- tracking progress via the [Ethics Committee Case Tracking](#) sheet
- acting as an administrative liaison between the Committee and Executive Director

### **Reporting Structure**

The Committee shall have a direct reporting relationship to the Executive Director, who in turn reports to the Board.

## **Overview of Internal Procedure for Addressing Grievances**

### **Receiving the Grievance**

1. Submitted Grievance Forms will be forwarded to both the Executive Director and the Committee group email address ([ethics@irest.org](mailto:ethics@irest.org)) for the sake of full transparency.
2. The Executive Director will review newly submitted grievances for relevancy and report findings to the Committee via [ethics@irest.org](mailto:ethics@irest.org) with any requests to begin the review

process and actions, if any, to be taken should it not be recommended for Committee review.

3. Within 14 days of receiving a grievance, the Executive Director will provide written acknowledgement to the complainant that the grievance has been received and will notify the subject of the grievance that a grievance against them has been received and forwarded to the Committee for review

### **Grievances Involving the Executive Director**

4. In the event that the complainant has submitted a Grievance Against Executive Director Form, or due to the direct inclusion of the Executive Director in the details of the grievance, the unique submission will be automatically forwarded to the email addresses of both the Committee and the Chairperson of the Board to ensure objectivity. In this case, the Committee will assess the eligibility of the grievance and continue forward with communications with both the complainant and the subject of the grievance on behalf of iRest Institute otherwise performed by the Executive Director.

### **Grievances Involving a Member of the Committee**

5. Should a complaint be filed against a Committee member, they will recuse themselves from the Committee for the duration of the review and await the final decision.
6. If a Committee member feels there is a conflict of interest due to personal relationship with the accused member or any person(s) involved in the grievance, they may state their conflict of interest and request to recuse themselves from the Committee during the duration of the review & decision-making process.
7. If quorum cannot be made, the Committee will report to the Executive Director who will seek an independent, outside referral for consultation and mediation.

The Committee will review any grievances made against a Committee member, Board member or the Executive Director just as it would any other member of the iRest community.

### **Addressing the Grievance**

8. The Committee will assess each grievance on a case-by-case basis and determine the most appropriate and useful role that iRest Institute can play given the context and nature of that grievance. The Committee, with the prior approval of the Executive Director, may seek independent advice on any matter related to the grievance process.
9. If the grievance is filed by a member of the Executive or Ethics Committee, that member will recuse themselves of any involvement in reviewing and determining any course of action related to the grievance.
10. The decision of the Committee will be submitted by the Executive Director on behalf of iRest Institute within 60 days following the original grievance form submission.

11. Within 14 days of receiving the Committee decision, the Executive Director will notify both the complainant and the subject of the grievance of iRest Institute's response, including any resulting actions, consequences or requirements in writing. Should the grievance review process require more than 60 days time, the complainant and the subject of the grievance will be notified of the extension and a new expected timeline will be communicated.

## **Appeals**

12. Appeals of the Committee's decision must go to the Executive Director in writing within 14 days of the delivery of the decision.
13. The Executive Director will review all existing records relating to the grievance and the Committee decision for any procedural or policy-related errors, facts wrongly considered or dismissed, or other activities of the Committee that revealed an inadequate or unfair process.
14. Based on the findings, the Executive Director will then determine whether the decision of the Committee shall be affirmed, modified, or overruled. The Executive Director will notify the complainant and the subject of the grievance, separately, of the result of the Executive Director's review of the appeal in writing within 14 days of receiving the appeal.
15. In the event that the Executive Director is directly involved in the details of the original grievance and the grievance instead was forwarded directly to the Committee, the appeal must be made to the Board of Directors ("Board"). The Board will then exercise the same review and authority otherwise performed and held by the Executive Director as indicated above.

## **Completion**

16. In the cases where the grievance has been resolved within the organization, it will be noted in the case file that resolution has been achieved. The parties involved in the resolution will acknowledge by signature that resolution has been achieved and the grievance procedure is now completed.
17. Where the grievance has been referred to an external party, the Committee will maintain liaison with this external party during the external resolution process until the parties to the grievance, and the external party approves the resolution of the grievance. The Committee will report the resolution of the grievance to the Executive Director.

## **Committee Independence and Liability**

By functioning as an independent volunteer committee, the Committee can ensure the greatest likelihood of an unbiased review, deliberation, and final decision on ethical grievances on behalf of iRest Institute. Nonetheless, decisions will be delivered to the complainant and subject of complaint by the Executive Director on behalf of iRest Institute. The Committee and its members are not liable for legal repercussions of Committee decisions are covered under the liability insurance of iRest Institute.

For more information regarding the grievance resolution process, please see the official [Grievance Procedure](#).