

Community Agreement at HSABC trainings and events

This Community Agreement on how we learn, participate and support each other during HSABC trainings and events, is intended to help us co-create a safe, respectful, and inclusive space.

SAFE

We need to be accountable to ourselves and each other for our behaviour. Following [HSABC's values](#) and the [BC Human Rights Code](#) ensures there is no harassment, discrimination, violence, or harmful behaviour — online or in person. We treat everyone with dignity and respect.

As we are sharing space together, we need to be mindful to share stories with care using respectful, non-stigmatizing language. We speak from our own experience (“I” statements) and honour community experiences when appropriate (“we” statements). Additionally, to foster a safe space, we need to keep each other’s personal stories private.

We also need to be taking care of ourselves and each other. That includes:

- taking care of our needs—food, rest, breaks and movement.
- asking for help when needed.
- setting boundaries and respecting others’ boundaries.
- supporting each other in ways that are safe and appropriate.

RESPECTFUL

We acknowledge that we are gathered on occupied and stolen Indigenous land, and that colonization on this land includes attempts to systemically erase Indigenous culture and ways of knowing. We therefore honour Indigenous knowledge and teachings, both as an act of solidarity and resistance, and to expand our own learning and growth.

Similarly, we acknowledge the power imbalance within our society and our sector, we will work together to make this space free of racism, discrimination, misogyny and judgment. We will stay open to learning about our own biases and each other’s experiences.

As we work towards decolonization and anti-oppression, we will also be accountable with kindness. Understanding that anyone can make mistakes or cause harm. And, when harm happens, we look at why and work to repair it by accepting feedback with “thank you” and a willingness to learn.

Similarly, we are aware that hard topics can bring up strong feelings. However, we need to take emotional responsibility by handling our emotions without putting extra emotional labour on others. This can include letting people know in advance or checking in with the group if we wish to share something particularly personal or traumatic. And, when we feel overwhelmed, we reach out to facilitators or hosts for support. This means showing up with courage, honesty, and care.

INCLUSIVE

We affirm that everyone has a voice—all voices matter and no one person speaks for the whole group. We share space and time by:

- practising “step up, step back” —
 speak when needed, make room for others too.
- listening to understand, not to argue; and
- noticing who hasn’t spoken and inviting them in gently.

As we are coming together for a shared goal, we need to follow the reasonable direction of facilitators and event leaders and support each other to stay on track. We are working together toward change, even when it feels challenging.