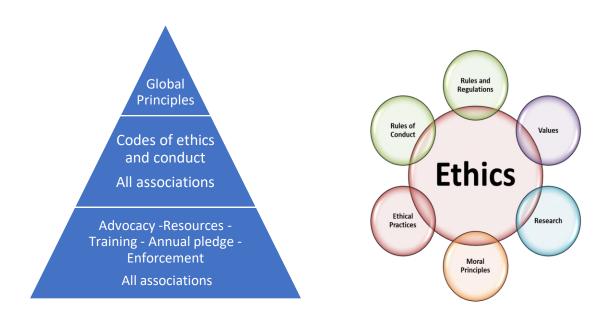## Global Principles of Ethical practice in Public Relations and Communication Management

For more than 70 years, public relations and communication professional bodies have established codes of ethics to help public relations and communications professionals to detect, deter and denounce unethical behaviors. Most professional bodies in public relations and communication have codes of ethics, enforce codes of practice, conduct and offer guidance for their members. Over the years, giants in our field have provided guidance on codes of ethics. We have been inspired by the work of these senior leaders from around the world in our review of codes to extract global principles.

As communicators and public relations professionals, we have the potential to influence economies and individuals. This carries obligations and responsibilities to society and to organisations. Ethics must be at the core of our activity. There is no public relations/communication profession without ethics. Membership in a professional association and adherence to a code of ethics is the 'point of difference' for a professional practitioner in an environment where unqualified individuals can 'put the sign on the door'. For ethics standards to be enforced, practitioners must be members of a professional body, so they can be called to account.

The 2018 Global principles were developed following a review and comparison of over a dozen codes of conduct and codes of ethics.

As illustrated in the pyramid, the global principles are offered as global guidance to individual organisations. It does not replace codes of ethics which are enforceable by the associations.

Global
Principles

Codes of ethics
and conduct

All associations

Advocacy -Resources -
Training - Annual pledge -
Enforcement

All associations

Rules and
Regulations

Rules of
Conduct

Values

Ethics

Ethical
Practices

Research

Moral
Principles

GLOBAL PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS (2018)
Here are the 16 principles that we deem universal and fundamental to the practice of public relations and communication management:

Guiding principles
1. Working in the public interest
2. Obeying laws and respect diversity and local customs
3. Freedom of speech
4. Freedom of assembly
5. Freedom of media
6. Honesty, truth and fact-based communication
7. Integrity
8. Transparency and disclosure
9. Privacy

Principles of professional practice
1. Commitment to continuous learning and training
2. Avoiding conflict of interest
3. Advocating for the profession
4. Respect and fairness in dealing with publics
5. Expertise without guarantee of results beyond capacity
6. Behaviours that enhance the profession
7. Professional conduct