



Drafted: April 2025

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FOREWORD

Grand Challenges African Drug Discovery Accelerator (GC ADDA) is a network of drug discovery researchers; it is not a formal legal entity. There are different membership categories, namely Full Members, Affiliate Members, Affiliate Institution Members, Associate Members and Emerging Researcher Members. The H3D Foundation conducts administrative activities for the network and an Operational Leadership Team (OLT) oversees its smooth running. The OLT includes representatives from the GC ADDA member group and is responsible for oversight of all network activities and for representing the needs of the members. Other governance bodies include the GC ADDA Advisory Board, made up of international experts, and the GC ADDA EXCOM, who represent the voice of the seed funders.

All GC ADDA members, leadership body members and members of the secretariat are required to sign and uphold the Code of Conduct to participate in, and belong to, the GC ADDA network.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to help members deal with the opportunities and challenges that arise from network activities including, but not limited to, collaboration, communication, scientific ethics, and crises. H3D Foundation and the OLT are always willing to help members and leadership teams who have doubts about aspects of conduct or any course of action and can offer guidance if necessary.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The OLT have adopted the following Code of Conduct to uphold high standards of ethical practice. In doing so, we will raise the level of public trust and confidence in GC ADDA through positive contributions to the advancement of drug discovery in Africa.

1. Scope of application:

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct is applicable to all GC ADDA members (Full Members, Affiliate Members, Affiliate Institution Members, Associate Members and Emerging Researcher Members), leadership body members (members of the Advisory Board, EXCOM and the OLT) and members of the secretariat.

2. Conduct: All members have a duty to:

- 2.1. Observe the provision of the documents approved by the OLT that indicate the structures and rules applicable to GC ADDA, including the various terms of reference documents and membership requirements;
- 2.2. Conduct themselves honourably and with integrity, transparency and accountability in the practice of their profession;
- 2.3. Maintain the highest standards of competence, especially in carrying out any statutory duties relevant to a GC ADDA network project or activity;
- 2.4. Always have regard to the public interest, encourage inclusivity and protect the dignity and welfare of the community, both within and beyond the GC ADDA network;
- 2.5. Always respect the rights of others, and fulfil duties in a fair manner by being aware of, and limiting, any biases;
- 2.6. Further the interests of and maintain the reputation and welfare of GC ADDA;
- 2.7. Maintain confidentiality of proprietary information that may be shared within the GC ADDA network;
- 2.8. Uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, including avoiding conflicts of interest.

3. Conflict of Interest:

- 3.1. Members are expected to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest relating to relational, financial or professional factors that may influence or appear to influence their judgement in GC ADDA activities.

4. Internal complaints procedure:

4.1. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate and safe to do so, members are encouraged to resolve disagreements or misunderstandings through respectful and direct



communication between the parties involved. Often, clarification or open dialogue can help address concerns quickly and effectively.

4.2. Raising a Concern

If a matter cannot be resolved informally, or if the issue is more serious, a member may submit a written complaint to the Operational Leadership Team (OLT) via the designated point of contact at H3D Foundation. Complaints should clearly outline the issue, the individuals or parties involved, and any steps already taken to resolve the matter.

4.3. Initial Review

The OLT will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and assess its nature and severity. The OLT may choose to consult relevant parties and request additional information if necessary. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, and any investigation will be conducted with impartiality and due process.

4.4. Resolution Process

The OLT will aim to mediate and propose a resolution within 30 days of receiving a formal complaint. This may involve facilitated discussions, written responses, or agreed steps for future conduct. If required, the OLT may appoint a small panel of neutral members from the network to assist in this process. Should a complaint involve a member of the OLT, that member will recuse themselves.

4.5. Escalation

If the matter remains unresolved, or if the complaint concerns a member of the OLT or poses a significant risk to the integrity of the network, the issue may be escalated to the GC ADDA EXCOM. Should a complaint involve a member of the EXCOM, that member will recuse themselves.

4.6. Confidentiality:

The conflict resolution process should be managed confidentially, and the complainant and OLT agree to follow this process in good faith before escalating the issue to funders or external parties.

4.7. No Retaliation

GC ADDA strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who raises a complaint or concern in good faith under this procedure. Allegations of retaliation will be treated as a serious breach of this Code of Conduct.



5. Dealing with a crisis:

Should a crisis occur, the OLT and EXCOM will instruct H3D Foundation to use the GC ADDA media channels to employ the DCAP (disclosure, concern, action, perspective) approach:

Disclosure – explain what has happened;

Concern – express concern about it;

Action – explain what we will do about it;

Perspective – offer a perspective on, or framing of, the situation.

5.1. Members agree to refrain from discussing crises with the media or via their social media channels before the OLT has deployed the DCAP approach mentioned above.

UPDATE AND REVIEW

The OLT will review, and if necessary update, the Code of Conduct annually.

DECLARATION

Members will upon admission and renewal sign the following declaration:

“I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that, while a member of the Grand Challenges African Drug Discovery Accelerator (GC ADDA) network or a member of a GC ADDA leadership body or a member of the GC ADDA secretariat, I will observe the provisions of the membership requirements and terms of reference of the GC ADDA network, and adhere to the provisions of the Code of Conduct”.

NAME: _____

GC ADDA MEMBER CATEGORY: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____