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**Consultation: CIfA’s *Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology***

As reported in [*The Archaeologist 118*](https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/The%20Archaeologist%20118.pdf) *(Winter 2023),* CIfA is undertaking a review of the [*Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology*](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf)*.* The review has been triggered by the recognition that the Code, though added to and amended from time to time, is essentially 40 years old, and may not have evolved as far or as fast as the values and ethics of our profession.

An advisory group drawn from a wide range of interests and perspectives in CIfA’s membership has been considering the findings to date. They are

* Some elements of the Code, and the values underpinning them, seem out of date.
* The Code’s purpose is not universally understood, and the relationship between the Code, standards, guidance and policy statements are unclear to many.
* Similarly, the constitutional relationship of the Code to the Charter and bylaw and the nature of the membership contract could be clearer. There are explanations in the Preamble to the Code, but they are often overlooked and need to be highlighted in a better way.
* The Code drew on many sources, but was drafted and has been managed by those with a primarily UK perspective. It is intended to be applicable worldwide, setting a higher standard for behaviour than is required by most jurisdictions, but does it effectively address – at a high level – the ethical obligations and challenges faced by our global profession?
* The language is not accessible.

Now we would like your invaluable views and input to help us produce a Code fit for the 21st century. All comments are welcome on the current [Code](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf) and how it might be reformed, promoted and applied. Please take the time to read and respond to the series of questions in the next few pages, and email your response to: [admin@archaeologists.net](mailto:admin@archaeologists.net). You are welcome to remain anonymous if you so wish. Those reviewing responses will only have sight of the forms sent to them from CIfA’s general email, and won’t have access to the email address from which they were sent. The deadline for the submission of responses is 26 May. Should you have any questions regarding this process, please email CIfA Chief Executive, Peter Hinton on: peter.hinton@archaeologists.net

**About you** (you may remain anonymous if you wish)

**Name**

**Are you?**

CIfA-accredited

non CIfA-accredited

**Are you**

**responding?**

On behalf of yourself

On behalf of a CIfA Registered Organisation

On behalf of another organisation or group

**1. How you use the Code of conduct**

**How does the Code relate to your day-to-day work?**

**How do you consider the Code when working with colleagues?**

**How do you consider the Code when working with non-archaeologists?**

**How do you make use of the preamble, as well as the principles and rules?**

**2. Conservation and destructive investigation**

1. **Archaeologists frequently make or advise on decisions about whether an asset with archaeological interest should be preserved or whether it should be subject to destructive investigation. Principle 2 of the Code seeks preservation wherever it is ‘possible’, and also refers to ‘rescue’ and ‘research’ projects. This seems out of step with current practice: do you agree?**
2. **If so do you have any suggestions for rebalancing or rewording?**

**3. Other relevant codes**

**a. Do you think CIfA should attempt to align its Code with national and international codes?**

**b. If yes, should we be prepared to modify our ideals to conform?**

**4. Wider responsibilities**

**Through the rules of ethical conduct in our Code, we place a heavier set of obligations on ourselves than are required of citizens – including other archaeologists – by law. The Code requires us to comply with the law, and with some moral expectations of society, in the conduct of our archaeological activities (and rarely in our private lives). Is there anything missing?**

**What should be said about the environment, climate change and EDI, for example?**

**Should the Code simply focus on the avoidance of unethical actions or should it require us to go further?**

**5. The implications of being a party to the Code**

**Do you think that the commitment by a** **CIfA-accredited archaeologist or Registered Organisation to comply with the Code is sufficiently recognised as a binding obligation, linked to our Chartered Status?**

**How well understood do you think it is that, under the Code, we have obligations equally to our professional colleagues and to the public at large?**

**How do you think our commitment to honour the Code obligations could best be emphasised (eg through reminders, signed undertakings, changing ‘a member shall…’ to ‘I will…’, integrating the preamble into the main text)?**

**6. Structure**

**How helpful is the current structure of the Code (five principles and supporting rules covering general conduct, conservation, recording, dissemination, treatment of colleagues)?**

**Would you recommend a different structure (eg ordered by types of activity, types of people we have obligations to, etc)?**

**7….and finally**

**Do you have any other advice or comments about the Code of conduct?**