



Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Filipino Scientists

In 1995, the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines (NAST PHL) published the Guidelines for Researchers on Ethics and Procedures which provided detailed prescriptions regarding the ethical conduct of scientific research and the processes involved in scientific research work.

Since then, various scientific and professional organizations have developed their own specific codes of ethics which aim to guide the conduct not only of scientific research in the various scientific disciplines, but also to stipulate principles of proper professional conduct in the varied professional and academic functions of scientists.

This document was developed with the aim of articulating and affirming the most important ethical principles that should guide all Filipino scientists. This statement of ethical principles is being articulated by the NAST in the hope that it would spur more detailed and thorough discussions about ethical practices in scientific research work in the specific disciplines. As such, it refrains from making detailed prescriptions regarding ethical standards, as these specifics may vary across the different scientific disciplines. In cases when these discussions have already been formalized in codes of ethics, this statement should serve as an affirmation of these codes.

The NAST would like to acknowledge the work of the Committee in Scientific Ethics, whose members are listed on page 3, for their valuable contributions in crafting this document that defines important tenets that should frame the work of all Filipino scientists.

In the long term, the NAST hopes that this statement of ethical principles will guide right-minded Filipino scientists as they strive to maintain the highest levels of ethical and professional behaviors as they face new forms of ethical dilemmas that arise in today's more complex scientific environment.

The NAST also hopes that this document would inform the various stakeholders of the scientific community: government agencies, industry, non-government and people's organizations, schools, research funding agencies, media, among others, about the ethical convictions of scientists, upon which their credibility rests. As such, the NAST hopes that these stakeholders would also endorse and support these principles in their various activities and interactions with Filipino scientists.

PREAMBLE

Scientific Research as a Public Trust

Scientific research and innovation are important pillars for the development of any country and people. This basic point is recognized in the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Art XIV Sec 10), which affirms that “The State shall give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and their utilization, and to science and technology education, training and services.”

This principle of prioritizing scientific research is premised on the State’s and society’s trust in the integrity of scientists and researchers, in the reliability of the results of their scientific work, and in the credibility of their scientific pronouncements.

Because the general public does not have the means and capacity to verify the outcomes and interpretations of the work of scientists and research, the public trusts that the scientific research community is composed of people of integrity and honesty, who would ensure that the work of all scientists and researchers abide by basic ethical principles that guide good scientific work.

These Ethical Principles for Science Researchers articulates the general principles of ethical conduct in scientific work and all its aspects; these basic ethical principles should guide all scientists in their various roles and functions in the scientific and academic community, and in the Philippine society, including research, publication and other forms of public communication, teaching and mentoring, among others.

This articulation of principles represents the more specific ethical standards that the scientific community holds Filipino scientists, over and above the standards of all Filipino scientists abide be as lawful citizens of the Republic of the Philippines, committed to its national and human development goals.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Ethical Scientific Practices

All Filipino scientists, recognize, abide by, and intentionally disseminate the basic ethical principles articulated in this document. They also require of all their colleagues conduct and behavior consistent with these principles. They do not defend, conceal or justify conduct that breaches these principles, not even on the basis of necessary obedience and loyalty. They refuse all forms of scientific dishonesty and infringement of the principles specified in this document.

2. Ethical Use of Science in Philippine Society

All Filipino scientists consider scientific research as an integral part of a culture of inquiry, and as the source of innovation, and thus, defend scientific work against inappropriate scientific criticism. They stand determinedly against the unethical and inappropriate use of scientific knowledge, and ensure that scientific knowledge is used in the service of national and human development goals.

3. Conflict of Interest

All Filipino scientists serve the scientific community and the general public by providing unbiased professional judgments and statements regarding various issues of public interest; these judgments and statements are based on careful scientific studies. They avoid all possible cases in which the provision of unbiased judgments is affected in any way that may favor self-interest and other conflicting interests.

4. Intellectual Honesty

Filipino scientists acknowledge the scientific contributions of predecessors and colleagues to the research question being studied in all written and oral reports of their research study.

When citing findings and results obtained by other scientists, they provide clear references to the appropriate respective sources, whether published or unpublished. They do not plagiarize any part of the research reports of other scientists and researchers, whether published or unpublished; that is, they do not take other authors' findings, words and writings, and pass them off as their own by not providing appropriate indications and citations of the original sources, whether published or unpublished.

5. Weighing the Benefits of Science vis-à-vis Potential Harm

All Filipino scientists undertake research in such a way that ensures that society and all its members, the environment, and other basic human and cultural values are not compromised. Thus, Filipino scientists must always consider the benefits of their scientific work vis-à-vis these potential harms. In cases when the benefits of science are deemed to outweigh the potential harm, Filipino scientists take all steps to minimize potential harm and take steps to mitigate their negative consequences.

6. Commitment to Professional Development as Scientists

All Filipino scientists broaden and deepen their scientific knowledge and strive to improve personal professional competency. They maintain a critically reflective attitude towards their own scientific findings and results as well as to results of colleagues, and are open to discussion and factual arguments.

7. Development of Students and Other Stakeholders

All Filipino scientists are committed to mentoring future scientists and to developing the scientific knowledge of their students as

well as other stakeholders and end-users of scientific knowledge. They model the proper knowledge, skills, and principles of good conduct in science to students and other stakeholders, as such they consider the consequences and act appropriately regarding the possible scientific misconduct or unethical behaviors of their students, collaborators, and partners in scientific work.

8. Advocacy for Scientific Approaches

All Filipino scientists defend the freedom of scientific thought, expression, exchanges of opinion and information. They refuse to use non-scientific approaches and expressions of ideological, religious, and political opinions in their work as scientists.

Committee Members

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ABOUT NAST

National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines or NAST PHL is the country's highest advisory body to the government and the science community on matters related to science and technology. It also has the mandate to recognize outstanding achievements in science and technology made by Filipino Scientists in all fields of science.

Vision

"A progressive Philippines anchored on science"

Mission

1. To recognize exemplary science and technology achievements among the young and among peers.
2. To encourage individual Academy members to continue their own scholarly pursuits thereby making the Academy the principal reservoir of scientific and technological expertise in the nation.
3. To provide independent and science-based advice on problems facing the nation and the world.
4. To link with like-minded institutions and individuals in promoting scientific achievement in the Philippines and abroad.
5. To promote a strong science culture in Philippine society.

Mandates

1. To recognize outstanding achievements in Science and Technology as well as provide meaningful incentives to those engaged in Scientific and Technological Researches (P.D. 1003-A).
2. To advise the President and the Cabinet on matters related to Science and Technology (Executive Order No. 818).
3. To engage in projects and programs designed to recognize outstanding achievements in science and to promote scientific productivity (Executive Order No. 818).
4. To embark on programs traditionally and internationally expected of an academy of science (Executive Order No. 818).

*Copy of **Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Filipino Scientists** is available at the NAST Website: <http://www.nast.ph>; Email: secretariat@nast.dost.gov.ph*

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