



Volunteer and Staff Handbook¹

Thank you for contributing your time, energy, and care to make this conference a welcoming, inclusive, and safe space for everyone.

Your role as a volunteer or staff member is essential to ensuring that every participant feels supported, respected, and valued.

Please read this handbook carefully and refer to it throughout the event, it provides the key guidance and contacts you may need before, during, and after the conference.

Purpose

This handbook provides guidance for all volunteers and staff supporting the conference.

It outlines responsibilities, communication protocols, and expected conduct before, during, and after the event.

It aligns with the *DiGRA 2026 White Paper on Behaviour Expectations* (Sections 4.2, 5.4, and 8.1).

All volunteers will receive a role-specific briefing from the Volunteer/Chair Coordinator at the start of their shift.

These briefings cover your specific area of responsibility — such as registration support, accessibility guidance, or hybrid session assistance — and the key contacts relevant to your role.

1. Core Principles

All volunteers and staff must:

- Treat every participant with courtesy, professionalism, and empathy.
- Maintain confidentiality in all incident or accessibility reports.
- Promote inclusivity, accessibility, and safety in every interaction.
- Follow the DiGRA Code of Conduct and report any concerns promptly.

¹ Authorship and Acknowledgment: These appendices were prepared by Yekta Kalantar Hormozi, DiGRA Diversity Officer (2025–2027), as companion materials [to the DiGRA 2026 White Paper on Behaviour Expectations](#). They were developed with feedback and contributions from the DiGRA DEI Subcommittee, including Carlos Gabriel Kelly González, Stanisław Krawczyk, and Usva Friman.



- Respect participants' affirmed names, pronouns, and cultural backgrounds.

2. Roles and Identification

- Wear name badges that clearly display your role (and pronouns if you wish).
- Remain approachable and visible in public areas.
- Know who the Safety & Conduct Team, Accessibility & Inclusion Desk, and local organisers are.
- Be familiar with the venue layout, quiet/sensory rooms, restrooms, and emergency exits.
- Keep your phone on silent but accessible for urgent communication.

3. Communication and Interaction

- Use inclusive, gender-neutral, and culturally sensitive language.
- Avoid assumptions about identity or access needs.
- Offer help respectfully (“Would you like some assistance?”).
- Direct questions you cannot answer to the Accessibility & Inclusion Desk.
- Remain calm and professional; de-escalate where possible.

4. Reporting and Confidentiality

If a participant reports harassment, discrimination, or an accessibility issue:

- Listen without judgement.
- Thank them for raising the concern.
- Do **not** promise outcomes — explain that the Safety & Conduct Team will handle the matter.
- Contact the appropriate person (see below).
- Keep details private except with authorised contacts.
If the report concerns the Executive Board, contact the **Ombuds Team** directly.

5. Accessibility Support

- Know accessible routes, lifts, and restrooms.



- Guide participants to quiet/sensory or parent/caregiver rooms.
- Fetch assistive equipment when requested.
- Keep pathways clear and signage visible.
- Report broken or missing accessibility features immediately to the LOC lead.

6. Daily Responsibilities and Check-Ins

Before each day:

- Attend the morning briefing with the **Volunteer/Chair Coordinator**.
- Receive your specific role assignment (e.g., registration desk, session room, hybrid tech, or accessibility support).
- Confirm your scheduled breaks and lunch times.
- Review your assigned area and confirm signage is intact.

During the day:

- Stay alert and available to assist participants in your designated area.
- If working registration: welcome participants, check badges, answer common questions, and direct accessibility queries to the Inclusion Desk.
- If supporting remote/hybrid sessions: ensure online participants can hear, see, and interact; check captions are active; assist the chair as needed.
- Communicate any issues quickly via the volunteer channel or help desk.
- Take scheduled breaks — wellbeing is essential for good support.

End of day:

- Join the short debrief to log incidents, feedback, or improvements.
- Return equipment (lanyards, headsets, signage) before leaving.

Volunteer/Chair Coordinator responsibilities:

- Conduct morning and end-of-day briefings for all volunteers.
- Distribute this handbook and ensure all volunteers understand their specific roles.
- Monitor workloads and ensure volunteers take proper breaks.
- Act as the first point of contact for all volunteer-related issues.
- Communicate urgent updates from the Organising Committee.

If a Session Chair Does Not Arrive

If a scheduled session chair does not arrive on time, please follow these steps to ensure the session continues smoothly:

1. Wait up to 5 minutes after the scheduled start time.
2. If the chair is still absent, a volunteer or LOC member should begin the session to avoid delay.
3. Use the Chair's Opening Script provided in Appendix E – Chair Handbook to start the session professionally.
4. Assign a temporary chair, such as the next scheduled presenter or a Programme Committee member if available.
5. Inform the Programme Committee or Volunteer Chair immediately so an official replacement can be arranged for later sessions.
6. If hybrid or remote participants are involved, notify them clearly about the change in session facilitation.
7. Note: If you are stepping in as a replacement chair and have time, you may review Appendix E – Chair Handbook for further guidance on session management and reporting responsibilities.



7. Safety and Conduct Support

Please review the full [DiGRA Code of Conduct](#) for our shared commitment to safety and respectful participation.

If you **experience or witness harassment, discrimination, or any issue affecting safety or accessibility**, follow the guidance below.

In an Emergency

- **Call** 999 or 112 for Gardaí, Fire Brigade, or Ambulance.
- **Then contact Campus Security:** Maynooth University Campus Security: +353 1 708 3929/+353 1 708 3333
 - Security will meet first responders and guide them to the correct location.
 - They can also support non-emergency safety situations.
- **Immediately notify the Organising Chair and Co-Chair** (see contact table).

In all emergencies: **contact both campus security and the organising chairs once you are safe.**

In Cases of Harassment or Conduct Concerns

- Approach any DiGRA Board member wearing a designated sticker, as they are trained to receive reports confidentially,
or
- Visit the Accessibility and Inclusion Desk to request private contact with a Safety and Conduct representative. You can also email:
 - **Local Organising Committee:** digrainireland2026@gmail.com
 - **DiGRA Executive Board:** digraininternational@gmail.com
 - **DiGRA Ombuds Team (confidential):** digraombuds@googlegroups.com
- Anonymous reports can be submitted via [DiGRA's online form](#).

8. Who to Contact and for What Issue

Issue Type	Primary Contact	Email / Phone	Notes
Issue regarding your volunteer or chair role	Volunteer / Chair Coordinator John Healy	john.p.healy@tudublin.ie	Questions, scheduling, or internal matters



Issue regarding DEI or diversity concerns	Diversity & Inclusion Chair Yekta Kalantar	yekta.kalantar@mu.ie	Accessibility, inclusion, or conduct queries
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Other issues / overall conference concerns	Organising Chair / Co-Chair	digraireland2026@gmail.com	General conference operations
Campus security / venue safety	Campus Security Maynooth University Campus Security	+353 1 708 3929 / +353 1 708 3333	Emergency or safety assistance
Emergency services	Local Emergency Number	999 or 112	Police / Fire / Ambulance
Local Organising Committee (main email)	DiGRA 2026 Local Organising Committee	digraireland2026@gmail.com	General inquiries or reports

9. Confidentiality and Follow-Up

All reports will be handled with **respect, discretion, and confidentiality**, following DiGRA's Code of Conduct and GDPR standards.

Only the relevant individuals — such as the Ombuds Team or Safety & Conduct leads — will receive the details necessary to respond appropriately.

10. After the Conference

- Submit final accessibility notes or incident summaries (if applicable) to the LOC.
- Return all materials and equipment.
- Participate in post-event evaluation if invited.

