

Conflict Resolution Policy

Ronin Institute for Independent Scholarship 2.0 (RIIS 2.0)

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Interim Council

1. Purpose

This policy outlines a procedure that is designed to address conduct issues and conflicts, defined as formal complaints related to violations of RIIS 2.0 policies, including but not limited to the [Code of Conduct](#) and [Belonging Policy](#), in a transparent, fair, and non-retaliatory manner.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All RIIS 2.0 Affiliates, including Fellows and Associates.
- Actions that could lead to misconduct in financial reporting are unlawful and are inconsistent with announced policies or procedures or otherwise amount to serious improper conduct. The Conflict Resolution Policy is intended to encourage and enable a reporting person to raise serious concerns within RIIS 2.0 before seeking resolution outside of the RIIS 2.0. Such conduct could include questionable accounting reports or internal controls, unethical business conduct, concerns about health risks, sexual harassment, or discrimination based on race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability within RIIS 2.0.

3. Principles

- **Fairness:** All parties have a right to be heard and treated equitably.
- **Confidentiality:** Disclosures are handled with discretion to the extent possible.
- **Impartiality:** Oversight is conducted by individuals without direct conflicts of interest.
- **Restorative Orientation:** Where feasible, processes seek restoration over disciplinary actions.

4. Submission of statements of concern

A statement of concern may be submitted to any of the Council members of RIIS 2.0 listed on the RIIS 2.0 website (or to the email for the Council as a whole listed on the website), whose responsibility is to begin the investigative process. Please see the preliminary investigation description below.

Submissions must include:

- Full name and contact information of the complainant.
- Detailed description of the concern or conflict (including names, dates, and evidence).
- Desired resolution (if any).
- Whether the complainant would prefer to remain anonymous.
 - Note: We cannot guarantee anonymity; however, we will make a good faith effort upon request of the complainant, including keeping testimony or evidence in a secure location with limited access. In addition, efforts to maintain anonymity may limit the investigation scope.

Statements of concern about events older than 2 years after the complainant was made aware will be investigated only at the discretion of the Council.

5. Investigation

- Acknowledgment of receipt within **30 days** by the receiving Council member.
- Preliminary investigation conducted by the receiving Council member and a subset of the Council group. The preliminary investigation can have three possible results:
 - a. **Dismissed** for insufficient evidence, if deemed frivolous, or outside the purview of RIIS 2.0.
 - b. **Referred** to the appropriate parties if minor or administrative.
 - c. **Advanced to review** if substantive and actionable.
- If **Advanced to review**:
 - The receiving Council member will recommend a **Conflict Resolution Panel** (the “**Panel**”) of three impartial members to the Council, which will approve the composition of the members.
 - The complainant and the respondent will be interviewed by the Panel, as well as relevant witnesses as needed, and evidence will be collected.
 - The complainant will be notified and given the opportunity to respond.

- All participants in the investigation must maintain confidentiality about the investigation.
- The Panel will issue a set of findings and recommend an outcome.

6. Findings and Outcomes

The results of the conflict resolution process are referred to the Council. This includes all preliminary investigation outcomes—whether dismissal, referral, or advancement to review with Panel involvement. If a case is advanced to a review and a Panel is convened, the Panel’s findings and recommended outcome are submitted to the Council. The Council will review all relevant information and issue a final outcome. If a Panel investigation were conducted, the outcome would include a summary of its findings. In all cases, the Council will recommend one of the following outcomes, which can include:

- **A finding of Insufficient Evidence / Dismissal**
- **Informal resolution** (e.g., mediated apology, restorative circle)
- **Formal action**, such as:
 - Written warning.
 - Temporary suspension.
 - Termination of Affiliation.

Outcomes are communicated from the Council to all directly involved parties in writing. In rare cases, RIIS 2.0 may be ethically or legally required to issue a public statement regarding the conflict to clarify its position or protect its integrity; individuals involved will be notified in advance.

7. Appeals

Appeals may be filed within **14 days** of the outcome notice, limited to:

- New evidence.
- Procedural error.
- Disproportionate sanction.

Appeals are reviewed by a separate, Council-appointed 3-member panel (the “**Appeals Panel**”), and their recommendation is referred to the Council. No member of the original preliminary investigation or review process may serve on the Appeals Panel. The Council’s decision after review of the appeal is final.

8. Recordkeeping and Transparency

- A secure log of reported issues is maintained by the Council.
- Aggregated, de-identified annual reports may be published for transparency.
- Records will be maintained for a minimum of 7 years.

9. Protection Against Retaliation

RIIS 2.0 prohibits retaliation against any individual for:

- Reporting to the Council, or to a federal, state, or local agency, what the complainant believes in good faith to be illegal, fraudulent, or in violation of any policy of the RIIS 2.0.
- Participating in good faith in any resulting investigation or proceeding.
- Exercising his or her rights under any state or federal law(s) or regulation(s) to pursue a claim or take legal action to protect the complainant's rights.

RIIS 2.0 may take disciplinary action (up to and including termination) against an officer, director, employee, or volunteer who has engaged in retaliatory conduct in violation of this policy.

10. Jurisdiction and Legal Disclaimer

Nothing in this policy limits the legal rights of any party to seek recourse under applicable local, state, or federal laws.

11. Council approval

Signed: 

Rami Saydjari, Secretary
Ronin Institute for Independent Scholarship 2.0
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Document history

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