

Code of Conduct

South African Society for Research in Music, September 2016

Preamble

The South African Society for Research in Music (hereafter SASRIM or the Society) is an organisation dedicated to facilitating dialogue and collaboration between all researchers in music, within and beyond academia and to promoting, fostering and disseminating such research, in particular on the African continent. Emerging from the recognition that music research has historically been pursued in relatively distinct settings and intellectual traditions in our country, the objective of the Society shall be to actively attempt to bridge these historic gaps and to pursue transformative best practices in music scholarship.

SASRIM acknowledges the importance of scholarly engagement with questions regarding the relationships between music and its social and political contexts under and in the wake of colonialism and apartheid. As such, the Society actively encourages critical inquiry, while acknowledging that such inquiry relies on the scholarly integrity of its members.

SASRIM members recognise an obligation to uphold and promote the following basic principles of ethical conduct in our profession:

- (1) freedom of inquiry and the right to academic expression
- (2) honesty and integrity in scholarly investigation and in the dissemination of research
- (3) respect for diverse points of view and respect for persons

Members of the Society are expected to uphold these principles not only in their scholarly work but in all their professional capacities.

Ethical Conduct in Research and Scholarship

i) Freedom of inquiry

SASRIM declares freedom of inquiry to be fundamental to the scholarly enterprise. Such freedom of inquiry assumes a sincere commitment to reasoned discourse, professional integrity, willingness to engage in constructive debate and acknowledgement of and respect

for alternative interpretations and points of view. The Society shall defend critical scholarly practices, individual scholars' right to free inquiry, and the unhampered dissemination of research. Members are encouraged to solve disputes or intellectual differences with fellow members and research associates through scholarly platforms and to refrain from resorting to *ad hominem* attacks, legal action, or threats of the same. Such actions are deemed by the Society to be inappropriate to the fostering of academic inquiry and antithetical to academic life in general.

ii) Responsibility in Scholarly Exchanges

The Society affirms that debate is an integral and desirable part of scholarly exchange, but that it should take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility. As such, SASRIM members should be committed to giving fair hearing to or reading of sometimes conflicting arguments of fellow scholars; to develop arguments responsibly; and to base arguments on thorough research and reliable evidence.

iii) Fair Research Practice

SASRIM regards all forms of research misconduct, including plagiarism and falsification or fabrication of data as unacceptable. Society members should know and uphold copyright laws as they apply to all relevant research materials. SASRIM's members are to be expected to negotiate informed access to the artists and/or communities with whom they conduct their research, and to document such informed consent as appropriate. While this does not entail asking permission to criticise someone's work, practice or conduct, or soliciting the agreement of research subjects in relation to what scholars argue in their research findings, the broad purpose and intentions of a research project need to be made known to research participants prior to the research process being conducted.

iv) Professional Conduct

Members of the Society should maintain ethical professional conduct at all times, while remaining mindful of the inequalities of power inherent in professional relationships. SASRIM therefore urges senior academics and institutions of higher learning to acknowledge the weighting of power and capital in their favour whenever students, junior colleagues or early career researchers are involved. SASRIM further condemns abuse of power or

harassment within professional relationships in any form; this includes discriminatory behaviour that may be based on, but is not exclusive to, race, gender, religion, nationality or national origin, age, sexual orientation, political beliefs or affiliation, physical abilities or handicaps, chosen research or performance specialisation, or employment status.