



## **Board Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

### **Our Mission:**

Bridge The Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation is created to serve, educate and fund research for families coping with the effects of SYNGAP mutations.

### **1. GENERAL MORAL IMPERATIVES**

*As a Bridge The Gap – SYNGAP Board Member I will...*

**1.1 Contribute to society and human well-being.** This principle concerning the quality of life of all people affirms an obligation to protect fundamental human rights and to respect the diversity of all cultures.

**1.2 Avoid harm to others.** Well-intended actions, may lead to harm unexpectedly. In such an event the responsible person or persons are obligated to undo or mitigate the negative consequences as much as possible. One way to avoid unintentional harm is to carefully consider potential impact on all those affected before decisions are made.

**1.3 Be honest and trustworthy.** Honesty is an essential component of trust. Without trust an organization cannot function effectively. The honest professional will not make deliberately false or deceptive claims.

As professionals we have a duty to be honest about all/any circumstances that may lead to conflicts of interest.

Board Membership in volunteer organizations such as Bridge The Gap – SYNGAP ERF may at times place individuals in situations where their statements or actions could be interpreted as carrying the "weight" of a larger group of professionals. A Bridge The Gap – SYNGAP ERF Board Member will exercise care to not misrepresent Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF or positions and policies of the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF and should insure to clearly state positions other than those specifically sanctioned by the President as personal in nature.

**1.4 Be fair and take action not to discriminate.** The values of equality, tolerance, respect for others beliefs, and the principles of equal justice govern this imperative. Discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin, or other such factors is an explicit violation of the Bridge the Gap - SYNGAP ERF and will not be tolerated.

**1.5 Honor property rights including copyrights and patents.** Violation of copyrights, patents, is prohibited by law in most circumstances. Even when it is not so protected Copies should be made only with proper authorization. Unauthorized duplication or publishing in paper or electronic form of copy written materials is not permitted.

**1.6 Give proper credit for intellectual property.** Members are obligated to protect the integrity of intellectual property. Specifically, one must not take credit for other's ideas or work.

**1.7 Respect the privacy of others.** There is potential for violating the privacy of individuals and groups. It is the responsibility of members/volunteers to maintain privacy and integrity of individuals. This includes taking precautions to ensure the accuracy of data, as well as protecting it from unauthorized access, purposeful or accidental disclosure without prior consent. As is appropriate and, in some cases required by law, written consent may be necessary.

**1.8 Honor confidentiality.** The principle of honesty extends to issues of confidentiality of information whenever one has made an explicit promise to honor confidentiality. The ethical concern is to respect all obligations of confidentiality to members and individuals seeking the assistance of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF.

**1.9 Treat others with respect.** Courtesy and respect for others are fundamental principles which apply in all aspects and to all individuals with whom we interact. As Board Members we represent Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF with each contact. This principle applies equally to the treatment of fellow Board Members.

## **2. SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**2.1 Strive to achieve the highest quality, effectiveness and dignity in both the process and products of professional work.** Excellence is perhaps the most important obligation of a professional. Each Board Member & volunteer must strive to achieve the highest quality and to be cognizant of the serious negative consequences and poor reflection on the organization that lesser quality generates.

**2.2 Acquire and maintain professional competence.** Excellence depends on individuals who take responsibility for acquiring and maintaining professional competence. A Board Member must participate in setting standards for appropriate levels of competence, and strive to achieve those standards.

**2.3 Know and respect existing laws pertaining to professional work.** Board Member must obey existing local, state, province, national, and international laws. Policies and procedures of the organization must also be obeyed. If one decides to violate a law or rule for any reason, one must fully accept responsibility for one's actions and for the consequences.

**No medical advice should be given by non medical professionals** with the exception of data posted in our Fact Sheet and from the Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF Website.

**2.4 Accept and provide appropriate professional review.** The organizations success depends on professional reviewing and critiquing. Whenever appropriate, individual members should seek and utilize peer review as well as provide review of the work of others.

**2.5 Honor contracts, agreements, and assigned responsibilities.** Honoring one's commitments is a matter of integrity and honesty. For members and professional volunteers this includes ensuring elements perform as intended. Also, when one contracts for work with another party, one has an obligation to keep that party properly informed about progress toward completing that work.

A member/volunteer has a responsibility to request a change in any assignment that he or she feels cannot be completed as defined. The major underlying principle here is the obligation to accept personal accountability for professional work.

**2.6 Access computing and communication resources only when authorized to do so.** No one should enter or use another's computer system, software, or data files without explicit permission. No one shall make changes to computer system or website without first obtaining approval for each instance. No exceptions.

### **3. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVES**

**3.1 Articulate social responsibilities of members of the organization and encourage full acceptance of those responsibilities.** Because organizations of all kinds have impacts on the public, they must accept responsibilities to society. Organizational procedures and attitudes oriented toward quality and the welfare of society will promote well being thereby serving the public interest and fulfilling social responsibility. Organizational leaders must encourage full participation in meeting social responsibilities as well as quality performance.

**3.2 Create opportunities for members of the organization to learn.** Educational opportunities are essential to facilitate optimal participation of all organizational members. Opportunities must be available to all members to help them improve their knowledge and scope

**3.3 Speak up when you have questions or disagree, but support the final decision of the organization.** Once an issue has been discussed and decided, support it and defend it. We may make mistakes, but we do so in good faith and act in the best interest of Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF. Address rumors and misunderstandings.

**3.4 Accept responsibility** Take on your share of the work. Do your best, ask for help and look for ways to improve prior practices.

**3.5 Stay actively engaged** It is our energy that feeds this organization and gets its results. Absent this energy and direction, the organization will become stagnant and not meet its goals or its mission. Our work is too important to too many to permit such an absence of focus or progress

**3.6 Conflicts within the organization** Conflicts and concerns will be address by the Executive Committee within a reasonable time frame depending on the time of year and issues involved. Members need to have an understanding for and respect the Executive Committee’s response and decision. Once the Executive Committee reviews the conflict/concern and renders a decision, the decision, like others, is final and should be respected by all involved.

Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP ERF