

NLengineers Code of Conduct

In accordance with the Articles of Association of the association NLengineers, all members are subject to a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct forms part of the obligations that membership of NLengineers entails.

The Code of Conduct was approved at the general meeting of NLengineers on 24 June 2010 in Zeist, the Netherlands.

General

1. The Code of Conduct applies to all members of NLengineers unless indicated otherwise.
2. Members will see to it that the Code of Conduct will be complied with by the people who work at or are associated with the members.
3. The Code of Conduct is based on the principles of integrity, independence, expertise, confidentiality, sustainability, safety and social responsibility.
4. By following these principles in practising their profession, members embrace their responsibility towards society, the clients, and the other participants in the consultation process in which they are involved.
5. Members will observe the current legislation and regulations.
6. Members are aware of the importance of their role in society and of the contribution their consultation can make to the development of the human environment.

Integrity

7. In their professional, business and social relations, members will act honestly and openly, in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations, without any tolerance for corruption, bribery, deceit and other forms of unlawful actions or failure.
8. In practising their profession, members will emphasize transparency, clarity and openness.

Independence

9. Members will avoid anything that may damage the independence of their consultation.
10. Members will demonstrate their independence by:
 - not being influenced by unlawful additional interests in their consultation;
 - not accepting a reward, in any form whatsoever, that diminishes their independence.
11. Members will not serve conflicting interests of different clients, unless the clients agree in writing with the member carrying out the activities in question.

Expertise

12. Members will follow the technological and legal developments relevant to their field. Members will keep their knowledge and skills at the required level, apply the branch-specific requirements guaranteeing their expertise, and act accordingly.
13. Members will accept an assignment if and only if they have the necessary knowledge and expertise to carry it out correctly.
14. In addition to this Code of Conduct, all members will apply a quality management system.

Confidentiality

15. Members will honour the confidential character of the information that they receive within the framework of their professional and business activities.
16. Members may only use confidential information in as far as this is necessary to carry out an assignment.
17. Members will not disclose confidential information to third parties, unless this is required by law.

Sustainability, safety and social responsibility

18. Members will stimulate sustainable, safe and socially responsible conduct to the highest possible degree.
19. Members will act with respect for people, the environment and society, both in their internal business operation and in their consulting activities. In this way, they will set a good example to, and create awareness with, clients and other parties in the supply chain.
20. If the subjects mentioned in articles 18 and 19 have not been taken into account sufficiently or not at all in projects, members will notify the client stating the reasons why.
21. Members will refrain from conduct that violates the current legislation and regulations or the international agreements or conventions concerning nature or the environment that apply to the country where the member in question is active.

Practice

22. Members will represent the justified interests of the client to the best of their abilities within the scope of the assignment. Moreover, members will encourage the client to opt for a solution that contributes to a sustainable development and structure of society.
23. Members will maintain good contacts with other members; they will not enter into unfair competition with other members, and show respect for other members¹.

¹ The board regards the memorandum "Scheiding van belang" (i.e. separation of interest) as established by DT-RWS on September 14th 2007, as relevant policy in our sector against conflict of interests in public procurements and has officially confirmed this at the General Assembly Meeting on June 28th 2012.

24. In the event a dispute arises between one or more members, the members involved must see to it that the interests of their respective clients will not be harmed.
25. In the event that a member is being asked to revise or take over the assignment of another member, this will be done with the greatest care². In this situation, the right for all parties to be heard applies.

Compliance

26. The Committee on Associational Affairs will supervise compliance with this Code of Conduct.
27. This Committee may impose the following sanctions: warning, reprimand, suspension of membership (up to a maximum of 6 months) and expulsion.
28. The Committee may notify an imposed sanction within the association. This notification will be anonymous and cannot be traced to any person or member.
29. Appeals against decisions of the Committee may be lodged with the Board. When an appeal is pending, the decision will remain in force.

Date of commencement

30. This Code of Conduct will replace the Code of Conduct of 6 December 2001, and will come into effect on 24 June 2010.

² On 21 November 2007, the Board established the Guideline for Second Opinions, formulating a framework for conducting a second opinion professionally.