

Big Fork Theatre Code of Conduct

Big Fork Theatre (BFT) is a not-for-profit co-operative. The primary activities of BFT are:

- producing live comedy shows;
- providing improvisational and other training; and
- creating a community around improvisation, comedy and performance in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Core principles

The core principles of participation in the BFT community, as reflected in this Code of Conduct, are respect, community, fun and quality.

Respect

BFT believes in respect for others, our audiences and our players, and respect for our environment.

BFT respects artistic and comedic freedom, however any bigotry, intolerance or harassment will not be tolerated on or off stage. BFT understands and accepts uncomfortable, impolite or offensive things may be explored on stage, in rehearsal, in jams, or in class, as comedy often exists in the grey areas of life. Any person enrolling in a class, playing in a jam, participating in a rehearsal, performing in or watching a show, should approach this experience with an open mind. However BFT accepts the importance of maintaining proper respect for people to encourage diverse participation in comedy.

To this end, harassment (including sexual harassment and bullying), discrimination, and violence will not be tolerated. Other behaviour that puts other people at risk will also not be tolerated.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- being intoxicated by drugs or alcohol (if you are unfit to drive, you are unfit to perform/play);
- cause intentional damage to any space in which they are training, performing or representing BFT;
- bringing uninvited guests to a class that is not "open" or bring uninvited guests into areas specified as 'performer only';
- Inappropriate verbal, physical or sexual conduct towards other members of the community
- repeatedly disrupting the enjoyment of other members of the community by unreasonably controlling or monopolising group conversations, performance or training time;
- giving unsolicited criticism to fellow community members on their performances, whether in or outside of a classroom or performance environment (compliments are fine though!).

While BFT will generally not interfere with artistic choices made on-stage or during a classroom exercise, any performer or student who feels that the line has been crossed may excuse themselves from the performance or exercise and should report the conduct to the Big Fork Theatre Grievance Officer and the grievance procedure will be followed. Behaviour outside a BFT context can also be considered through the grievance procedure if appropriate.

Inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and will result in suspension and/or removal from participation in BFT activities.

Criminal or violent behaviour at any BFT event will not be tolerated and will result in immediate removal from participation in BFT activities.

Community

BFT is a community-based organisation, and part of that is an obligation to ensure accessibility and accountability. BFT wants to encourage as many people from as many different backgrounds to be involved in improv and comedy in all facets, creative and organisational. Every person who is part of the BFT community commits to taking these values on board.

Our commitment to accessibility means:

- As much as possible, all shows will be disability accessible. This includes wheelchair accessibility, providing advice about the content of the shows, providing appropriate seating, ensuring shows can be accessed on public transport. BFT will continue to strive to improve our accessibility, and if community members have suggestions or options to improve this they are welcomed and should be communicated to the board through email.
- As much as possible all BFT events will aim to be easy for all members of the community to attend. This includes taking into account those with caring responsibilities and others. BFT will distribute information in an up to date manner, be flexible and accommodating and always be open to discuss how to improve accessibility of events.

Our commitment to accountability means:

- As much as possible, information and planning for the company will be open and accessible to the members of the community. This includes, 6 monthly check ins, getting regular feedback, providing as up to date information as possible regarding shows, workshops and future plans.
- Decisions made by the board will be publicised and processes for feedback and the responses to that feedback will be available and open to members.
- BFT is always happy to listen to and discuss ideas from the community members to improve and open up the company.

Fun

BFT wants to ensure that fun - the core of improv and comedy - is centred in our community and work. This means we aim for a positive environment at all shows, jams, rehearsals and events. This means:

- All players and performers bring an open mind to performances and jams, treating each other with tolerance and respect
- Any constructive criticism will be delivered appropriately and through the right channels
- No personal insults, unsolicited criticism or offensive comments will be tolerated during BFT events
- All BFT events are welcoming and open to all people

Quality

BFT is committed to producing quality improv and sketch comedy shows, and other content. This means:

- BFT retains the right to select which shows it produces
- BFT commits to choosing shows based on clear criteria
- All BFT shows should entertain the audience and creatively satisfy the performers/writers/artists involved (as far as is possible)

As part of our commitment to quality we are also committed to ensuring our teaching and training is up to standard. This means:

- BFT teachers will teach to the curriculum set for the course ensuring consistency
- BFT teachers and coaches will behave professionally and respectfully
- Students will have opportunities to give feedback to improve the course
- Students will receive constructive feedback on their progress in classes and training courses

Grievance Procedure

The procedure for resolving a grievance regarding any part of this code of conduct is as follows. The person with the grievance will be referred to below as the aggrieved.

1. The aggrieved should write to the BFT Grievance Officer outlining what their grievance is, who is responsible if anyone, when and where their grievance occurred, and the effect this has had on the person or others. If it is not possible to communicate the grievance in writing, it can be done in person.
2. The BFT Grievance Officer will respond within 7 days to the aggrieved. This grievance should be reported to the BFT board.
3. The BFT Grievance Officer will investigate the grievance. If it is an interpersonal issue that is not related to an overt breach of the code of conduct, then the BFT Grievance Officer may attempt to resolve the conflict through a conversation between the parties mediated by the BFT Grievance Officer.
4. If the grievance is related to a breach of the code of conduct or something of a similarly serious nature, the board will hear a report from the BFT Grievance Officer and discuss the breach and appropriate consequences.
5. Possible consequences can include things such as performance bans, jam bans or other such restrictions on access to the community.
6. If the matter is of a criminal nature, the BFT Grievance Officer and BFT board will support the aggrieved in going to the authorities.
7. If the grievance involves the BFT Grievance Officer, the board must appoint another party to fulfil the role.
8. All grievances and investigations are strictly confidential.
9. All grievances are to be reported on, in general or in a de-identified manner, at the AGM.

Definitions

discrimination means when a person discriminates against another person if they treat a person less favourably in similar circumstances because of the other person's:

- sex;
- relationship status;
- pregnancy;
- parental status;
- breastfeeding;
- age;
- race;
- impairment;
- religious belief or religious activity;
- political belief or activity;
- trade union activity;
- lawful sexual activity;
- gender identity;
- sexuality;
- intersex status;
- family responsibilities; and/or
- association with, or relation to, a person identified on the basis of any of the above attributes.

harassment means a repeated unwanted or clearly unacceptable behaviour, or a pattern of unwanted or clearly unacceptable behaviour, directed at another person or persons

sexual harassment means unwanted sexual advance or comment