

# **BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK**

## **Guiding Principles 2026**

Values, Commitments, & Code of Conduct

# Our Values & Commitments

## **Science is for everyone.**

Our core belief is that high-quality science is for everyone. That's why our mission is to make science understandable, approachable, and accessible. At Berlin Science Week, our festival is guided by five core values: curiosity, hope, scientific integrity, sharing knowledge, and inclusivity. These principles shape our programme, inform our decisions, and guide our relationships with our partners, visitors, and the planet.

## **Curiosity**

Curiosity is where discovery begins, and everyone has the right to wonder. We create space for scientific exploration by making high-quality science engaging in lively event formats, lowering barriers to understanding, and inviting the public into scientific thinking and discovery. We encourage approaches that go beyond the conventional, opening up new ways of experiencing science.

## **Hope**

Science is deeply human: it reflects our shared drive to understand the world and our place within it. Beyond addressing the challenges of our time, science also expands what we imagine to be possible. In this way, it offers not only knowledge, but perspective and direction. Throughout the festival, our annual theme, campaign, and programme, we share the transformative power of science, in the belief that it can be a source of inspiration, connection, and hope.

## **Scientific integrity**

Scientific integrity is at the heart of our programme. We stand for rigorous, responsible, evidence-based research from across the sciences, humanities, and artistic practices. We welcome open debate but not claims that dismiss well-established scientific consensus, as recognised by leading scientific bodies, without credible evidence. Where expert consensus is still evolving or genuinely contested within the scientific mainstream, we favour honest presentation of the evidence and its limits.

## **Sharing Knowledge**

Knowledge thrives when it is shared. We value inter- and transdisciplinary approaches and actively seek topics that are socially relevant and extend beyond traditional “hard” science. We strive to create a vibrant and equitable environment where diverse voices and scientific excellence flourish together.

## **Inclusivity**

Science belongs to everyone. We aim to ensure that everyone feels welcome to explore scientific ideas. We foster diversity, inclusion, and accessibility throughout our work, treating others with respect and being open to different ways of thinking and being. Our openness ends where discrimination begins. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, intimidation, hate speech, or any form of abusive behaviour, including, but not limited to, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, ableism, or ageism. We recognise that our responsibility to one another extends beyond social relations to our home planet, Earth. We work to reduce the environmental impact of our activities – from travel to materials and venue choices – and encourage our partners to do the same.

# What This Means for Our Partners

If you share these values and Guiding Principles, we invite you to join Berlin Science Week and help expand how science connects with society.

## Content and Quality

We welcome debate, diverse perspectives, and approaches that make science accessible. We expect discussion to remain respectful, constructive, and grounded in evidence. Events must be grounded in verifiable research. For other forms of knowledge, we expect recognized forms of quality assurance, along with honest communication of evidence and its limits. Any use of AI-generated content in events or materials must be clearly disclosed. We will not accept events that dismiss well-established scientific consensus without credible evidence, promote conspiracy theories or disinformation, or misrepresent non-scientific claims as science.

When events touch sensitive research, they should include appropriate ethical framing, acknowledging risks, and relevant regulatory contexts. For such events, we may request additional information on how these aspects are addressed. Where we judge the framing insufficient to the sensitivity of the topic, we may decline the event or set conditions for acceptance.

## A Safe and Inclusive Space

We value events that actively foster a sense of belonging, where people of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities feel welcome to participate, ask questions, and engage. Therefore, partners are responsible for ensuring their events are respectful, safe, and inclusive, and for handling any issues that may arise. We're happy to support with guidance but organisational and legal responsibility for partner-run events remains with the partner.

In the event of safety concerns, security incidents, or extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to public health emergencies, credible threats, or a partner organisation's involvement in a major controversy which might compromise the integrity of the festival, we reserve the right to take immediate protective action, including suspending or cancelling events.

Where events are designed for or involve children and young people, additional care is required, including appropriate supervision, safeguarding measures, and age-appropriate content. We expect particular care in partner and sponsor selection for events aimed at minors.

## **Visibility & Independence**

Berlin Science Week is a platform that offers partners visibility, helping them reach new audiences and raise awareness for their work, research, and institutions. We value events that put science first, where curiosity leads and organisational branding follows. We appreciate partners who use the festival to exchange knowledge generously and engage our audiences, not to solely advance commercial or political interests. For this reason:

- Events should not be designed primarily as product launches, sales pitches, or recruitment initiatives. Where partners reference their own platforms, products, or services, this should remain secondary to the scientific content and aligned with the spirit and mission of Berlin Science Week.
- Events that address societal and political contexts, including policy, governance, or geopolitical dimensions of science, are welcome when they center on evidence and experience. We do not accept events aimed at spreading political propaganda or events which advocate positions incompatible with democratic principles, human rights, or the equal dignity of all people.

To support transparency and trust, we may ask partners at any stage to share relevant affiliations, funding sources, or potential conflicts of interest. If such information is not disclosed upon request, or if significant omissions emerge later, this may lead to the withdrawal or rejection of an event.

You're welcome to communicate your participation and use our brand materials in line with our guidelines. Please note: being part of the festival does not constitute an endorsement of your organisation, its research, or its broader activities, and must not be presented as such.

These Guiding Principles apply to everyone involved in the Berlin Science Week, including our partner institutions and their staff, speakers, moderators, facilitators, or others involved in hosting an event at the festival.

Berlin Science Week reserves the right to review events at any stage, including after registration and confirmation, and to request changes, set conditions, or withdraw events that no longer align with these Principles. This also covers situations where circumstances shift after acceptance, such as concerns about speaker conduct. Partners may request a review of any such decision through our designated contact via [awareness@berlinscienceweek.com](mailto:awareness@berlinscienceweek.com).

We recognise that no set of principles can anticipate every situation. Where circumstances fall outside these guidelines, we will apply our judgment in the spirit of our mission and values, and we are always open to conversation.

# Code of Conduct

For partners, speakers, and participants

Berlin Science Week is built on curiosity, openness, and respect. This Code of Conduct applies to everyone taking part in our festival: partners, speakers and facilitators, volunteers, visitors, and to our team, at all events and in related online spaces. Our Code of Conduct is short on purpose: we trust people to act thoughtfully, but we want to be clear about a few things that really matter to us.

## Be Respectful

Treat everyone with courtesy and good faith. Challenge ideas, not people. Make space for voices different from your own. If you're moderating, keep discussions grounded in evidence and open to disagreement, but not to personal attacks. We also ask that you are respectful to the people working behind the scenes who power the festival in invisible ways: technicians, producers, wait staff, volunteers, and so many more.

## No Harassment or Discrimination

We do not tolerate harassment, intimidation, hate speech, or abusive behaviour of any kind. This includes, but is not limited to, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, antisemitism, islamophobia, ableism, or ageism. Unwelcome physical contact or sexual comments, threats, and deliberate disruption of events are equally unacceptable.

## For Partners

If you're organising an event under the Berlin Science Week umbrella, make sure your team, speakers, facilitators, and anyone else involved are familiar with, and agree to this Code of Conduct. Have someone on site who can respond to concerns. If something goes wrong, address it, and let us know.

## If Something Happens

If you experience or witness behaviour that doesn't align with this Code of Conduct, you can contact us directly at [awareness@berlinscienceweek.com](mailto:awareness@berlinscienceweek.com) or speak to the event organiser on site. Anonymous reports are welcome. We treat all reports with discretion and don't retaliate against anyone who raises a concern in good faith. We'll respond proportionately: that may mean a conversation, a warning, removal from an event, or exclusion from future participation. Our priority is the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. Partners may request a review of any decision through our designated contact. Decisions made under this Code of Conduct are at the discretion of Berlin Science Week and its designated representatives.