

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPECTFUL AND COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOUR

This Code of Conduct is made with a commitment to protect the dignity as well as the physical and mental well-being of all individuals involved with the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles. The Executive Board of the association "Balthasar-Neumann-Chor und -Ensemble e.V." and the management are responsible for ensuring that all persons are supported and protected according to the principles of free personal development, if this does not infringe upon the rights of others. The aim of this Code of Conduct is to foster a positive and collaborative working and rehearsal environment.

### Who is covered by this Code of Conduct?

This Code of Conduct applies to all individuals associated with the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles, including:

- all musicians in the projects of the Balthasar Neumann Choir and Orchestra
- all teachers and participants of the Balthasar Neumann Academy
- all artistic personnel involved in projects or productions of the Ensembles including conductors, soloists, directors etc.
- all persons engaged in technical, organizational, or supply-related activities
- all team members of the office team
- all members of the association Balthasar-Neumann-Chor und -Ensemble e.V.

### What values do we share?

- We stand for a trusting and fear-free working environment and togetherness based on clear communication, respect, and appreciation.
- We address conflicts within our organisation openly, and always seek solutions through a cooperative and social approach, without worry of negative personal consequences.
- Protecting human dignity, recognising social diversity, and promoting gender equality and equal opportunities are fundamental social values that we consider essential.
- Sexual harassment, abuse of power, bullying, and any form of discrimination based on origin, skin colour, sexual orientation, gender, or religion are violations of human dignity and personal rights. Such behaviour will not be tolerated within the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles.
- We show integrity and encourage each other to prevent any form of abuse, discrimination or toxic leadership.
- We are aware that it takes the attention and commitment of all members and staff to protect and uphold our shared values.

## How do we define the terms used?

### Discrimination

Discrimination refers to any act of demeaning or disadvantaging individuals, particularly on the grounds of disability, origin, nationality, skin colour, religion or political or artists' union activities, age, gender, or sexual orientation. It makes no difference whether such behaviour occurs verbally, in writing, or through actions.

### Bullying (Mobbing)

Bullying includes all personal conflicts in which an individual's freedom of action and decision, personal development, self-esteem, social relationships, dignity, and social reputation, as well as their ability to participate meaningfully in the work of the Ensembles, are systematically and repeatedly undermined. Examples include:

- defamation and/or spreading rumours about individuals
- withholding or deliberately providing false information necessary for work
- threats, open hatred, humiliation, insinuations, mockery, or aggression
- degrading treatment by supervisors or leaders, such as assigning insulting, unsolvable tasks, or no tasks at all
- exclusion through refusal of contact

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in the workplace, rehearsal, or artistic context includes any unwelcome, sexually motivated behaviour that violates the dignity of the person concerned. This includes not only conduct punishable under criminal law but also:

- unwanted physical contact
- sexually demeaning or suggestive language
- lewd or sexualised comments, jokes, or gestures
- degrading remarks about another person's body, sexuality, or sexual orientation
- verbal, visual, or electronic display of obscene or sexually demeaning material
- requests for sexual or sexualised behaviour
- suggestions that sexual favouritism could result in professional or artistic advantages
- direct or indirect threats of disadvantage for rejecting advances
- attempts to coerce sexual acts through violence or threats of violence

A defining feature of harassment is a boundary violation experienced against one's will. Sexual harassment is defined by the fact that the behaviour is unwanted, regardless of whether the affected person has explicitly expressed their objection. Even unintended actions may be perceived as harassment.

### Toxic Leadership

Toxic leadership refers to patterns of behaviour by individuals in positions of authority that harm colleagues, teams, or the organization. It can include demeaning others, excessive control, micromanagement, applying undue pressure, manipulation, and constant criticism of those within one's area of responsibility. A lack of appreciation for others' work,

condescending behaviour, and exclusion — for example, by withholding essential information — also fall into this category. It makes no difference whether such behaviour occurs publicly or in one-on-one interactions, or whether it results from a conscious decision or not.

### Integrity

Acting honestly, responsibly, and in alignment with our shared values – even when no one is watching – means integrity. It involves transparency, fairness, and accountability in our decisions and behaviour, as well as the courage to speak up when something is wrong. Integrity builds trust and credibility, both within our organization and in how we engage with others.

### Dealing with Power

A reflective approach to power involves recognising and consciously managing power dynamics within the Ensembles and their working environment. Abuse of power occurs when an individual exceeds their decision-making authority or exploits their position. Power should always be exercised responsibly, transparently, and with respect for dignity for the other person, serving the artistic and collective goals of the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles rather than personal advantage.

### What procedures and measures are in place?

Based on the above values and principles, the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles, commit to the following:

- to separate clearly between what is permissible within and outside artistic work
- not to misuse artistic freedom
- to behave respectfully towards all individuals, regardless of gender, age, religion, disability, origin, or sexual orientation
- to refrain from any inappropriate gestures, language, or physical behaviour
- to exercise power responsibly
- to communicate clearly and unambiguously
- to strive for open and fair conflict resolution
- to intervene actively and address situations when witnessing abuse, misuse of power, or inappropriate behaviour of any kind

The Balthasar Neumann Ensembles will respond to any form of discriminatory or boundary-violating incidents with clarification and mediation measures. We reserve the right to terminate contracts in the event of any violations. All affected persons shall be granted equal protection. Leadership personnel bear a particular duty of care and responsibility.

### Where to find support?

In cases of boundary violations, harassment, discrimination, or questions regarding equality and equal opportunities, all members and associates of the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles may contact:

- The [Artistic Board](#) of the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles or
- The [office team](#) of the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles

### What are the next steps?

A defined procedure exists for handling reports internally, which can be found [here](#) for more information.

### Final Provisions

This Code of Conduct is made available to all members, employees, and collaborators of the Balthasar Neumann Ensembles and is binding for all. It enters into force with immediate effect. The Code will be reviewed every two years and as needed by the management and the artistic board, with the aim of improvement or amendment. In the event of revisions, all affected individuals will be informed in due time.

Date: 09.03.2026

Date: 12.03.2026



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Silvia Bleile  
Chairwoman Executive Board  
Balthasar-Neumann-Chor und -Ensemble e.V.



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Christina Schonk  
General Manager & Artistic Planning  
Balthasar-Neumann-Chor und -Ensemble e.V.