



## **Simien Mountains Gelada Research Project Code of Conduct**

The Simien Mountain Gelada Research Project is a long-term research site that is functional today because of the efforts put in by all our staff, researchers and local collaborators. We are here because we all share a mutual interest – to study the behavior of geladas living in the Simien Mountains. This field site is a workplace where people from diverse backgrounds live and work together closely. We are all responsible for treating each other with respect and ensuring each other's safety and well-being. The field team represents the project, the different Universities and the Directors of this project. We must always remember that the way we behave in the field and in the community not only affects us but also the long-term project and can have lasting consequences.

This field site is a workplace where people from diverse walks of life come together - so it is necessary to be aware of differences among individuals and understand what is appropriate and inappropriate to say or do. This means, no one should make anyone else feel uncomfortable or afraid. We must all treat each other with respect, and as equals. We should respect our individual differences and should not make fun of people based on cultural biases (food habits, cultural or religious practices etc.) as this is a form of bullying and discourages people from being themselves at work. We should respect boundaries and understand that each one of us needs our personal space regardless of gender or position in the field site. Talking to someone about their body, clothing, or about their sexual behavior, or other things they would like to be kept private is not acceptable at this field project.

In some cases, you may be more powerful than someone, and this makes it more likely for you to make them feel like they are unsafe or without choices (sometimes by mistake). There are many ways you can have more power than someone. One is by being officially in charge, like the team leaders. Another is by having more knowledge. Someone may rely on your knowledge not to get lost, or to act safely in a dangerous environment. In other cases, you may have to report to someone who is in a position of power at the field project. You should not feel that you are obligated to do something under their orders if it makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

If someone makes you uncomfortable, you should talk to any of the project directors about it. If someone tells you that another person has made them uncomfortable, you can offer support but also ask whether you can tell a project director about it. You can be anonymous when you report. Consequences for violation of the code will be handled on a case-by-case basis, but can include termination of their permission to work with the project. No report is too big or too small.

**This code of conduct is made for all staff and researchers of the Simien Mountains Gelada Research Project to ensure that while working at SMNP everyone feels safe and respected.**

### **Camp manager's contact:**

Liz Babbitt - [lizbabbitt707@gmail.com](mailto:lizbabbitt707@gmail.com)

### **Directors' contact:**

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**SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF THIS POLICY**

### ***Criticizing SMGRP participants or others in the community***

SMGRP strictly discourages public criticism of local staff, researchers, and EWCA officials; especially in front of other Ethiopians and visitors coming inside the National Park. This includes social media. This includes comments on food, dress, habits, or other “differences” that come to your attention.

### ***Harassment***

Conduct directed toward a person that includes repeated unconsented contact or behavior that would cause an individual emotional distress.

- *Example: Hitting someone in a non-joking manner, or repeated physical contact with a person who has asked you to stop.*

### ***Being disrespectful or unprofessional***

At our field site, we work and live together in very close quarters for long periods of time. It is imperative that everyone feels at home and welcome here. We must always act professionally and think about how our behavior can impact everyone else’s field life. Always be respectful and considerate of others. Give space to others or ask others to do the same when you need it. Be mindful of what you say - gossip is toxic and can destroy your relationships with others in the field as well as in the wider academic community. Do not allow problems to fester, engage in a conversation or inform the camp manager of problems before they become major issues. Do your part to keep the house clean and orderly and help others when you can.

### ***Coercion or bullying***

Coercion is a tactic used to intimidate, trick, or force someone to engage in an activity without physical force. This may be sexual, but might involve forcing someone to lie for you, withholding information from someone so that they are unsafe or cannot perform their work unless they are with you, or guilt-tripping someone else into doing your work for you.

- *Example: Older student to younger student: “You are going to do all the chores in the house today and if you don’t, I’m going to tell our advisor that you are a bad researcher.”*

### ***Sexual misconduct***

Sexual misconduct includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. These include comments about someone’s appearance that may suggest to them you want sex when they don’t. This can also include questions about someone’s relationship status, sexual orientation, or sexual experiences. Remember that when you are in a position of power, it is more difficult for another person to express that they don’t want to do something you want them to do.

- *Example: Male field assistant says to female graduate student when they are alone, “I always wanted to sleep with a blonde woman”.*

### ***Engaging in romantic relationships***

Inter-workplace romantic relationships may inadvertently affect the workplace environment and the directors of the project discourage researchers to initiate such relationships. In case you do have such romantic relationships with any member of the field team, you must inform the directors of the project.

Please be aware that there are cultural differences for romantic relationships. Please we would ask that you do not engage in any short-term relationships with our partners or community members in the Simiens or in Debarq. This is mainly because you may put yourself and others on the project in danger of harassment by doing so. These relationships also cause stress in the field and have (in the past) given the project a bad reputation.