

# IESBA Meeting Highlights and Decisions

December 2023

This summary of decisions of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA) has been prepared for information purposes only. Except for documents approved for public exposure and issuance of final pronouncements, decisions reported on technical matters are tentative, reflect only the current status of discussions on projects, and may change after further deliberation by the IESBA.

The IESBA met in New York, USA on December 4-8, 13 & 15, 2023. The video recording of the meeting is available on the IESBA [YouTube](#) channel.

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## Strategy and Work Plan 2024-2027

The IESBA unanimously approved the *IESBA Strategy and Work Plan 2024-2027* (SWP).

Subject to confirmation by the Public Interest Oversight Board (PIOB) that due process has been followed, the SWP is expected to be issued by mid-April 2024.

## Tax Planning

The IESBA unanimously approved the revisions to the *International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards)* (the Code) relating to the provision of tax planning and related services by professional accountants in business (PAIBs) and professional accountants in public practice (PAPPs).

Subject to certification by the Public Interest Oversight Board (PIOB), the final pronouncement is expected to be issued by mid-April 2024. The pronouncement will be effective for tax planning activities or services beginning after June 30, 2025, with early adoption permitted.

## Using the Work of an External Expert

The IESBA unanimously approved for exposure three proposed new sections to the Code addressing using the work of an external expert – proposed Section 390 for PAPPs, proposed Section 290 for PAIBs, and proposed Section 5390 for sustainability assurance practitioners.

The proposed sections establish an ethical framework to guide PAPPs, PAIBs or sustainability assurance practitioners, as applicable, in evaluating whether an external expert has the necessary competence, capabilities and objectivity to use the expert's work for the intended purposes. The proposals also include provisions to guide a PAIB, PAPP or sustainability assurance practitioner, as applicable, in applying the Code's conceptual framework when using the work of an external expert.

The development of the proposals was closely coordinated with the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB).

The Exposure Draft (ED) is expected to be issued by the end of January 2024 with a comment period of 90 days.

## Sustainability

The IESBA considered an update on the liaison between its Sustainability Task Force and the IESBA Sustainability Reference Group, coordination activities with the IAASB, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), as well as other stakeholder engagement and outreach activities during Q4 2023.

After deliberation, the IESBA approved for exposure:

- Proposed revisions to Parts 1 to 3 of the Code addressing sustainability reporting by professional accountants.
- A proposed new Part 5 of the Code, *International Ethics Standards for Sustainability Assurance (including International Independence Standards)* for all sustainability assurance practitioners, regardless of whether or not they are professional accountants, when performing sustainability assurance engagements that are within the specified scope of Part 5. The proposed new standards set out provisions that are at the same level as those for audits of financial statements. Among other matters, they address independence considerations relating to group sustainability assurance engagements, using the work of another practitioner, and assurance of sustainability information from value chain entities.
- New terms and definitions including “sustainability information,” “sustainability assurance engagement” and “value chain”.
- Proposed consequential and conforming amendments to the Code.

The ED is expected to be issued by the end of January 2024 with a public comment period of 100 days.

## Sustainability Outreach Plan

The IESBA discussed a draft communications and outreach plan to raise global awareness of the Sustainability and Use of External Experts EDs and promote the importance of the proposed ethics (including independence) standards, as well as stimulate diverse stakeholder feedback on the EDs. Among other matters, the IESBA supported expanding outreach to stakeholders beyond the accountancy profession who may be impacted by the proposed standards. The IESBA also exchanged views and suggestions regarding outreach opportunities, messaging, building a business case for sustainability ethics, and timing.

## PIE Rollout

The IESBA considered an update from its Public Interest Entity (PIE) Rollout Working Group regarding Track 2 of the IAASB’s [Listed Entity and PIE Project](#).

The IESBA will receive a further update from its PIE Rollout Working Group on matters of coordination with the IAASB at its March 2024 meeting.

## Collective Investment Vehicles, Pension Funds and Investment Company Complexes

The IESBA approved the Terms of Reference for its Collective Investment Vehicles (CIVs), Pension Funds and Investment Company Complexes (ICCs) Project Team. The objective of the initiative is to

explore the need for revisions to Part 4A of the Code so that it remains fit for purpose when addressing independence considerations regarding the audit of CIVs, pension fund arrangements and ICCs, including their relationships with trustees, managers and advisors. The IESBA supported early engagement with subject matter experts and others with relevant knowledge to help inform the Project Team's research.

The IESBA supported that this initiative be conducted under the new IESBA staff-driven model.

The IESBA will receive an update on the work stream at its March 2024 meeting.

### [Next Meeting](#)

The next IESBA meeting is scheduled for March 18-20, 2024 in New York, USA.