

Code of Ethics

COOS ART MUSEUM

Approved by the CAM Board of Directors
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CAM Code of Ethics

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Introduction

Vision Statement

We envision a world where art is accessible to all and fosters creativity, cultural appreciation, and personal growth.

Mission Statement

Coos Art Museum serves as a cultural resource for Oregon's South Coast through exhibitions and educational programs that inspire appreciation and exploration of visual art.

Values

Bringing our vision to life and fulfilling our mission begins with a commitment to certain core values that guide our work. Coos Art Museum is devoted to the following core values:

Community

We believe the arts foster a vibrant tapestry of creativity, imagination, and expression that enriches our lives, sparks innovation, and fosters deep connections across cultures and generations.

Learning

We offer arts education as a fundamental cornerstone of holistic development, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and empathy, while empowering individuals to explore their unique identities.

Accessibility

We strive to make the arts intellectually, physically, and economically accessible to everyone.

Equity

We endeavor to create a culture of diversity, access, and inclusivity that is represented in the museum's collection, exhibitions, and educational programs, and among members of the Board, staff, and volunteers.

Stewardship

We are responsible stewards of the resources that have been entrusted to our care.

History of CAM

Coos Art Museum traces its roots to the Coos Artist League, active since 1950. Early operations were conducted in storefront locations, followed by occupancy of the old Carnegie Library Building near downtown Coos Bay. During this "library period," the Museum began building its permanent collection, and established a reputation for high quality exhibits and educational programs. Throughout this period volunteers were responsible for nearly all Museum operations and functions.

In the late 1970's, Coos Art Museum members won approval for a community-wide bond issue to acquire and remodel the old post office building, a historical Art Deco structure built in 1936. After 5 years of hard work – including a door-to-door campaign to inform the community and raise monies – and many repairs and retrofitting, Coos Art Museum moved into its current location in 1984.

The Museum houses the Maggie Karl Gallery, the Perkins Gallery, and the Rental/Sales Gallery on the main floor. On the 2nd floor, via either the Art Deco staircase or the ADA compliant elevator, you'll find the Mable



Hansen Gallery and the spacious Uno Richter Atrium, complete with exposed brick walls and a high, arched ceiling.

Also on the 2nd floor, the Permanent Collection storage and work area keeps CAM's more than 630 works of art in pristine condition. Museum offices and the Janet Beetham Classroom are also located on the 2nd floor. Oregon Coast Music Association, which produces the annual Oregon Coast Music Festival and other popular events, also maintains its offices in the building, and the Bay Area Artists Association holds their monthly meetings in the Janet Beetham Classroom.

Ethical Duties

Coos Art Museum (CAM) is dedicated to enriching the cultural and artistic life of Coos Bay, Oregon, with a steadfast commitment to prioritizing the public's interest over that of individuals or the institution. Upholding the highest ethical standards, best practices, and legal requirements is essential to fulfilling our mission. This Code of Ethics outlines our ethical duties and obligations, and applies to all board members, staff, and volunteers. It ensures that CAM operates with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Our commitment to this Code reflects our dedication to preserving and protecting the public's trust. The Board of Directors and Executive Director oversee its implementation, ensuring that all actions align with our mission and exceed legal minimums. Regular audits will be conducted to maintain compliance, and robust policies will be in place to address any ethical challenges or dilemmas.

This Code is integral to CAM's governance and is maintained alongside other key policies guiding the work of individual departments. These materials are meant to supplant, not replace, other legal policies or procedures the Museum maintains.

Governance

The Board of Directors of Coos Art Museum holds the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Museum operates in the public's interest, upholding the highest ethical standards. As the governing authority, the Board is accountable to both the public and the institution, overseeing the formulation and maintenance of policies that guide the Museum's mission.

The Board's responsibilities include:

- **Setting Vision and Strategy:** The Board establishes the Museum's vision, mission, and strategic direction, approving the strategic plan, objectives, and budget to ensure alignment with community interests.
- **Oversight and Empowerment:** While the Board empowers the Executive Director to manage day-to-day operations, it maintains oversight to ensure that all actions reflect the Museum's ethical commitments and public trust.
- **Conflict of Interest and Integrity:** Board members must avoid conflicts of interest and act solely in the Museum's best interest, using information gained during their service only to benefit the institution.
- **Policy Development:** The Board develops, administers, and advocates for policies that promote fair, consistent, and equitable treatment across all Museum activities.
- **Financial Responsibility:** Ensuring sufficient funding and financial protection for the Museum, its staff, and volunteers, the Board safeguards the institution's assets and ensures compliance with legal and ethical standards.



- **Accountability and Compliance:** The Board ensures that all Museum policies and activities comply with legal requirements and that the Museum's non-profit status is never compromised.

The Board collaborates with the Executive Director, who is entrusted with managing the Museum's daily operations. This relationship is built on mutual trust, with the Board providing strategic oversight and the Executive Director executing the Museum's mission within the established ethical framework.

The Executive Director should nurture the intellectual and aesthetic philosophy of the Museum. The Executive Director is responsible for administration that is consistent with established policy and enables staff members to perform to the full extent of their abilities. The Executive Director should foster such values and practices as collaboration, communication, respect, and delegation of duties. (Hereafter, references to the Executive Director mean the Executive Director in consultation with staff, as appropriate.)

Conflict of Interest

To maintain transparency and uphold the Museum's mission, board members, staff, and volunteers must immediately disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. These include affiliations with related institutions, receipt of gifts, loans, outside employment, personal collecting, political activities, and the use of the Museum's assets or information for personal gain. The Museum has established procedures to address conflicts, which may include recusal from decision-making processes and, if necessary, seeking independent review to ensure impartiality and protect the Museum's integrity. No individual may use their position for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museum, its mission, its reputation, or the public it serves.

Public Trust and Accountability

Coos Art Museum serves as a public trust, holding its collections, programs, and operations in stewardship for the community. We recognize our responsibility to the public and commit to:

- **Transparency:** Providing clear and accessible information about our activities, governance, finances, and decision-making processes.
- **Inclusivity:** Engaging with and serving all members of our diverse community, ensuring that our programs and collections are representative and accessible.
- **Accountability:** Making decisions that are consistent with our mission and values and being responsive to the needs and concerns of the public.

The Museum will actively engage our community through regular public reports, open meetings, and feedback mechanisms. Transparency in decision-making processes will be prioritized, with clear communication channels established to ensure the public's voice is heard and integrated into the Museum's operations and strategic planning.

Collections Stewardship

Coos Art Museum's collections are held in trust for the public, supporting the Museum's mission to foster appreciation and understanding of visual arts. We are committed to ethical stewardship, ensuring that all collections-related activities serve the public interest.

- **Acquisition:** All acquisitions are conducted legally and ethically, aligned with the Museum's mission. Provenance research is crucial to verify the authenticity, ownership history, and ethical integrity of each artwork.



- **Care and Preservation:** The Museum is dedicated to the meticulous care, preservation, and storage of its collections, ensuring they are preserved for future generations. We adhere to best practices in preservation to maintain the integrity of each work.
- **Cataloguing and Documentation:** Cataloguing and documenting the collections are basic responsibilities of Museum staff. The information should represent sound scholarship and the staff's informed judgment, independent of any external pressures. Other scholarly opinions, including dissenting opinions concerning a work of art, should be recorded. Major changes in attribution and dating, as well as any serious questions concerning authenticity, should be reported to the Board and made available to the public.
- **Deaccessioning:** The Museum may deaccession artworks only through a transparent and ethical process. The deaccessioning process requires thorough research on prior ownership, donor intent, and scholarly evaluation before deaccessioning. Proceeds from deaccessioned works are restricted to acquiring new art pieces or the direct care of the existing collection, ensuring that these actions support the Museum's mission and enhance the collection's quality.
- **Culturally Sensitive Artworks:** The Museum acknowledges the significance of culturally sensitive artworks, such as indigenous or sacred pieces. Should such artworks enter our collection, they will be managed with the utmost respect and in consultation with relevant communities, ensuring adherence to cultural, ethical, and legal standards.
- **Adherence to Art-Specific Laws:** The Museum rigorously complies with all relevant laws specific to art, including those governing cultural property, intellectual property, and repatriation.
- **Truth in Presentation:** The Museum is committed to the accurate and respectful presentation of all artworks, ensuring that exhibitions and educational materials faithfully represent the art's cultural, historical, and artistic contexts.
- **Appraisals:** To maintain impartiality and avoid conflicts of interest, the Museum does not provide appraisals for private collections or outside parties.

This section is consistent with the Museum's Collections Management Policy, ensuring that our ethical commitments to art stewardship are clear and upheld throughout all operations.

Programs, Exhibitions, and Interpretation

CAM's public programs serve our mission, reflect the goals of our strategic plan, and offer our audience edification and enrichment. Such programs, including, among others, exhibitions, publications, lectures, workshops, films, and performances, should present and interpret works of art and expand public understanding of the scope of human creativity.

Artistic and educational excellence, public engagement, and accessibility must be primary considerations when planning our public programs. Other valid considerations include attendance, revenue potential, and media response.

Within the context of our mission, we aim to serve as broad and diverse a public as possible by offering a range of programs that provide experiences with works of art. Ideas and information must be based on principles of sound scholarship, respect for artistic expression, and the ability to engage the public.



Except in situations that prohibit the sale of artwork, Coos Art Museum allows exhibiting artists to sell their works directly, without taking commissions, except during fundraising events. The Museum does not set prices or handle transactions; all sales are managed by the artists themselves. This approach aims to provide financial support to artists and strengthen the Museum's relationship with the local art community. By offering a platform to sell art, the Museum attracts more artists to exhibit, creating an incentive for participation. Visitors also benefit, enjoying the chance to purchase art directly from exhibitions, enhancing their engagement and connection with the works on display.

The Rental Sales Gallery, as a retail-based revenue stream, takes a commission on artwork rentals and sales. As a revenue-generating business line, it is considered a fundraising activity.

We are committed to ensuring that all programs have:

- **Intellectual Integrity:** All exhibitions and educational programs are grounded in rigorous scholarship, ensuring accuracy and integrity in every presentation.
- **Diverse Perspectives:** We actively include a wide range of voices and perspectives, reflecting the cultural and artistic diversity of our community and the broader world.
- **Accessibility:** Our programs are designed to be accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of ability, background, or economic status, ensuring that everyone can engage with the arts.

Through these commitments, Coos Art Museum ensures that its programs support its mission and serve the public good.

Museum Management Practices

Fundraising and Financial Accountability

The Museum is committed to ethical practices in fundraising and financial management. The Board carries full responsibility for financial and investment policies and approves the budget of the Museum. Any significant change in the Museum's financial condition must be addressed by the Board in consultation with the Executive Director, who must regularly inform the Board of any actual or anticipated changes in income or expenditures.

Donors are recognized and treated with respect, and the Museum is transparent about how donations are used to support its mission. The Museum maintains accurate and transparent financial records, ensuring that all funds are used in alignment with our mission and goals. The Museum is committed to financial sustainability, ensuring that our operations and programs are maintained responsibly over the long term.

The Museum adheres to the following standards with respect to fundraising:

- The Museum welcomes appropriate cooperation with similar organizations to further its goals.
- The Museum is in ultimate control of educational content in exhibits and programs. The recognition of external donors or sponsors is secondary.
- The Museum will acknowledge corporate support but will not specifically endorse any corporation, its products, or services.
- The Museum's reputation is one of its most precious assets and in no way shall any sponsorship diminish that reputation. In the case of some breach of morals, the sponsorship shall be dissolved.
- Those involved in fundraising must do so with honesty as to need and must use funds for a donor's intended purposes. Opportunities and advantages shall be promised to donors equally.
- All donor-related records and documents shall be confidential, except as required by law.
- The Museum shall keep standard accounting records.



- Those authorized to spend funds must do so with impartiality, honesty, and in the Museum's best interest.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI)

Coos Art Museum is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that respects and celebrates the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of all individuals. Our commitment to DEAI includes:

- **Commitment to DEAI:** Coos Art Museum is dedicated to fostering a just, inclusive, and equitable community through all exhibitions, programs, and events.
- **Welcoming Arts Community:** Ensuring all individuals, particularly historically underrepresented groups, are included in developing and experiencing our programs.
- **Cultural Competency:** Continuously pursuing cultural competency and transparency in decision-making processes.
- **Accountability:** Regularly assessing and addressing inequities in policies, systems, and services.
- **Diverse Leadership:** Committing resources to expand diversity within our board, staff, and advisory bodies.

This section is consistent with the Museum's DEAI Statement, ensuring that our ethical commitments to DEAI are clear and upheld throughout all operations.

Commitment to Professionalism

Coos Art Museum is committed to standards of professionalism in all aspects of its operations. This commitment ensures that the Museum's practices are ethical, transparent, and consistent with best practices in the museum field. Our staff, board members, and volunteers are dedicated to continuous learning and adherence to professional guidelines, ensuring that all activities—from collections management to public programming—are conducted with the utmost integrity and respect for the Museum's mission and public trust responsibilities.

Ownership of Scholarly Material

Scholarly material designates the work developed or created by staff while carrying out Museum-related responsibilities. Coos Art Museum recognizes that the creation of material by staff is a collaborative effort that benefits both the Museum and the employee. While the Museum retains ownership of work developed during Museum-related responsibilities, this practice ensures that contributions support the Museum's mission and public trust. At the same time, it provides staff with the opportunity to contribute to significant projects and gain professional recognition, fostering growth and development within their careers while contributing to the broader community.

Compliance with Laws

Although ultimate fiduciary responsibility rests with the Board, the Executive Director is responsible for the daily monitoring of the institution's compliance with laws and regulations. Legal matters arising in the operation of the Museum include those pertaining to collections, exhibitions, personnel and labor relations, contracts, governance, finances, facilities, taxes, rights and reproductions, and events. The Board and Executive Director should share current information about legal issues and legislation relevant to the institution and museum standards.

Staff, Volunteers, and Interns

The operation of Coos Art Museum relies on the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and interns, whether paid or unpaid.



- **Respect and Support:** All individuals serving the Museum deserve respect and support from their peers, superiors, and the institution.
- **Fair Compensation:** Employees are entitled to fair pay and benefits commensurate with their training, performance, and contributions to the Museum's mission.
- **Volunteer Standards:** Volunteers are held to clearly defined performance objectives and are afforded the same respect as paid colleagues.
- **Internship Compensation:** Internships should offer meaningful training experiences, with a commitment to fair compensation that reflects the value of their contributions. Unpaid internships should be minimized to avoid disadvantaging those without additional financial support.
- **Personnel Policies:** The Museum maintains comprehensive personnel policies, approved by the Board, and made accessible to all staff.
- **Training and Expertise:** The Museum is committed to engaging staff and volunteers with appropriate expertise and provides opportunities for further training to ensure they meet their responsibilities effectively.
- **Administrative Responsibility:** The Executive Director, as appointed by the Board, is solely responsible for the hiring, discipline, and dismissal of staff, in accordance with established policies.
- **Institutional Representation:** Actions by staff or volunteers may reflect on the Museum, and all are expected to uphold the Museum's reputation.
- **Privacy and Non-Discrimination:** The Museum respects the privacy of all members, volunteers, and employees, acting in their best interests. Discrimination based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion is strictly prohibited.
- **Harassment and Fair Treatment:** The museum Maintains a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or discrimination and promotes an environment of fairness, courtesy, and professional integrity.
- **Confidentiality:** All individuals working or volunteering at the Museum are expected to observe confidentiality and treat colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, avoiding relationships that could compromise professional judgment or the Museum's reputation.

Implementation, Compliance, and Training

To ensure adherence to Coos Art Museum's Code of Ethics, all board members, staff, and volunteers are required to undergo regular training that emphasizes the importance of ethical conduct and understanding of the Code. In the event of a code violation, the Museum will take appropriate corrective actions, which may include retraining, disciplinary measures, or, in severe cases, termination of employment or volunteer duties.

The Museum will also provide an acknowledgment form with the Code of Ethics, which all board members, staff, and volunteers must sign. This form will include an affirmation of their commitment to the Code, documentation of any personal collecting activities, and disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.

By signing the acknowledgment form, individuals affirm their understanding and agreement to abide by the Code of Ethics and its associated policies, ensuring a shared commitment to upholding the Museum's mission and ethical standards.



Promulgation and Review

This Code of Ethics is a living document, reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the evolving needs of the Museum and the community. Board and staff members are responsible for upholding and actively reviewing this Code to ensure it meets the highest ethical standards.

The Board of Directors will conduct a formal review of the Code of Ethics every three years, or more frequently, if necessary, to reflect evolving standards and practices. This review process will include consultations with staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders to ensure the Code remains relevant and effective.



Acknowledgment and Commitment to Coos Art Museum Code of Ethics

Affirmation of Commitment

I, _____, affirm my commitment to uphold Coos Art Museum's Code of Ethics in all my professional and volunteer activities. I have reviewed the Code in full, agree to adhere to its guidelines, and understand the importance of maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct. I have disclosed any personal collecting activities and potential conflicts of interest as required and will continue to do so should any changes arise. I understand that failure to comply with this Code may result in corrective actions as outlined by the Museum. I understand that these materials are meant to supplant, not replace, other legal policies or procedures the Museum maintains.

Personal Collecting Activities

Declaration of any personal art collections owned by the individual.	
Description of the scope, nature, and content of personal collections.	
Affirmation that these collections do not conflict with the museum's interests.	

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Disclosure form for any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.	
describe any affiliations with related institutions, receipt of gifts, outside employment, political activities, or other relevant matters.	

Signature and Date

Name

Date