

Riverside Metropolitan Museum

CODE OF ETHICS

Adopted 2002, amended 2015

The Riverside Metropolitan Museum (RMM) is a division of the City of Riverside's Museum and Cultural Affairs Department. The City of Riverside Municipal Code [Chapter 2.12] that established the RMM states that "All collections and exhibitions of the museum shall generally reflect but shall not necessarily be limited to the specific interpretations of the history, natural history and anthropology of the City and County of Riverside and the immediate environs of southern California."

The Mission of the Riverside Museum and Arts and Cultural Affairs Department is to collect the history, tell the stories and create memories for the Riverside region

The RMM's Code of Ethics establishes standards of conduct and performance of professional practice and ethical guidance for the RMM including all Board members, professionals, staff and volunteers.

RMM serves as a public trust for the people of Riverside, holding its collections and information in accordance with state and federal laws.

GOVERNANCE:

The City of Riverside, as the steward of the RMM, oversees and maintains the RMM's collections and programs for the benefit of City residents and the public. It ensures that resources are provided to support the RMM's Mission.

- a. RMM exhibitions and programs are available through regular established hours in compliance with all accessibility requirements.
- b. Professional standards and best practices for public museums inform and guide RMM operations.
- c. Policies (Collections Management Policy, Code of Ethics, Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Response Plan and Strategic Institutional Plan) and plans (Conservation Plan and Acquisitions Plan) are articulated and prudent oversight is practiced.
- d. City of Riverside Councilmembers, its employees, RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not use their association with the RMM for personal gain and/or to benefit another individual or institution.
- e. RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not use their association with the RMM for personal gifts and/or favors with financial value of over \$50.

- f. RMM staff, who have been identified by the City of Riverside’s City Clerk’s Office, must provide personal disclosures as stated by the State of California Form 700.
- g. RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not engage in outside employment and/or outside volunteer activities that conflicts with their association with the RMM.
- h. RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not engage in political activity that conflicts with the mission, goals and values of the RMM.
- i. RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not use their RMM association for referrals, information and/or name for personal benefit.

COLLECTIONS:

The RMM through its stewardship of the public trust acquires and preserves its collections. Collection activities are in compliance with state, federal and international laws.¹

- a. RMM collections support the Mission and the Museum’s public trust responsibilities.
- b. All collection-related activities promote the public good rather than personal financial gain.
- c. Curators are responsible for the accuracy of research and interpretation and for the content of written descriptions and documentation of the collections under their jurisdiction, as prepared by themselves and/or by others.
- d. Collections are held, recorded, documented, unencumbered, preserved and protected.
- e. Access to collections and related information is permitted and regulated.
- f. Deaccession of artifact/collections and their transfer, sale, trade or use in research activities is solely for the advancement of the Mission. Proceeds from the sale of any objects/collections are used for the purchase and/or the conservation of objects/collections from the collection where they had been previously accessioned.
- g. Competing claims of ownership of objects in Museum collections are handled with respect, transparency, integrity, legally and ethically.
- h. Curatorial staff is responsible for the proper and ethical application of the current American Alliance of Museums/International Council of Museums standards in museum practices and the elucidation of those practices for the benefit of City administration and public.
- i. RMM conforms fully to local, regional, state, national, international and treaty obligations.
- j. Artifact management activities respect the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources and discourage illicit trade.

¹ Pertinent laws include, but are not limited to: California Environmental Quality Act; Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; Federal Antiquities Act of 1906; Archaeological and Historic Data Preservation Act of 1974; Executive Order 11593, 1971; Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976; National Environmental Policy Act; Convention on Cultural Property Implementation [CPIA]; INIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects.

- k. Federal and international laws govern all decisions concerning collections of human remains, funerary and ritual objects.
- l. RMM staff, Board members and Museum volunteers may not use their association with the RMM to enhance a personal collection through loan, purchase, gift, transfer, or exchange and/or facilitate and/or enhance incoming or outgoing loans to benefit other institutions.
- m. RMM collection activities must not harm the environment, disparage American Indian cultural heritage and/or influence external markets.

EDUCATION:

The RMM provides accessibility to objects/specimens and collections through exhibitions, public programs, research, scholarship, publications, educational activities and web access. It develops its educational role and attracts audiences from the community, region, nationally and internationally through direct Museum access and/or virtual visits.

- a. Museum collections in anthropology, history, natural history and archives are the basis for educational program content.
- b. Programs support RMM Mission and public trust responsibilities.
- c. Programs are founded on current scholarship and marked by intellectual integrity.
- d. Programs are accessible and encourage participation of the widest possible audience.
- e. Programs respect pluralistic values, traditions and concerns.
- f. Revenue-producing activities are compatible with the RMM Mission and support its public trust responsibilities.