



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: MAY 24, 2023**

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A REVISED CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT FOR THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE

ISSUE:

Recommend that City Council adopt a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct for the Museum of Riverside.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommend that City Council adopt a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct for the Museum of Riverside.

BACKGROUND:

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) is the museum field's accrediting body. The AAM defines five "core documents" required of each accredited museum. These documents must be approved by an accredited museum's governing body. The Museum of Riverside (Museum) is an AAM-accredited institution. It is thus obliged to comply and, furthermore, desires to comply with the field's standards even as they become more demanding. The code of ethics must be specific to the Museum and expand on the AAM's industry-wide code. The Museum's last ethics policy revision occurred in 2015 in preparation for the most recent reaccreditation process.

DISCUSSION:

While the Museum was reaccredited in 2018, the process included a period when the accreditation commission tabled the Museum's bid for reaccreditation to permit a number of issues to be addressed. Among other concerns that have been or are being addressed, the accreditation review committee identified shortcomings in the Museum's ethics policy. An independent peer review consultant conducted an operational assessment at about the same time and reached many of the same conclusions.

The document recommended today is the last of the policy documents that required attention. It was written by the Museum Director after researching other museums' examples and articles about the changing function of such documents. It incorporates social justice concerns that were

rarely, if ever, addressed in earlier museum ethics statements. Because there is substantial overlap with existing Human Resources documents that guide the manner in which employees conduct themselves among their internal and external contacts, the document includes references and links to existing resources rather than restating them. During preparation of this document, revisions have been incorporated from Museum staff, the City of Riverside's Human Resources Department, and the City Attorney's office.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with the Strategic Priority, "Arts, Culture and Recreation." The document in this report supports, in particular, goal 1.1 (strengthening Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), goal 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and goal 1.5 (supporting programs and amenities to further develop literacy, health, and education of children, youth, and seniors throughout the community).

Foundational documents that inform Museum programs further support the Strategic Priority, "Community Well-Being." Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include goal 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and goal 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – Maintaining a policy document that articulates high ethical standards explicitly demonstrates a commitment to community service and a goal of earning community trust.
2. **Equity** – The Code of Ethics and Conduct incorporates expectations regarding equity and broad, transparent community service.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Code of Ethics and Conduct identifies and provides guidance in areas where ethical issues may arise in connection with financial matters.
4. **Innovation** – While a code of ethics is a standard operating requirement, the Museum's code is forward-looking in its inclusion of such sections as a land acknowledgment statement and a statement on racism, gender, and discrimination.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Code of Ethics and Conduct reflects staff efforts to remain abreast of a changing museum management environment in order to deliver services with relevance and lasting value.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Approved by:	Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager

Attachment:	Museum of Riverside Code of Ethics and Conduct
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