



## **Principles of Professional Practice**

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**Independent Museum Professionals (IMP)** provides a central hub of resources, knowledge, and connections. It actively works to support independent museum professionals, to strengthen the relationship between independent museum professionals and museums, and to advance the museum field.

### **Professional Integrity**

- Do your best for each and every client.
- Work with integrity, accuracy, independence, and respect for your client.
- Be diligent at every phase of work: don't cut corners, re-use work product prepared for an unrelated client, or skip over any phases of the consultation.
- Always work within the limits of your own expertise, while respecting the expertise of your client.
- Accept only those assignments for which you possess the requisite experience and competence.

### **Client Relationship**

- Act only within the limits of your authority: do not act in an official capacity except as requested by your client.
- Do not assume the role of regular client staff, leading to loss of staff positions, or invite an employee to consider alternative employment without prior discussion with the client.
- Above all, avoid disparaging or doing harm to your client and the constituency served by the client.

### **Cultural Competence**

- Make every effort to learn the culture of the client organization, including its values and practices.
- Show respect to the client's culture and deference to the client's norms, while maintaining your own professional standards.
- Maintain cultural competency in order to sustain equitable partnerships with diverse communities and clients.

### **Contracts and Agreements**

- In order to establish with the client realistic expectations of the benefits and results of your services, always prepare an agreement or contract detailing the work to be performed, the cost, the schedule, the client and consultant responsibilities, and the preferred mechanism of resolving any disputes or terminating the contract. Such agreements can range in length and format, but should be signed by both consultant and client.

### **Confidentiality**

- Assure the client of confidentiality. Keep client information that is not public knowledge private unless the client gives permission or law requires otherwise.

### **Conflict of Interest**

- Place the client's and the public's best interests first, before your own or your firm's interests.
- Anticipate and avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts.
- Do not represent conflicting or competing interests without the express consent of those involved (for example, when submitting proposals, do not agree to being part of competing consultant teams without revealing that to all team leaders).

### **Legal and Ethical**

- Follow all laws that apply to your client, your business, and your contract.
- Adhere to the ethical codes of all relevant professional associations and your discipline.
- Treat your subcontractors and employees equitably, with transparent pay, fair hiring, paid internships. Avoid discrimination in hiring employees and subcontractors.
- And, in general, treat others the way you want them to treat you, with openness, respect, attentiveness, consideration, and kindness. This includes respect for others' personal space, opinions, and privacy.