

Towner Art Gallery Ethics Code

June 2019

To be reviewed June 2021

This code sets out the standards of conduct that are expected of all Towner staff and volunteers in respect of regulations and values-based ethics, which are reflective of Towner's mission and values.

It is consistent with the Museum Association's Code of Ethics for Museums and provides the ethical framework for Towner's policies and procedures including:

Privacy Policy

Collection Policy

Gift Acceptance Policy

Donor Promise

Staff and Volunteer Conduct Agreement

Mission

Proud to be in Eastbourne, where the South Downs and coast meet, we support all artists and create experiences that connect, challenge and inspire.

Guiding principles

Established by Alderman John Chisholm Towner as 'a gallery for the people' in 1923, this founding ethos provides the basis for our guiding principles of openness, accessibility, integrity and accountability. These underpin Towner's core culture regardless of any changes in strategic priorities.

Enshrined in our mission, we have a duty to present work with and for our audiences which represents the interests of the broadest range of people across a wide diversity of age, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality and gender, including those with disabilities. We are committed to caring for and developing Towner's collection transparently and competently for current and future generations, ensuring that our communities engage with their important cultural asset.

We expect all those who work with and for Towner to uphold the highest level of institutional integrity and personal conduct at all times, to be transparent and trustworthy and to act in the public interest. It is of paramount importance that all staff and volunteers ensure public trust in the Towner's activities is upheld at all times.

Regulation

Staff/volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with all laws and regulation at all times in respect of bribery, confidentiality and discrimination.

Our code of conduct for staff/volunteers

Towner's values lie at the heart of our organisational culture, and define how we want our organisation to be seen by our communities and stakeholders.

Our values

Generosity

We share the gallery with diverse communities, making sure Towner is a welcoming, safe space for everyone to enjoy. We value different perspectives and treat each other with kindness and respect.

Creativity

Creativity inspires everything we do. We innovate across our organisation; in our working practices, our openness to collaborate and how we engage with communities.

Relevance

We always strive to be closely connected with our audiences and artists. By listening to different perspectives, we ensure our activities are reflective of people's lives. We champion the region and nurture its identity.

Integrity

We are committed to being ethical, honest and transparent in the governance of our charity, its financial management and across all our activities. We are accountable for our decisions and take ownership of our actions.

Bravery

We are confident and courageous, open to risk-taking across all aspects of our work, and will push the boundaries of what an art gallery can do.

All staff/volunteers are expected to:

- Conduct themselves with integrity and honesty
- Respect the public and each other at all times, as articulated in the Staff and Volunteer Conduct Agreement
- Act in the public interest at all times and avoid using their position for personal gain so as not to jeopardise Towner's reputation or compromise its ability to deliver its mission
- Avoid rewards e.g. gifts or cash that might be perceived as inducement to influence programme or secure favours e.g. authentication of artworks, that presents a conflict of interest, compromises the gallery's independence or damages its reputation
- Declare interests that might conflict with delivery of Towner's priorities or compromise its reputation

Our approach to gift acceptance and fundraising

Towner's strives to uphold the highest levels of integrity in its approach to accepting monetary and non-monetary gifts and donations, ensuring that both are compatible with the gallery's mission and strategic ambitions.

The Gift Acceptance Policy and Collections Policy set out clear steps for the consideration of accepting gifts by the Board and the Executive and our due diligence procedures ensuring that gifts are lawful and do not compromise Towner's independence or integrity.

The gallery is dedicated to treating all its supporters with the highest level of care and respect as articulated in the Donor Promise.

Our approach to programming and partners

Towner's mission and vision is to support artists of all ages and to create experiences for everyone that connect, challenge and inspire. To achieve this, we aim to represent the broadest range of human experience, providing a space for everyone to engage in conversation and debate that is reflective of the world we live in. This ambition reflects our values of bravery and relevance and achieves our core purpose to be a safe space that is open to respectful discussion and debate.

The gallery regularly collaborates with other art and culture organisations and artists to create and deliver exhibitions and creative activities in pursuit of its mission and strategic goals. While we cannot be fully accountable for the activities of all third parties, we endeavour to work with partners who conduct themselves with probity equivalent to our own standards.

Towner regularly hires its spaces to third party businesses and charities for events to supplement its income which helps deliver its core programme. While these events are private and not part of the gallery's public programme, we endeavour to ensure that our clients uphold similar ethical principles and that their association does not present any risk to Towner's reputation and mission.

June 2019