

**MFA Statement of Values and Code of Ethics**

1. **Introduction**

As a matter of fundamental principle, the nonprofit community should adhere to the highest ethical standards because it is the right thing to do. As a matter of pragmatic self-interest, the community should do so because public trust in our performance is the bedrock of our legitimacy. Donors and volunteers support charitable organizations because they trust them to carry out their missions, to be good stewards of their resources, and to uphold rigorous standards of conduct.

The Maryland Federation of Art (**MFA**) must earn this trust every day and in every possible way. But organizations are, at base, people, and it is up to the people of **MFA**―board members, executive leaders, staff and volunteers―to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the core values of integrity, honesty, fairness, openness, respect, and responsibility.

1. **Statement of Values**

Any code of ethics is built on a foundation of shared values. **MFA** values:

* The role of nonprofits in society (including relevance and outcomes)
* Innovation and excellence (including partnerships, collaboration, and commitment)
* Diversity and inclusiveness
* Accountability and transparency (including openness, honesty, trust and integrity)

These values lead directly to the Code of Ethics that follows. The Standards of Excellence and our values inform and guide the actions that **MFA** should take in developing our policies and informing their practices.

1. **The Code of Ethics**
2. Personal and Professional Integrity

**MFA** staff, board members and volunteers shall act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of **MFA**. **MFA** promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

1. Mission

**MFA** shall have a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the Board of Directors, in pursuit of the public good. The **MFA** mission is “to *create meaningful connections in the community through art*”. All **MFA** programs shall support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of **MFA** will understand and be loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission shall be responsive to the constituencies and communities served by **MFA** and of value to the society at large.

1. Governance

**MFA** shall have an active governing body, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, which is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of **MFA** and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of **MFA**. The Executive Committee:

* Ensures that its board members or trustees have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of **MFA** and its public purpose;
* Has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means; and
* Is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the **Executive Director** and ensures that the compensation of the **Director** is reasonable and

appropriate;

* Ensures that the **Executive Director** and appropriate staff provide the **Board of Directors** with timely and comprehensive information so that they can effectively carry out its duties;
* Ensures that **MFA** conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;
* Ensures that **MFA** promotes working relationships with board members, staff,
* volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
* Ensures that **MFA** is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and
* practices for all board, staff and volunteer positions;
* Ensures that policies of **MFA** are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted as defined in Standards of Excellence ;
* Ensures that the resources of **MFA** are responsibly and prudently managed; and
* Ensures that **MFA** has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.ad
1. Legal Compliance

**MFA** will be vigilant in compliance with laws, regulations and applicable conventions that govern and regulate our organization.

1. Responsible Stewardship

**MFA** shall manage its’ funds responsibly and prudently. This should include the following

considerations:

* It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on programs in pursuance of its

mission;

* It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;
* **MFA** compensates staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately;
* **MFA** has reasonable fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that affect fundraising costs;
* **MFA** will maintain an appropriate level of funds to maintain our mission and purpose and not accumulate excessive reserve funds;
* **MFA** ensures that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of **MFA**; and,
* All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.
1. Openness and Disclosure

**MFA** shall provide comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders and is responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about **MFA** will fully and honestly reflect our policies and practices. Basic informational data about **MFA**, such as the Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements, if required, will be available to the public. All solicitation materials accurately represent the organization’s policies and practices and will reflect the dignity of program beneficiaries. All financial, organizational, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

1. Program Evaluation

**MFA** will regularly review program effectiveness and have mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. **MFA** is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and develops mechanisms to promote learning from its activities. **MFA** will be responsive to changes in its field of activity and the needs of its constituencies.

1. Inclusiveness and Diversity

**MFA** shall have a policy of promoting inclusiveness and its staff, board and volunteers reflect diversity to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. **MFA** shall take meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, board recruitment and constituencies served.

I. Fundraising

**MFA** shall raise funds from the public and from donor institutions and be truthful in solicitation materials. **MFA** will respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and expends funds consistent with donor intent. **MFA** shall disclose important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds, **MFA** will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

* To be informed of the **MFA** mission, the way the resources will be used and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
* To be informed of the identity of those serving on the **MFA** board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
* To have access to the most recent **MFA** financial reports;
* To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
* To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
* To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with
* confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
* To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
* To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, **MFA** employees or hired solicitors;
* To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that **MFA** may intend to share; and,
* To feel free to ask questions when donating and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.