BOARD POLICY
ETHICS & CONDUCT

Preamble

The national and international museum community aspires to high standards of ethics and conduct as a prerequisite for all areas of museum activity and responsibility. This aspiration is expressed in the codes of museum associations, professional associations, and individual institutions.

Policy

Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) will comply with all applicable legislation as well as with the specific legal authority, the Royal Ontario Museum Act. Further, ROM strives for the highest ethical standards in all aspects of museum activities in recognition of its public trust. All ROM Board Policies, Management Policies, and procedures will be guided by these standards of ethics and conduct and will comply with the established guidelines of the larger museum community, including the Canadian Museum Association, the Ontario Museum Association, the Canadian Art Museum Director's Organization, the Association of Art Museum Directors, and the International Council of Museums.
Individuals subject to this policy must conduct themselves in a manner that maintains public confidence in the integrity, stewardship, and reputation of the Royal Ontario Museum.

Therefore, ROM requires that all employees, volunteers, trustees, board members, contractors, and individuals acting on behalf of ROM

- Treat others with respect, dignity, professionalism, and inclusion, both internally and when representing ROM. Behaviour inconsistent with ROM policies on discrimination, harassment, workplace violence, or retaliation is prohibited.
- Use their skills and experiences for the benefit of ROM.
- Keep confidential any and all ROM information obtained through employment, volunteer service, or governance responsibilities, except where disclosure is authorized or required by law.
- Respect and protect ROM property and facilities, including records, and refrain from using them in a manner or for a purpose that may be contrary to ROM's interests.
- Avoid, disclose, and appropriately manage actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could interfere with their responsibilities to ROM.
- Abide by the Public Service of Ontario Act (Revised edition 2026), and the regulations thereunder, including, but not limited to, the "*Conflict of Interest Rules for Public Servants.* Acquaint themselves with and comply with the principles established by the Canadian Museum Association's Ethics Guidelines (Revised edition, 2006), the Association of Art Museums Directors, Professional Practices (Revised edition, 2022),the International Council of Museum's (ICOM) Code of Ethics (Revised edition, Revised edition, 2026), and Bill 132, Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act, 2016. Senior management is responsible for ensuring awareness of and access to these documents.
- Individuals are expected to promptly report suspected breaches of this policy, conflicts of interest, fraud, unethical conduct, or other misconduct through established reporting channels.

Explanation of Terms

employee: an individual who fills a position approved by the Director & CEO and who receives monetary compensation. ROM employees include senior management, supervisory and exempt staff, unionized employees, and individuals employed by the ROM for a limited duration.

volunteer: a term that applies to all individuals who provide their time and service to an activity that supports the objectives of the ROM and is authorized and sponsored

by the ROM, and for which they are not paid by the ROM. Volunteers include, but are not limited to, members of the Department of Museum Volunteers, trustees, research associates, departmental associates, field associates, curators emeritus, post-secondary or graduate students working in a curatorial department or in the field, and secondary-school students working on a cooperative-education term on Museum premises or volunteering in the Hands-on galleries.

Date June 21, 2001

Amended August 29, 2002
December 12, 2005
March 6, 2008
April 4, 2013
December 13, 2016
December 8, 2020 *(administrative updates)*
March 28, 2023 *(administrative updates)*
October 23, 2024 *(administrative updates)*
October 25, 2025 *(administrative updates)*
October 28, 2026 *(administrative updates)*

MONITORING

Adherence to Policy
Board: The Governance Committee will periodically review management's adherence to the policy.

Management: The Director & CEO, the Deputy Director Museum Operations & Chief Operating Officer, the Deputy Director, Collections & Research and Chief Innovation Officer, Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Human Resources Officer will ensure that the Governance Committee has all the relevant information for determining adherence.

Policy Review
Method Internal Report
Responsibility Governance Committee
Minimum Frequency Annually or more frequently when significant legislative, governance, or operational changes occur *(next review 2027)*