

# **American Association of Grant Professionals**

## **Code of Ethics**

The **American Association of Grant Professionals** (AAGP), a nonprofit membership association, is committed to serving the greater public good by practicing the highest ethical and professional standards. Ethics refer to the rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or members of a profession.

Members have joined forces to be the leading authority and resource for the practice of grantsmanship in all sectors of the field. Membership in this association promotes positive relationships between grant professionals and their stakeholders, provides a vehicle for grant professionals to gain professional growth and development, and enhances the public image and recognition of the profession within the greater philanthropic, public, and private funding communities. Members' foundation is stimulated by the rich diversity within the grant profession.

### **Members, among others, are to:**

Practice their profession with the highest sense of integrity, honesty, and truthfulness to maintain and broaden public confidence

Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations in all aspects of grantsmanship

Continually improve their professional knowledge and skills

Promote positive relationships between grant professionals and their stakeholders

Value the privacy, freedom, choice and interests of all those affected by their actions

Ensure that funds are solicited according to program guidelines

Adhere to acceptable means of compensation for services performed; pro bono work is encouraged

Foster cultural diversity and pluralistic values and treat all people with dignity and respect

Become leaders and role models in the field of grantsmanship

Encourage colleagues to embrace and practice AAGP's Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice.

## **Standards of Professional Practice**

As members respect and honor the above principles and guidelines established by the AAGP Code of Ethics, any infringement or breach of standards outlined in the Code are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including expulsion, to be determined by a committee elected by their peers.

### **Professional Obligations:**

Members shall act according to the highest ethical standards of their institution, profession, and conscience.

Members shall obey all applicable local, state, provincial, and federal civil and criminal laws and regulations.

Members shall avoid the appearance of any criminal offense or professional misconduct.

Members shall disclose all relationships that might constitute, or appear to constitute, conflicts of interest.

Members shall not be associated directly or indirectly with any service, product, individuals, or organizations in a way that they know is misleading.

Members shall not abuse any relationship with a donor, prospect, volunteer or employee to the benefit of the member or the member's organization.

Members shall recognize their individual boundaries of competence and are forthcoming and truthful about their professional experience, knowledge and expertise.

Members shall continually strive to improve their personal competence.

### **Solicitation and Use of Funds:**

Members shall take care to ensure that all solicitation materials are accurate and correctly reflect the organization's mission and use of solicited funds.

Members shall take care to ensure that grants are used in accordance with the grant's intent.

If Applicable:

Members shall take care to ensure proper use of funds, including timely reports on the use and management of such funds.

Members shall obtain explicit consent by the grantor before altering the conditions of grant agreements.

### **Presentation of Information:**

Members shall not disclose privileged information to unauthorized parties. Information acquired from consumers is confidential. This includes verbal and written disclosures, records, and video or audio recording of an activity or presentation without appropriate releases.

Members shall not plagiarize<sup>[2]</sup> in any professional work, including, but not limited to: grant proposals, journal articles/magazines, scholarly works, advertising/marketing materials, websites, scientific articles, self-plagiarism, etc.

Members are responsible for knowing the confidentiality regulations within their jurisdiction.

Members shall use accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to the appropriate guidelines adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) for the type of organization involved. (In countries outside of the United States, comparable authority should be utilized).

### **Compensation:**

Members shall work for a salary or fee.

Members may accept performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, provided such bonuses are in accordance with prevailing practices within the members' own organizations and are not based on a percentage of grant monies.

Members shall not accept or pay a finder's fee<sup>[3]</sup>, commission<sup>[4]</sup>, or percentage compensation based on grants and shall take care to discourage their organizations from making such payments.

Compensation should not be written into grants unless allowed by the funder.

*"The AAGP Code of Ethics reflects only the highest standards in*

*professional behavior and incorporates the standards promulgated by American Fundraising Professionals and other professions dedicated to serving the greater public good.*

[1] Defined by American Heritage Dictionary

[2] Plagiarize – to steal or pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own; use (another’s production) without crediting the source; to commit literary theft; present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

[3] Finder’s fee – payment made for introducing a nonprofit to a funder and/or contingent upon the nonprofit receiving a grant from that funder.

[4] Commission – flat-rate fee or percentage paid for services rendered



