

# **CODE OF ETHICS**

**of the**



**RAILROAD MUSEUM OF  
LONG ISLAND**

**ADOPTED 5/14/2019**

## **I. Code of Ethics Policy**

- 1.1** The Railroad Museum of Long Island [RMLI] founded in 1990, is grounded in the tradition of public service. The Museum is organized as a public trust; the collections and information are a benefit for those individuals and entities it serves. Members of the Board of Trustees and volunteers are committed to serve the interests of these beneficiaries. As stated in the mission statement, *“the Museum is dedicated to the restoration, preservation and interpretation of the history and artifacts pertaining to the railroads which participated in the growth of Long Island, its communities and industries for the entertainment, edification, and good of present and future generations.”* The museum is a Section 501(c)(3) entity, and as a nonprofit institution complies with applicable local, state, and federal laws and international conventions, as well as with the specific legal standards governing trust responsibilities.
- 1.2** The foundation of museum work is fidelity to the mission of the Museum and society it serves. When any incidents of conflicts of interest arise, actual, potential, or perceived, the duty of fidelity will never be compromised. No volunteer may use their position in the Museum for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museum, its mission, its reputation and the public it serves.

## **II. Governance**

- 2.1** Museum governance in its various forms is a public trust responsible for the institution's service to society. The governing authority protects and enhances the Museum's collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources. It ensures that all these resources support the Museum's mission, respond to the pluralism of society and respect the diversity of the natural and cultural commonwealth.

- 2.2** Thus, the governing authority ensures that:
- A.** All those who work for or on behalf of Museum understand and support its mission and public trust responsibilities.
  - B.** Its members understand and fulfill their trusteeship and act corporately, not as individuals.
  - C.** The Museum's collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources are protected, maintained and developed in support of the its mission.
  - D.** It is responsive to and represents the interests of society.
  - E.** It maintains the relationship with staff in which shared roles are recognized and separate responsibilities respected.
  - F.** Working relationships among trustees, volunteers and potential employees are based on equity and mutual respect.
  - G.** Professional standards and practices inform and guide Museum operations.
  - H.** Policies are articulated, and prudent oversight is practiced.
  - I.** Governance promotes the public good rather than individual financial gain.

### **III. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 3.1** As is the case with all organizations, the membership is composed of people representing a complex and diversified set of interests and experiences. In numerous situations, individual members may be involved with multiple organizations and may occupy positions of a similar nature. The intention of this guideline is to encourage all officers, trustees and volunteers to avoid any and all matters which may be construed as a conflict of interest with an entity other than our Museum.
- 3.2** A "Conflict of Interest" occurs when a private interest interferes in any means with the interests of the Railroad Museum of Long Island's. A conflict situation may arise when a volunteer covered by this code takes actions or has interests which impede their performance to work objectively and effectively. "Conflicts of Interest" may also arise when a volunteer covered by this Code or a member of their immediate family receives improper personal benefits as a result of their position in the RMLI. This policy also applies to anyone who may be a member of a similar organization. Loans to, or guarantees of obligations to, such persons are of special concern. Volunteers are expected to avoid all situations which create a material conflict between their self-interest and their duties and responsibilities to the RMLI. They should direct questions to the RMLI's Senior Compliance Officer or Executive Officers.

## IV. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 4.1** Nonpublic information regarding the RMLI and its properties, volunteers, business associations, customers/guests, volunteers and vendors must be kept confidential and should not be disclosed without proper authorization. As a volunteer covered by this Code, you may be entrusted with confidential information. You may use confidential information only for the purpose intended and are not to share any confidential information with anyone outside of the RMLI, including family and friends, or with other volunteers who do not "need to know" this information to carry out their duties. Additionally, volunteers may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement at any point. You remain under an obligation to keep all nonpublic information confidential, to the extent permitted by law, even if your association with the RMLI ends. Documents containing confidential information must be kept in a safe, secure place in the RMLI.
- 4.2** Confidential information is information that is not generally available to the public, and includes, but is not limited to:
- A.** Trade secrets, which include any business or technical information, such as programs, methods, techniques and compilation of information that is valuable because it is not generally known.
  - B.** All rights to any invention or process developed by a volunteer using the RMLI's facilities or trade secret information, resulting from any work for the RMLI or relating to the RMLI's business, shall belong to the RMLI.
  - C.** Proprietary information such as customer lists, trademarked items and the Museum's leases with the MTA, etc.
  - D.** Revenues, costs, profits, financial statements, ledgers, software, operating plans, budgets, projections, internal financial

reporting, sales reporting, vendor lists, product purchase costs, quantity information, contractual agreements, etc.

**E.** Marketing plans and information regarding advertising campaigns.

**F.** The terms, which are not publicly disclosed, of any contract between the RMLI and any third party.

**4.3** In addition, no person covered by this Code shall agree to enter into any confidentiality, non-disclosure or similar agreement with any third party on behalf of the RMLI unless such agreement shall have been approved by the Board of Trustees or an authorized Executive Officer of the RMLI.

## **V. Communications with Media and Public**

**5.1** The museum is certified by the New York State Department of Education and is classified as 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The president of the RMLI must approve press releases, public statements and marketing materials (including electronic means) produced on behalf of the RMLI prior to their release. The RMLI has specific guidelines regarding contact with print and broadcast media. All interviews or requests to access RMLI property must be approved by the president.

## **VI. Programs**

**6.1** The Museum's exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications and educational activities, further the Museum's mission and are responsive to the concerns, interests and needs of society.

- 6.2** Accordingly, the Museum ensures that:
- A.** Programs support its mission and public trust responsibilities.
  - B.** Programs are founded on scholarship and marked by intellectual integrity.
  - C.** Programs are accessible and encourage participation of the widest possible audience consistent with its mission and resources.
  - D.** Programs respect pluralistic values, traditions and concerns.
  - E.** Revenue-producing activities and activities that involve relationships with external entities are compatible with the Museum's mission and support its public trust responsibilities.
  - F.** Programs promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.