

Approved by the Membership, January 2006

Statement of Values and Code of Ethics

Introduction

As a matter of fundamental principle, all members of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters shall adhere to the highest ethical standards because it is the right thing to do. As a matter of pragmatic self-interest, members shall do so because mutual trust amongst the membership is the bedrock of our work. Adherence to contractual obligations and all applicable legal requirements is the minimum standard of expected behavior. As members of Arts Presenters, our organizations are encouraged to embrace the spirit of the law, often going beyond legal requirements. Transparency, openness and responsiveness to our colleagues and partners must be integral to our behavior.

Organizations are, at base, people, and it is up to the people working in the performing arts field—board members, executive leaders, staff, and artists—to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the core values of integrity, honesty, fairness, openness, respect, and responsibility. As members of the Association, our work practice demonstrates concern for the interests and well-being of individuals and organizations affected by our actions.

The evolving dynamics of our society and performing arts industry make the traditional “we-they” dichotomies increasingly archaic. The roles and functions of artists, managers, agents, presenters, producers, funders and service providers are fluid and interdependent. The Association of Performing Arts Presenters comprises a diverse array of organizations large and small, institutional and independent, those that operate at the community and national level and those that work outside the United States. That diversity is one of the abiding strengths of the Association. Undergirding this diversity is a common set of ethical standards that recognizes and upholds the interdependent nature of our business.

A code of ethics is, by necessity, general in outlining broad ethical principles upon which all members shall conduct their work with each other. It is not a detailed set of practices on a specific issue nor is it intended to replace each member organization’s own code of ethics with which all of their trustees, staff and volunteers are familiar and to which they adhere.

Statement of Values

The Arts Presenters code of ethics is built on a foundation of a shared vision, shared values and a shared mission. The vision, values and mission of Arts Presenters include:

Our Vision

We envision a world where:

- all people can experience the transformative power of live performance;
- art and ideas circulate vigorously and freely;
- artists play a leading role in civic affairs and global dialogue;
- people of all cultures interact and affirm themselves through the arts; and
- public and private sectors alike support the performing arts as a priority.

Our Values

We believe the performing arts are essential. Live performance is a universal form of human communication, a fundamental component of free expression. The interaction between artist and

audience is basic to civic life, crucial to the economic well-being of communities, indispensable to the mind and spirit.

We believe the performing arts unite all people. For the performing arts to flourish, we must have diversity and inclusiveness: in our membership, our presentations, and our audiences. By embracing all human experience—and bridging differences among individuals, communities, and cultures—we strengthen both art and society.

We believe the performing arts inspire leadership. Each of our members can and should play an active role in the arts world and in its home community. By accepting the responsibility to lead, exercising their own creativity, our members advance both themselves and their partners: presenters, artists, producers, agents, managers, funders, and audiences.

Our Mission

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters is a membership organization, dedicated to bringing performing artists and audiences together in every place and way imaginable. The Association achieves its goal by providing visionary thinking, professional development, resource sharing, and advocacy, in support of its members and all those who create and disseminate the performing arts.

These values, vision and mission lead directly to the Code of Ethics for Arts Presenters that follows. They inform and guide the actions that members should take in developing their policies.

The Code of Ethics for the Association of Performing Arts Presenters

I. Education

1. Arts Presenters shall provide educational opportunities through regular seminars and workshops designed to educate its Members and the industry at-large with regard to its Code of Ethics as well as legal standards and requirements. Discussion and review of the Code of Ethics will be integrated into the curricula of the “The Business of Presenting” seminars and the Emerging Leadership Institute seminars. In addition, case studies, frequently asked questions and ethics-related papers and links will be posted on the Association’s website and published in *Inside Arts*. A member-elected Ethics Committee will be available to answer questions and provide guidance to Members with regard to problematic situations.

II. Personal and Professional Integrity

1. By virtue of their positions of leadership, Arts Presenters members shall be responsible to each other and to the artists represented by members.
2. All staff, board members and volunteers of Arts Presenters members shall act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of their organization. Members shall promote a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.
3. Members shall conduct all negotiations, transactions and dealings in good faith and with integrity and honesty. Members will communicate with each other clearly and on a timely basis;
4. Members shall conduct working relationships with colleagues in all sectors of the field that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
5. Members shall not breach professional confidences. Members are encouraged to be circumspect, judicious, fair minded and diplomatic;
6. Members will respect the integrity of the mission of other members. Policies of member organizations are encouraged to be written, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
7. Members will seek to understand and respect the organizational capacity and needs of other members and members are expected to have the capacity to carry out the programs they offer and/or present effectively. Members will be forthcoming and truthful about their professional experience and qualifications.
8. Members shall be held responsible for the actions and commitments of their staffs and associated individuals.

III. Legal and Ethical Compliance

1. Members must be knowledgeable of and comply with all applicable laws, regulations and statutes.
2. Members shall not abuse their professional affiliation by seeking inappropriate perquisites or benefits of any sort that result in personal gain.

3. Members shall make one another aware of any potential or perceived conflict of interest.
4. Members shall be expressly clear when making inquiries and exploring possibilities with other members that they are not making commitments.
5. Members must honor the good faith aspect of holds and letters of intent and shall make such statements only when they fully intend to move forward with the negotiation.
6. All members shall use written agreements and contracts and are encouraged to confirm verbal agreements in writing by way of deal memos, emails, faxes or letters. Members are encouraged to create provisions for contract amendments and termination.
7. Contracts shall not be requested or supplied unless all parties intend to negotiate and execute such contracts in good faith. Written contracts must be completely, accurately and promptly executed.
8. Members must honor their contractual obligations and responsibilities and be clear about their needs, priorities and expectations. Failure to honor contractual obligations represents a breach of contract that could result in legal action.
9. Issues arising after contracts are issued and/or signed must be fully, frankly and promptly communicated to all parties concerned with the full intention of finding a fair resolution. Unilateral and bilateral actions have implications that reverberate throughout the field; instead members must work towards conflict resolution through honest, timely and straightforward communication.
10. Members must not willfully cancel commitments or booked engagements, including but not limited to when the desire to cancel stems from a more lucrative or prestigious opportunity and/or problematic ticket sales.
11. While extreme financial distress (budget cutbacks; loss of committed grant funds; sudden, unforeseen price increases, etc) is often a reality of our field, members recognize that arbitrary, unilateral cancellations are not an acceptable response to dire financial situations. It is incumbent upon members to explore multiple options with all affected parties in an open and honest search for a solution that mitigates financial loss for all parties as much as possible.
12. Members shall remit fees and invoice expenses within a clearly specified and agreed upon time period.

IV. Openness and Disclosure

1. Members shall provide comprehensive, accurate and timely information to colleagues and are encouraged to be responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information.
2. Members shall not make statements and representations that are knowingly or intentionally false, misleading or inaccurate.
3. Members shall respect the privacy concerns of other members.
4. Members shall respect the rights of individuals/organizations with whom they do business, as follows:

- a. To be assured that information about their business is handled with respect and with confidentiality;
- b. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing your organization will be professional in nature;
- c. To feel free to ask questions and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

V. Program Evaluation

1. Members are encouraged to regularly review their practices, challenges, effectiveness and obstacles and to have mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future practice. Members shall be responsive to changes in the field and to the needs of artists, presenters, producers and manager/agents.
2. The performing arts industry includes commercial businesses, not-for-profit organizations and self employed individuals. Training and professional development programs are limited and offices are often small. Because these factors contribute to varying degrees of employee turnover, the engagement and education of staff must be taken with care and diligence. Employers and senior staff are encouraged to act as mentors and educators who teach new employees the practical, philosophical and ethical aspects of our business.

VI. Requirement to Comply with the Code of Ethics

1. All Members are held accountable for upholding the Code of Ethics and shall be required to read and, by signing, agree to abide by the Code of Ethics, as a condition of Arts Presenters membership and upon renewing Arts Presenters membership every year.