



## Verde Valley Archaeology Center Code of Ethics

The Verde Valley Archaeology Center (hereafter referred to as “the Center”) Code of Ethics applies to staff, board members, volunteers, research associates, and others affiliated with the Center for official purposes.

The Center’s Code of Ethics is in conformance with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and uses AAM’s code of conduct as a guideline for Center Associates.

### Governance

The Center’s Board of Directors, Executive Director, Director of Archaeology, General Counsel and Advisory Council form a public trust responsible for the institution’s service to society. These governing authorities protect and enhance the Center’s collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources. The authorities confirm that the Center’s resources support its mission while respecting the diversity of the natural and cultural common wealth.

Thus, the Verde Valley Archaeology Center’s governing authorities ensure that:

- all those who work for or on behalf of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center understand and support its mission and public trust responsibilities
- Center members understand and fulfill their trusteeship and act corporately, not as individuals
- the Center’s collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources are protected, maintained and developed in support of the Center’s mission
- it is responsive to and represents the interests of regional, statewide, and national communities
- it maintains the relationship with staff in which shared roles are recognized and separate responsibilities respected
- working relationships among trustees, employees and volunteers are based on equity and mutual respect
- professional standards and practices inform and guide museum and research operations
- policies are articulated and prudent oversight is practiced
- governance promotes the public good rather than individual financial gain.

### Collections

The distinctive character of curation ethics derives from the ownership, care and use of objects, specimens, and living collections representing the world’s natural and cultural common wealth. This stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation, accessibility and responsible disposal.

Thus, the Center ensures that:

- collections in its custody support its mission and public trust responsibilities
- collections in its custody are lawfully held, protected, secure, unencumbered, cared for and preserved
- collections in its custody are accounted for and documented
- access to the collections and related information is permitted and regulated
- acquisition, disposal, and loan activities are conducted in a manner that respects the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources and discourages illicit trade in such materials
- acquisition, disposal, and loan activities conform to its mission and public trust responsibilities
- disposal of collections through sale, trade or research activities is solely for the advancement of the Center's mission. Proceeds from the sale of nonliving collections are to be used consistent with the established standards of the Center's discipline.
- the unique and special nature of human remains and funerary and sacred objects are treated in accordance to Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
- collections-related activities promote the public good rather than individual financial gain
- competing claims of ownership that may be asserted in connection with objects in its custody should be handled openly, seriously, responsively and with respect for the dignity of all parties involved.

## Programs

Research facilities and museums serve society by advancing an understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural common wealth through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications and educational activities. These programs further the Center's mission and are responsive to the concerns, interests and needs of society.

Thus, the Center ensures that:

- programs support its mission, vision, and public trust responsibilities
- programs are founded on scholarship and marked by intellectual integrity
- programs are accessible and encourage participation of the widest possible audience consistent with its mission and resources
- programs respect pluralistic values, traditions and concerns
- revenue-producing activities and activities that involve relationships with external entities are compatible with the Center's mission, vision, and support its public trust responsibilities
- programs promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.