

Principle Four: Focus on Quality and Authenticity

BEST PRACTICE: American Association of Museum's Code of Ethics

With the increase in popularity – and product availability – of cultural heritage tourism, destinations must seek strategies to demonstrate the point of difference and excellence in experience offered to visitors. Several strategies have been introduced to define and qualify authenticity, visitor services, and integrity of product.



The Role of Integrity

The American Association of Museums (AAM) created a **Code of Ethics** to promote integrity within the museum community and provide the public with guidelines as to what they might expect from museums and individuals associated with them. Of paramount importance is loyalty to the mission of the museum and to the public it serves.

According to AAM, “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 museum’s mission and are responsive to the concerns, interests and needs of society.

The museum ensures that:

- programs support its mission 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 museum’s mission and support its public trust responsibilities
- programs promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.

For more information

Ethical Guidelines: American Association of Museums, 1575 Eye Street NE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005 Tel: 202-289.1818; fax: 202-289-6578; <http://www.aam-us.org/>.

