

Code of Ethics – Van Gogh Museum Foundation

The Van Gogh Museum (hereinafter “VGM”) is committed to principles of corporate social responsibility and considers integrity and ethical conduct to be fundamental to its operations. This Code of Ethics forms part of the VGM’s broader ethical and integrity framework and serves as the normative basis for entering into and assessing collaborations and business relationships. It reflects how we translate our mission, vision and core values into practice. This Code of Ethics serves as the basis for the VGM when accepting donations and entering into relationships with external parties. We expect all of our donors, suppliers of goods and services, licensees and sub-licensees, and other contracting parties (hereinafter: partners) to help us comply with this Code of Ethics by actively supporting and respecting our values and principles, and by applying them as much as possible to their own business environment, while respecting the mission, vision and core values of the VGM.

This Code of Ethics applies to all parties from whom the VGM receives donations and with whom it enters into sponsorship agreements, as well as to suppliers of goods and services, licensees and sub-licensees of the VGM, and all other partners. This is a living document, which the VGM may amend or extend. We will inform our partners of any changes, and the Code of Ethics is available on the VGM’s website.

Respecting the law

The VGM expects its partners to comply with all applicable legislation and regulations. Compliance with laws and regulations must never be compromised. Persons or entities subject to UN sanctions are excluded from any collaboration with the museum.

Integrity and professional conduct

The VGM considers integrity and ethical conduct by its partners as essential conditions for sustainable business practice, investments and donations. The VGM therefore expects its partners to support an open, fair and competitive business environment. The VGM observes the Fair Practice Code and the Diversity and Inclusion Code, and expects the same from its partners.

The VGM also has an anti-bribery scheme that applies both internally and to its relationships with partners. The museum’s working procedures must not be affected by any conflict of interest. Furthermore, partners may not be involved in any form of corruption, extortion or embezzlement, nor engage in any form of bribery, including but not limited to, promising, offering, giving or accepting an inappropriate monetary or other inducement. Gifts or incentives to influence business or other decisions are unacceptable.

Working conditions and human rights

The VGM endorses the values set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) core conventions, based on respect for the dignity of the individual without any distinction. The VGM will therefore only enter into relationships with business partners who comply with the following standards and values:

- a. provide working conditions that enable safe working practices and that support the health of employees in the workplace;
- b. treat employees fairly in terms of reasonable working hours, periodic leave and remuneration for work performed;
- c. respect the right of employees to freely and democratically establish trade unions and not discriminate against employees based on their union membership;
- d. employ people based on the principle of equal opportunities, without distinction as to ethnicity, skin colour, gender, religion, beliefs or origin;
- e. do not use or participate in child or forced labour.

Products, environment and sustainability

All products that are sold and/or used by the VGM must always meet the legal safety requirements and must not endanger the health and safety of people. Products should be manufactured in an animal-friendly way and must not contain fur. Business partners are expected to contribute actively to climate responsibility and sustainable development. They are expected to make efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions, prevent environmental damage and comply with all applicable environmental legislation. Partners will endeavour to prevent or minimize adverse effects on the community, natural resources and the environment in general. In the context of exhibitions, partners are expected to work with circular, reusable or recyclable materials and energy-efficient solutions. Logistics, transport and packaging should be organized in such a way that environmental impact is minimized.

Independence, provenance and cultural integrity

The VGM attaches great importance to the independence of research and exhibition practices. Partners are expected to ensure that research, interpretation and the development of exhibitions take place independently and are free from undue influence from financiers, sponsors or other stakeholders. The VGM expects its partners to act transparently regarding the provenance of artworks and objects. In the case of acquisitions or loans, partners are expected to conduct careful provenance research and verify ownership. The VGM avoids acquisitions and loans without documented provenance or where there is a suspicion of illegal trade, in line with international museum standards such as the ICOM Code.

Digital ethics and communication

The VGM attaches great importance to digital ethics and responsible communication. Partners are expected to use technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in a responsible and transparent manner and are expected to avoid misleading practices, infringement of intellectual property rights and unethical use of personal data.

Partners are expected to act professionally and respectfully in all communications, including on social media. Communications associated with the VGM must reflect our core values and must not harm the reputation of the museum. Personal data must always be handled with due care and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Proviso

The VGM may refuse gifts, services, collaborations or contracts offered by partners if research (for example, of publicly available sources) reveals that they have deliberately invested in or cooperate with organisations that do not comply with this Code of Ethics. If a lack of compliance with the Code of Ethics is established after a gift or donation has been accepted, the amount will be refunded and any contractual considerations (such as naming rights) will cease. The VGM will discuss this with the partner in question in order to clarify its reasons and to encourage compliance with the Code of Ethics.

Compliance

The VGM expects its partners to comply with this Code of Ethics. At the VGM's request, partners must be able to demonstrate that they have taken the necessary measures to ensure compliance. Partners are expected to communicate the Code of Ethics to their employees and to take all reasonable measures to ensure that their own partners also comply with it. The VGM maintains an open and constructive dialogue with its partners to strengthen the Code of Ethics. In the event of non-compliance, the VGM will work with the partner to achieve corrective measures within an agreed timeframe. If non-compliance persists, this may lead to suspension or termination of the cooperation.