

Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (AIC)

PREAMBLE



The primary goal of conservation professionals, individuals with extensive training and special expertise, is the preservation of cultural property. Cultural property consists of individual objects, structures, or aggregate collections. It is material which has significance that may be artistic, historical, scientific, religious, or social, and it is an invaluable and irreplaceable legacy that must be preserved for future generations.

In striving to achieve this goal, conservation professionals assume certain obligations to the cultural property, to its owners and custodians, to the conservation profession, and to society as a whole. This document, the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (AIC), sets forth the principles that guide conservation professionals and others who are involved in the care of cultural property.



CODE OF ETHICS

- I. The conservation professional shall strive to attain the highest possible standards in all aspects of conservation, including, but not limited to, preventive conservation, examination, documentation, treatment, research, and education.
- II. All actions of the conservation professional must be governed by an informed respect for the cultural property, its unique character and significance, and the people or person who created it.
- III. While recognizing the right of society to make appropriate and respectful use of cultural property, the conservation professional shall serve as an advocate for the preservation of cultural property.
- IV. The conservation professional shall practice within the limits of personal competence and education as well as within the limits of the available facilities.
- V. While circumstances may limit the resources allocated to a particular situation, the quality of work that the conservation professional performs shall not be compromised.
- VI. The conservation professional must strive to select methods and materials that, to the best of current knowledge, do not adversely affect cultural property or its future examination, scientific investigation, treatment, or function.
- VII. The conservation professional shall document examination, scientific investigation, and treatment by creating permanent records and reports.
- VIII. The conservation professional shall recognize a responsibility for preventive conservation by endeavoring to limit damage or deterioration to cultural property, providing guidelines for continuing use and care, recommending appropriate environmental conditions for storage and exhibition, and encouraging proper procedures for handling, packing, and transport.

CODE OF ETHICS CONT.

IX. The conservation professional shall act with honesty and respect in all professional relationships, seek to ensure the rights and opportunities of all individuals in the profession, and recognize the specialized knowledge of others.



X. The conservation professional shall contribute to the evolution and growth of the profession, a field of study that encompasses the liberal arts and the natural sciences. This contribution may be made by such means as continuing development of personal skills and knowledge, sharing of information and experience with colleagues, adding to the profession's written body of knowledge, and providing and promoting educational opportunities in the field.

XI. The conservation professional shall promote an awareness and understanding of conservation through open communication with allied professionals and the public.

XII. The conservation professional shall practice in a manner that minimizes personal risks and hazards to co-workers, the public, and the environment.

XIII. Each conservation professional has an obligation to promote understanding of and adherence to this Code of Ethics.

The conservation professional should use the following guidelines and supplemental commentaries together with the AIC Code of Ethics in the pursuit of ethical practice. The commentaries are separate documents, created by the AIC membership, that are intended to amplify this document and to accommodate growth and change in the field.

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<http://www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=858&nodeID=1>

