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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GLAMMONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Code of Conduct (CoC) is designed specifically for practitioners in commons-oriented Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAMMONS). It provides a framework of best practices and ethical guidelines, aimed at ensuring the Commons-Orientation of GLAM institutions. The CoC includes a comprehensive set of recommendations focused on promoting inclusivity, transparency, and responsibility, in alignment with principles of common ownership, shared stewardship, and collaborative management.

1. We collectively steward knowledge as a shared cultural resource by promoting open access, fair use, and collaborative authorship.

2. We cultivate inclusive environments where diverse voices shape shared cultural life and have equal opportunities for participation.

3. We ethically curate and preserve heritage by recognising communities as co-stewards of their own cultural narratives.

4. We commit to transparency and accountability by ensuring open access to information and inclusive decision-making processes.

5. We practice environmental and social sustainability by caring for shared resources and promoting long-term stewardship.

6. We protect the privacy and confidentiality of all collaborators by safeguarding data and respecting personal information.

7. We maintain impartiality and integrity by disclosing conflicts of interest and making decisions in the public interest.

8. We abide by institutional policies and professional standards, while critically engaging with those that hinder commons-based governance.

9. We ensure safe reporting procedures and protect those who report misconduct from retaliation.

10. We support co-production and co-curation through inclusive, locally grounded, and equitably resourced collaborative practices.

11. We foster respectful and professional communication to build trust and strengthen social bonds within our commons.

12. We enable meaningful community participation by co-governing institutional priorities and programming with collaborators.

13. We recognise, support, and empower volunteers as co-creators and co-financiers of our shared institutional identity.

14. We treat our spaces as living infrastructures, co-designed and stewarded with communities to foster belonging and collaboration.

15. We build collective learning systems that support peer-led development, shared governance skills, and open knowledge.

16. We prioritise the physical and emotional well-being of everyone involved in our commons.

17. We use technology ethically and accessibly to support open, participatory, and inclusive digital commons practices.

18. We embrace innovation as a commons-based practice that evolves through shared experimentation and inclusive dialogue.

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Instructions for Using the "Code of Conduct for GLAMMONS - Commons-Oriented GLAMs"

This Code of Conduct (CoC) is designed specifically for practitioners in commons-oriented Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAMMONS). It provides a framework of best practices and ethical guidelines, aimed at ensuring the Commons-Orientation of GLAM institutions. The CoC includes a comprehensive set of recommendations focused on promoting inclusivity, transparency, and responsibility, in alignment with principles of common ownership, shared stewardship, and collaborative management.

By 'GLAMMONS' or 'Commons-oriented GLAMs' we refer to a bottom-up process whereby a group of people comes together to steward tangible and intangible cultural and knowledge resources within GLAM and create a shared arrangement under common ownership and horizontal ways of governance.

Please note the following important points regarding the implementation of this Code:

- *The recommendations outlined in this CoC are intended to serve as a guideline. Each GLAMMON institution operates within its unique context, and not all recommendations may be applicable or relevant to every institution. It is essential to evaluate the specific needs and circumstances of your institution when considering these guidelines.*
- *Institutions are encouraged to review this CoC thoroughly and adapt it to reflect their values, missions, and operational realities. Modifications may be necessary to ensure that the Code aligns with the specific goals and challenges faced by your institution.*
- *In developing your institution's customised CoC, we recommend involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, community members, and relevant experts. Their input can help create a more inclusive and effective Code that reflects the voices and perspectives of those it impacts.*
- *This CoC is intended for use alongside the corresponding Skills Development Toolkit, which offers recommendations on how to operationalize the principles and guidelines developed in this CoC.*
- *The landscape of GLAM institutions is continually evolving, as are the societal and cultural contexts in which they operate. Regularly reviewing and updating your institution's CoC is crucial to maintain its relevance and effectiveness in guiding ethical practices.*

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By following these instructions, your institution can create a Code of Conduct that both adheres to best practices and also resonates with your community's values and aspirations.

Introduction

This Code of Conduct outlines the principles and guidelines that govern our institution's commitment to ethical practices, open access, community engagement, collaborative creation, and the indispensable contributions of volunteers. As a commons-oriented Gallery, Library, Archive, or Museum - GLAMMON -, we recognise that we are not merely custodians of knowledge and artefacts, but active participants in shaping a shared cultural space that is constantly evolving through community interaction.

We understand commons as dynamic systems of relationships—emerging and re-emerging through the practices of those who share them. Thus GLAMMONS become places where self-organised communities can thrive. In this light, our institution seeks to foster an environment where peer governance, provisioning, and social life are actively cultivated and sustained.

Peer governance in our GLAMMON means that community members—including volunteers, staff, and users—are empowered to contribute to decision-making processes. This includes the ability to establish and implement their own shared rules around the use and stewardship of knowledge, tools, and spaces.

Provisioning refers to the collective ability to identify community needs and collaboratively care for and maintain resources. We encourage open licensing and other practices that facilitate shared access to knowledge, ensuring that resources are not only used, but nurtured and sustained.

Social life is the cultural glue that holds commons together. We are committed to creating spaces—physical, digital, and emotional—that foster relationality, shared experiences, and enduring networks of exchange. Through workshops, weekly programs, and other communal formats, we aim to nurture a sense of belonging, self-worth, trust, and collective responsibility.

As communities change and new generations bring fresh perspectives, we remain open and responsive—adapting our practices to meet emerging needs. In doing so, we reaffirm our commitment to being a living, inclusive commons: a space of co-creation, care, and shared cultural stewardship.

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Our Commitment

We commit to co-creating and co-curating our collections, programs, and services in partnership with the communities we serve and our dedicated volunteers.

We value the knowledge, perspectives, and contributions of all collaborators, recognizing that our GLAMMON plays a crucial role in community building, identity formation, a sense of belonging and/or a sense of togetherness.

We strengthen community bonds and empower individuals by fostering an environment where they can see themselves and their stories reflected.

We acknowledge that volunteers are co-creators, co-financiers through their sweat equity, and commoners who play a crucial role in advancing our mission and shaping community identity.

We strive to create inclusive opportunities for participation, ensuring that our work reflects the rich diversity of our shared cultural heritage.

We embrace openness to change, understanding that communities and identities are not static.

We are committed to adapting our practices to meet the evolving needs of our communities, facilitating change, and fostering resilience.

We ensure that our GLAMMON remains a relevant, dynamic, and inclusive space for our communities.

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Our Code of Conduct in Detail

A. Principles

What we believe in – the ethical foundations of our work. This section outlines the values that underpin our approach to commoning, equity, and openness. These principles help guide our decision-making and frame the ethical commitments we make to one another and to the wider community.

1. Open Access, Sharing, and Intellectual Property Rights

- *Commons-based governance of knowledge:* We collectively steward knowledge as a shared cultural resource, governed by principles of openness, mutual respect, and peer accountability.
- *Open Licensing*: We use and promote open licences (e.g., Creative Commons) to make resources widely accessible. However, we adhere to copyright laws while advocating for fair use and open access where possible.
- *Resource Sharing*: We encourage the sharing of knowledge and materials with the public, volunteers, and other institutions.
- *Co-Creation and Co-Curation*: We invite collaborative authorship in all our curatorial processes. We create the conditions that involve communities and volunteers in developing and sharing resources, ensuring they reflect diverse voices and contribute to collective identity.
- *Shared Ownership*: We recognize and honour the contributions of community collaborators and volunteers in co-created and co-curated works.
- *Attribution*: We ensure proper credit is given to creators, sources of materials, and volunteer contributors.

2. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Empowerment

- *Collective care and relational accountability:* We approach inclusion as a form of provisioning—cultivating environments where diverse groups shape and sustain shared cultural life.
- *Inclusive Representation*: We strive to represent diverse cultures, perspectives, and histories in collections and programs, enhancing community identity.
- *Equal Opportunities*: We promote a working culture that values diversity and provides equal opportunities for all staff, volunteers, and collaborators.
- *Empowerment Through Participation*: We empower underrepresented and marginalized groups by involving them in co-creative processes that highlight their narratives and perspectives.
- *Inclusive Opportunities*: We ensure that co-creation and co-curation opportunities are accessible to diverse groups, removing barriers to

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participation. All programming and space design must consider and include different accessibility needs (physical, sensory, financial, linguistic)

3. Ethical Standards in Curation, Preservation, and Collaboration

- *Community governance and co-ownership of heritage:* We recognise communities as co-stewards of their cultural heritage, with the authority to define, interpret, and care for their own narratives.
- *Respect for Cultural Heritage*: We honour the origins and significance of cultural artefacts, especially those from marginalised communities, reinforcing their role in identity-building.
- *Responsible Acquisition*: We acquire items through legal and ethical means, avoiding illicit or questionable sources.
- *Community-Centred Curation*: We involve source communities and volunteers in preserving and interpreting their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of ownership and identity.
- *Ethical Collaboration*: We engage with communities and volunteers ethically, obtaining informed consent and respecting cultural sensitivities and intellectual property rights.

4. Transparency and Accountability

- *Shared Responsibility:* We uphold transparency as a shared responsibility in commons governance, ensuring that all contributors have access to information and the ability to influence decisions.
- *Transparent Decision-Making*: We maintain transparency in policies, procedures, and decision-making processes, including those involving volunteers.
- *Responsibility*: We hold staff and volunteers accountable for their actions and the institution's commitments.

5. Environmental & Social Sustainability

- *Sustainable Practices*: We ensure that cultural production and use of resources do not exploit people, communities, or environments.
- *Long-term stewardship of common resources: We view ecological sustainability as a foundational aspect of provisioning within the commons— caring for shared spaces and futures together.*
- *Green Practices*: We implement environmentally friendly practices in operations and resource management.
- *Awareness*: We educate staff, volunteers, and the public about sustainability issues related to GLAM activities.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

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- *Data Protection*: We safeguard personal and sensitive information of donors, collaborators, volunteers, and staff.
- *Confidentiality*: We respect confidentiality agreements and privacy laws.

7. Conflict of Interest and Impartiality

- *Integrity of peer governance:* We maintain impartiality to ensure collaborative governance operates with fairness, equity, and accountability.
- *Disclosure*: We require staff and volunteers to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
- *Impartial Actions*: We ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the institution and public, free from personal bias.

8. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

- *Policy Compliance*: We abide by institutional policies and professional standards.
- *Critical Engagement*: We recognise that not all legal or policy frameworks support commons-based values. We therefore reserve the right to critically examine, challenge, or seek to reform laws and institutional rules that limit participation, cultural rights, or democratic governance.
- *Advocacy for Change*: We actively support efforts—within and beyond our institution—that aim to reshape regulatory environments in ways that expand social justice, cultural accessibility, and community stewardship of shared resources.

9. Reporting Misconduct and Whistleblower Protection

- *Clear Procedures*: We establish processes for reporting unethical behaviour or violations, accessible to staff and volunteers.
- *Protection*: We protect individuals, including volunteers, who report misconduct from retaliation.

B. Functions

How we operate – the practices, processes, and roles we perform. This section outlines how our commons principles are put into action through everyday institutional behaviours, methods, and organisational responsibilities.

10. Standards in Co-Production and Co-Curation

- *Caring About Local Contexts*: We ensure co-production and co-curation processes are responsive to local needs and incorporate diverse perspectives, particularly from marginalised groups, fostering cultural outputs that reflect community knowledge, experience, and priorities.

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- *Caring For Equitable Access*: We provide institutional support, resources, and infrastructure to enable equitable participation in all stages of co-production and co-curation, aligning our practices with both social justice and ecological considerations.
- *Caregiving in Co-Production & Co-Curation Practices*: We support the collective labour involved in co-production and co-curation by providing time, tools, facilitation, care structures, and adequate pay (where possible) that enable meaningful participation and shared responsibility.
- *Care Receiving Through Dialogue and Ownership*: We foster ongoing dialogue with participants to ensure their needs are met and their contributions valued—promoting collective ownership, affective investment, and long-term stewardship of the outcomes, whether exhibitions, events, archives, or cultural programmes.
- *Inclusion of Open Consultation in the Creation Process*: We ensure that local communities are involved throughout the entire co-production and co-curation process—from ideation to implementation—fostering collective ownership, deeper engagement, and ongoing stewardship. Our goal is to shift from presenting to working with communities, rejecting the passive-audience model in favour of active cultural co-authorship.
- *Increased Funding for Co-Production & Co-Creation Projects:* We advocate for flexible, commons-oriented funding models that recognise the iterative and collaborative nature of cultural co-production and co-curation. We work to ensure that sufficient resources are available to support projects that emerge organically through dialogue, trust-building, and negotiation with community partners.
- *Implementation of Independent Facilitation in Co-Production & Co-Curation*: We embed independent facilitation into co-production and co-curation practices to maintain open dialogue, support inclusive communication, and help navigate power asymmetries. Facilitation ensures that all participants—regardless of role or background—can contribute meaningfully and shape the process in non-hierarchical ways.
- *Institutional Policy Changes and Collaborative Governance*: We call for institutional policy reforms that embed collaborative governance structures across all phases of cultural work. This includes co-production and co-curation processes and beyond—creating spaces for shared authority, decentralised decision-making, and long-term community involvement in shaping institutional priorities.

11. Professional Conduct and Respectful Communication

- *Social life in the commons:* We cultivate respectful communication as the basis for shared world-making, trust, and relational accountability in our commons.

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- *Collegiality*: We foster a respectful and collaborative work environment among staff, volunteers, and collaborators.
- *Stakeholder Management*: We interact with patrons, volunteers, and the public courteously and professionally.
- *Open Communication*: We maintain clear and open day-to-day communication channels with collaborators and volunteers about goals, expectations, and outcomes.

12. Collaboration and Community Engagement

- *Governance by participation:* We approach collaboration as co-governance, enabling communities and volunteers to shape institutional priorities and actions.
- *Partnerships*: We build relationships with community organisations, educational institutions, volunteers, and other GLAMMONS.
- *Public Programs*: We develop programs and events that engage and benefit the community, incorporating volunteer contributions.
- *Collaborative Management*: We enable shared decision-making through structured participatory tools. We implement methods and platforms that facilitate community and volunteer input and collaboration, such as workshops, forums, and digital tools.
- *Co-Leadership*: We recognize and respect the knowledge and expertise of community collaborators and volunteers, sharing decision-making power in operational and curatorial processes.

13. Volunteer Engagement and Empowerment

- *Volunteer Recognition*: We recognise volunteers as co-creators and co-financiers of our institution. Through their sweat equity, time, and expertise, they help shape our shared identity and sustain our mission. We regularly honour and celebrate their contributions with gratitude and visibility.
- *Inclusive Involvement*: We provide meaningful opportunities for volunteers to participate in decision-making, project development, and program implementation.
- *Support and Development*: We offer training, resources, and support to volunteers to enhance their skills and contributions.

14. Space and Place

- *Living Infrastructure*: We recognise our physical and digital spaces as living infrastructures that shape and reflect our shared cultural life.
- *Relational Fabric*: We cultivate our spaces to support interaction, care, belonging, and the co-creation of knowledge and culture.

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- *Stewardship of Place:* We engage communities and volunteers in the stewardship, design, and ongoing transformation of our spaces, treating them as co-produced commons rather than static institutional property.
- *Accessibility and Appropriateness*: We ensure that our spaces are accessible, safe, and appropriate to the needs of diverse communities, enabling both spontaneous encounters and intentional collaboration

15. Continuous Learning, Peer-Led Development, and Collaborative Stewardship

- *Learning as Collective Resource:* We recognise learning as a collectively sustained resource. Training is co-designed by staff, volunteers, and community members to reflect the evolving needs and knowledge of our commons.
- *Peer-to-Peer Skill Sharing*: In addition to formal training, we facilitate peer learning networks where skills, insights, and practices can be exchanged horizontally among commoners. This reinforces mutual trust and distributed knowledge stewardship.
- *Commons-Oriented Skill Development*: We support the development of skills necessary for the care and governance of the commons, including facilitation, mediation, community engagement, resource stewardship, and shared decision-making.
- *Collective Capacity Building*: We strengthen our commons through the cultivation of relational, emotional, and collaborative capacities that enable long-term co-creation and care.
- *Commons-Based Evaluation and Learning*: We regularly evaluate co-creation and co-curation initiatives with input from all participants, including volunteers, to strengthen future collaborations. Reflection and feedback are embedded into our learning processes, ensuring that training evolves in response to the lived experiences of those engaged in the commons.
- *Open Knowledge Culture*: All learning materials, tools, and insights produced are made openly available, in alignment with our commitment to shared knowledge as a public good.

16. Safety and Well-being

- *Safe Environment*: We ensure the physical and emotional safety of staff, volunteers, collaborators, and visitors.
- *Wellness Support*: We promote work-life balance and provide resources for mental and physical health for both staff and volunteers

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17. Use of Technology and Digital Resources

- *Digital commons governance:* We prioritise open, participatory, and accessible digital tools that support the co-creation and stewardship of cultural resources as digital commons.
- *Ethical Use*: We promote responsible use of technology in accessing and sharing digital resources.
- *Digital Accessibility*: We ensure digital platforms and resources are accessible to all users, including volunteers.
- *Digital Collaboration Tools*: We utilise accessible technology platforms to facilitate remote or asynchronous co-creation and co-curation with volunteers.

18. Openness to Change and Innovation

- *Commoning practices of adaptation and care:* We view innovation as a commons practice—emerging through shared experimentation, collective problem-solving, and intergenerational exchange. We support creative approaches to challenges and cultivate a learning environment that welcomes uncertainty, failure, and discovery.
- *Adaptability*: We embrace change as a constant, remaining flexible and responsive to the evolving needs, identities, and dynamics of the communities we serve.
- *Inclusive Evolution*: We involve community members, volunteers, and staff in conversations about change, ensuring that adaptations reflect a broad range of voices and experiences.
- *Continuous Improvement*: We regularly assess and update our resources, programs, and services to reflect new perspectives, technologies, and best practices.
- *Intergenerational Engagement*: We recognize the importance of engaging with new generations, incorporating their insights, and fostering environments where multiple generations can share and learn from one another.
- *Facilitating Change*: We actively support initiatives that promote social progress and address emerging community needs, reinforcing our role as a catalyst for positive change.

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Annex 1: Glossary and Definitions

Collaborative Management refers to a governance strategy where decision-making authority and responsibility are shared among multiple participants who have an interest in, or are affected by, a particular resource or project. This approach recognises the centrality of Space as more than just a physical setting; it acts as a generative force that shapes and is shaped by community practices, interactions, and cultural engagements. In this context, Space becomes the foundation for fostering relationships, collective decision-making, and the emergence of new cultural practices, making it an essential element of collaborative management. The role of conflict is viewed through the lens of Agonistic Cultural Governance, where conflict serves as a vital and constructive force, encouraging open dialogue, creativity, and critical engagement, which leads to more inclusive and innovative outcomes. Additionally, collaborative management deeply values sweat equity, seeing volunteer contributions as core capital that sustains the organisation. It integrates mechanisms for recognising, valuing, and managing these contributions, ensuring that volunteers feel a sense of ownership and long-term commitment. Ultimately, collaborative management creates a structure that is adaptive, inclusive, and aligned with the Commons-based ethos, facilitating the active participation of all involved.

Co-leadership refers to a leadership style in which two or more individuals share the responsibility, authority, and accountability for leading an organisation, team, or project. In Commons-oriented GLAMs, co-leadership acknowledges the transformative nature of Space, understanding it as a dynamic and interactive environment that nurtures shared leadership practices and encourages the emergence of diverse voices. This leadership model embraces conflict as a constructive and necessary element, fostering an environment of Agonistic Cultural Governance, where different perspectives can be openly contested and integrated into the decision-making process. Co-leadership also emphasises the importance of sweat equity, recognising that the contributions of volunteers and community members are fundamental to the institution's success and sustainability. By adopting volunteer-centric management strategies, co-leadership ensures that volunteers are not only valued but also empowered to participate in decision-making and take on leadership roles, reinforcing a culture of inclusivity, shared responsibility, and long-term engagement. This approach results in a more resilient and responsive leadership structure, capable of adapting to the evolving needs and dynamics of cultural commons.

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The **Commons** refer to shared resources that are collectively managed by a community under agreed-upon rules and principles. Namely, commons are composed of three interconnected elements: 1. resource, 2. community, and 3. institutions. The *resource* is the first element of the commons, and can be anything that holds value or utility to humans, which expands the idea of commons beyond natural common-pool resources. The resource itself is the object of governance within the commons or a "common good". The second element, *community* of users collectively manages the commons, with individuals contributing as "commoners." The third element is *institutions*, understood as recurring social practices established by users to manage a resource governed as a commons. They consist of "rules" that guide user behavior and "organizations" created to achieve collective goals. Communities design and implement these institutions to ensure that resources are used in a way that benefits all users and prevents overuse, underuse, or abuse. Institutions are the backbone of commons governance, and the act of governing commons through these institutions is known as "*commoning*."

'GLAMMONS' or 'Commons-oriented GLAMs' refers to a bottom-up process in which a group of individuals comes together to steward both tangible and intangible cultural and knowledge resources within GLAM institutions. This process involves creating a shared arrangement based on common ownership and horizontal governance structures.

Sweat equity refers to the non-monetary value contributed to a project, organisation, or commons through unpaid labour, care, creativity, and time. In commons-oriented GLAMs (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums), sweat equity is the embodied investment made by volunteers, community members, and collaborators who sustain and co-create shared resources. Rather than being seen as supplementary or informal, sweat equity is recognised as a core form of capital—equal in value to financial or institutional investment. It reflects a commitment to collective ownership and long-term engagement, and it plays a vital role in building trust, shaping identity, and maintaining the vitality of the commons.

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Annex 2: Further Documents

European Commission Good Environmental Practice Guide for the Culture and Creative Industries: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/45b1d888-f52d-11ed-a05c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Law Enforcement Directive and other rules concerning the protection of personal data: https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-protection-eu_en

Ostrom, Elinor (1990). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0-521-40599-7

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