Code of Ethics

Every nonprofit should adhere to a code of ethics that reflects their proper handling of donor funds and issues pertaining to how services are provided. CLICK HERE for further information.

Academy for Grassroots Organizations Code of Ethics

I. Introduction

As a matter of fundamental principle, the nonprofit and philanthropic community should adhere to the highest ethical standards because it is the right thing to do. As a matter of pragmatic self-interest, the community should do so because public trust in our performance is the bedrock of our legitimacy. Donors and volunteers support charitable organizations because they trust them to carry out their missions, to be good stewards of their resources, and to uphold rigorous standards of conduct.

Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations must earn this trust every day and in every possible way. But organizations are, at base, people, and it is up to the people of Academy for Grassroots Organizations board members, executive leaders, staff and volunteers to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the core values of ethical practice, inclusiveness and welcoming, transparency and accountability, and objectivity and neutrality.

Adherence to the law is the minimum standard of expected behavior. Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations must do more, however, than simply obey the law. We must embrace the spirit of the law, often going beyond legal requirements and making sure that what we do is matched by what the public understands about what we do. Transparency, openness and responsiveness to public concerns must be integral to our behavior.

II. Statement of Values

Any code of ethics is built on a foundation of widely shared values. The values of the independent sector include:

- Commitment to the public good;
- Ethical practice;
- Accountability to the public;
- Commitment beyond the law;
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals;
- Inclusiveness and welcoming;
- Respect for diversity;
- Transparency, integrity and honesty;
- Responsible stewardship of resources; and,
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust;
- Objectivity and neutrality.

These values lead directly to the Code of Ethics that follows. The values inform and guide the actions that Academy for Grassroots Organizations should take in developing its policies and informing its practices.

III. The Code of Ethics

A. Personal and Professional Integrity

All staff, board members and volunteers of Academy for Grassroots Organizations act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of Academy for Grassroots Organizations. Academy for Grassroots Organizations promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

B. Mission

Academy for Grassroots Organizations has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the board of directors, in pursuit of the public good. All of its programs support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of Academy for Grassroots Organizations understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by Academy for Grassroots Organizations and of value to the society at large.
Academy for Grassroots Organizations is truthful in its solicitation materials. It respects the privacy concerns of individual donors and expends funds consistent with donor intent. Academy for Grassroots Organizations discloses important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds from the public, Academy for Grassroots Organizations will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

- To be informed of the mission of Academy for Grassroots Organizations, the way the resources will be used and the capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on Academy for Grassroots Organizations's governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- To have access to Academy for Grassroots Organizations's most recent financial reports;
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of Academy for Grassroots Organizations or hired solicitors;
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that may be shared; and,
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.