THE SOCIETY OF THE FOUR ARTS - CODE OF ETHICS

INTRODUCTION
The Society of the Four Arts gardens, facilities and collections are a trust for its members and the public. This must always be recognized by all associated with The Society of the Four Arts, but primarily by persons having important responsibilities in formulating or administering policies and procedures governing The Society. Persons holding such responsibilities have a duty and obligation to preserve and protect this trust.

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES & MUSEUM GOVERNANCE
The Board of Trustees of The Society of the Four Arts is the governing body of the institution. In this capacity it services the public interest as it relates to The Society, and is accountable to the public as well as to the institution. In most cases the Board acts as the ultimate legal entity for the organization, and is responsible for making and maintaining its organization, and is responsible for making and maintaining its general policies, standards, condition, and operational continuity. The Society of the Four Arts Trustees must be loyal to the purpose of the organization, and must understand and respect the basic documents that provide for its establishment, character and governance.

Each Trustee should devote time and attention to the affairs of The Society and ensure that The Society and its governing board act in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and with applicable state and federal laws. Trustees must ensure that no policies or activities jeopardize the basic nonprofit status
of The Society, or reflect unfavorably upon it as an institution devoted to public service.

All actions of Trustees should be taken as a board, committee, or subcommittee, or otherwise in conformance with the bylaws or applicable policies. Trustees must work for The Society as a whole and not act solely as advocates for particular activities or subunits of The Society.

Trustees should maintain in confidence information learned during the course of their activities at The Society when it is not generally available to the public. This does not preclude public disclosure of information that is properly in the public domain, or information that should be released in fulfilling The Society’s accountability to the public.

Trustees hold the ultimate fiduciary responsibility for The Society and for the protection and nurturing of its various assets: the buildings, grounds, collections and related documentation, financial assets, and the staff. The Society must develop and define the purposes and related policies of the institution, and ensure that all of its assets are properly and effectively used for The Society’s purposes.

The Board has an obligation to provide the proper environment for the physical security and preservation of the collections, and to monitor and develop the financial structure of The Society so that it continues to exist as an institution of vitality and quality. In keeping with their responsibility for the protection of the Society’s collection, Trustees should not jeopardize the collection by using it as collateral for a loan or by otherwise selling or
mortgaging the collection in order to secure funds for operations, buildings, or expansion of the facility.

The Board should provide adequate financial protections for all Museum officials including themselves, staff, and volunteers so that no one will incur inequitable financial sacrifice or legal liabilities when performing duties for The Society.

An important responsibility of the Trustees is their relationship to the President, The Society’s chief executive. The selection of the executive and the continuing monitoring of his or her activities are primary Board responsibilities that cannot be delegated and must be diligently and thoughtfully fulfilled.

THE TRUSTEE-PRESIDENT RELATIONSHIP
The Executive Committee is responsible for appointing or dismissing the President, and the relationship between President and the Board must reflect the primacy of institutional goals over all personal or interpersonal consideration.

The President reports to and is accountable to the Executive Committee as the governing body of the Institute. Since Board of Trustee responsibilities are closely meshed, the President should report to both bodies at agreed upon intervals and upon request or need.
The President has an obligation to provide the Trustees with current and complete financial information in comprehensible form, to bring before the Board any matters involving policy questions not already determined, and to keep them informed on a timely basis about all other significant or substantial matters, or intended actions affecting the institution.

Whenever a matter arises for action involving a conflict between the interests of The Society and an outside or personal interest of the President or a family member, the President’s actions should be guided by the same rules as those governing the Trustees.