

# American Quilt Study Group

## Code of Ethics, Conduct and Confidentiality Policy

### For Board Members

The American Quilt Study Group (AQSG) has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the Board of Directors. Its programs support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of the organization understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by AQSG.

AQSG must observe the highest standards in order to retain the trust of its stakeholders—members, donors, volunteers and supporters. The Board of Directors provides the public face of AQSG, and its behavior, and that of individual board members, must be exemplary.

#### Standards of Ethics and Conduct

*As members of the Board of Directors, the individual's primary legal duties are those of **care**, ensuring prudent use of all of AQSG assets; **loyalty**, ensuring that all activities advance the Mission; and **obedience**, ensuring adherence to by-laws and public laws, and devotion to the AQSG Mission. Observing these duties, the following ethical standards are expected of members of the AQSG Board of Directors:*

***Selflessness.*** Board members should make decisions in terms of the interests of AQSG and its stakeholders. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their business, their families or their friends.

***Integrity.*** Board members should manage AQSG funds responsibly and prudently as stewards of the organization. Board members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties, including as members of the board of directors, committees and special projects.

***Objectivity.*** In carrying out AQSG business, including employee oversight, making appointments, awarding contracts and grants, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, Board Members should make decisions based only on merit.

***Accountability.*** Board Members are accountable to AQSG and its stakeholders for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

*Openness.* Board Members should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they make. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the interest of the organization and its stakeholders clearly demands it.

*Honesty.* Board Members have a duty to declare any private interest relating to their AQSG duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the interest of AQSG (see Conflict of Interest).

*Cooperation and Respect.* Board Members should cooperate with and respect the opinions of fellow Board Members and leave personal biases out of all Board discussion. Individual board members should support actions of the Board, even when the Board Member personally did not support the action taken.

*Leadership.* Board members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## **Confidentiality Policy**

Respecting the privacy of our constituents—donors, members, staff, board members, and volunteers of AQSG—is a basic value of AQSG. Personnel and financial information is confidential and should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the Executive Director and/or the individual. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Employees, volunteers and board members of AQSG may be exposed to information that is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of AQSG that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including board members, are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or expiration of service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal.