



AIMA CODE OF ETHICS

AIMA MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC

1 MEMBERS SHALL:

- a) Recognise a commitment to represent archaeology and its research results to the public in a responsible manner.
- b) Actively support preservation of archaeological resources.
- c) Be sensitive to, and respect the legitimate concerns of, groups whose cultural histories are the subjects of archaeological investigations.
- d) Avoid and discourage exaggerated, misleading or unwarranted statements about archaeological matters that might induce others to engage in unethical or illegal activity.
- e) Members will negotiate with and use all reasonable endeavours to obtain the informed consent of representatives of the communities of concern whose cultural heritage is the subject of investigation. Members cannot assume that there is no community of concern.
- f) Support and comply with the terms of the ICOMOS *Burra Charter*.
- g) Support and comply with the terms of the UNESCO *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*.

2 MEMBERS SHALL NOT:

- a) Engage in any illegal or unethical conduct involving archaeological matters or knowingly permit the use of their name in support of any illegal or unethical activity involving archaeological matters.
- b) Give a professional opinion, make a public report or give legal testimony involving archaeological matters without being as thoroughly informed as might reasonably be expected.
- c) Engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation about archaeological matters.
- d) Undertake research that impacts the resource base for which they are not qualified, nor represent themselves as an archaeologist without the appropriate qualifications, skills or professional experience.
- e) Represent themselves as a maritime archaeologist unless they:
 - hold an honours or other post-graduate degree in maritime archaeology or in another area of archaeology with a major in maritime archaeology; or
 - have gained recognition by Australian state, Commonwealth, New Zealand or national government or recognised professional body as a maritime archaeologist; have a minimum of two and a half years of full time professional experience applying the theories, methods and practices of maritime archaeology to the identification, evaluation, documentation or treatment of maritime archaeological sites in Australasia (one year of which must be under supervision of a maritime archaeologist); and have undertaken activities and achieved outcomes that demonstrate the successful application of acquired proficiencies to the practice of maritime archaeological preservation.
- f) Engage in nor support any illicit or unethical trade in archaeological materials from any nation, including the commercial excavation, salvage or recovery of archaeological materials for irretrievable dissemination and/or sale.

AIMA MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR COLLEAGUES

3 MEMBERS SHALL:

- a) Give appropriate credit for work done by others.
- b) Stay informed and knowledgeable about developments in their field/s of specialisation.
- c) Encourage less qualified or inexperienced members to develop skills and experience through participation in archaeological projects.
- d) Communicate and co-operate with colleagues having common professional interests.
- e) Give due respect to colleague's interests in, and right to, information about sites, areas or collections where there is a mutual active or potentially active research concern.
- f) Know and comply with all laws applicable to their archaeological research, as well as with any relevant procedures promulgated by duly constituted professional organisation.
- g) Report knowledge of violations of this Code to AIMA and other appropriate authorities.

4 MEMBERS SHALL NOT:

- a) Falsely or maliciously attempt to injure the reputation of another archaeologist.
- b) Commit plagiarism in oral or written communication.
- c) Undertake research that impacts the archaeological resource base unless reasonably prompt, appropriate analysis and reporting can be expected.
- d) Refuse a reasonable request from a qualified colleague for research data.

AIMA MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO EMPLOYERS AND CLIENTS

5 MEMBERS SHALL:

- a) Respect the interest of their employer or client, so far as is consistent with the public welfare and this Code of Ethics.
- b) Refuse to comply with any request or demand of an employer or client that conflicts with this Code of Ethics.
- c) Recommend to employers or clients the employment of other archaeologists or other expert consultants upon encountering archaeological problems beyond their own competence.
- d) Exercise reasonable care to prevent their employees, colleagues, associates and others whose services they engage from revealing or using confidential information. Confidential information means information of a nonarchaeological nature gained in the course of employment, which the employer or client has requested be held inviolate, or the disclosure of which would be embarrassing or would likely be detrimental to the employer or client. Information ceases to be confidential when the employer or client so indicates or when such information becomes publicly known.

6 MEMBERS SHALL NOT:

- a) Reveal confidential information, unless required by law.
- b) Use confidential information for the advantage of themselves or a third person, unless the client consents to full disclosure.
- c) Accept compensation or anything of value for recommending the employment of another archaeologist or other person, unless such compensation or thing of value is fully disclosed to the potential employer or client.
- d) Recommend or participate in any research that does not comply with the requirements of the Standard of Research Performance.

AIMA MEMBER'S RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES, STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE

The research archaeologist has a responsibility to attempt to design and conduct projects that will add to our understanding of past cultures and/or that will develop better theories, methods or techniques for interpreting the archaeological record, while causing minimal attrition of the archaeological and cultural heritage resource base. In the conduct of a research project, the following minimum standards should be followed.

7 MEMBER'S PREPARATION RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ANY RESEARCH PROJECT

- a) Assess the adequacy of their qualifications for the demands of the project and minimise inadequacies by acquiring additional expertise, by engaging associates with the relevant qualifications or by modifying the scope of the project.
- b) Inform themselves of relevant previous research.
- c) Develop a research design that specifies the objectives of the project, takes into account previous relevant research, employs a suitable methodology and provides for economical use of the resource base (whether such base comprises an excavation site, artefacts or specimens), consistent with the objectives of the project.
- d) Ensure the availability of adequate staff and support facilities to carry the project to completion, and for adequate curatorial facilities for artefacts, specimens and records.
- e) Comply with all legal requirements, including, without limitation, obtaining all necessary regulatory permits and necessary permission or consent from landowners or other persons.
- f) Determine whether the project is likely to interfere with the program or projects of other scholars and if there is such a likelihood, initiate negotiations to minimise such interference.
- g) In conducting research, members must follow their research design, except to the extent that unforeseen circumstances warrant its modification.

8 MINIMUM STANDARDS MEMBERS ARE TO UTILISE FOR FIELD SURVEY OR EXCAVATION

- a) If artefacts or specimens are collected, a system for identifying and recording their provenances must be maintained.
- b) Uncollected entities, such as environmental or cultural features, depositional strata and the like, must be fully and accurately recorded by appropriate means and their location recorded.
- c) The methods employed in data collection must be fully and accurately described. Significant stratigraphic and/or associational relationships among artefacts, specimens and cultural and environmental features must also be fully and accurately recorded.
- d) All records should be intelligible to other archaeologists. If terms lacking commonly held references are used, they should be clearly defined.
- e) Insofar as possible, the interest of other researchers should be considered. For example, upper levels of a site should be scientifically excavated and recorded whenever feasible, even if the focus of the project is on underlying levels.
- f) During accessioning, analysis and storage of specimens and records in the laboratory, the member must take precautions to ensure the correlations between the specimens and the field records are maintained, so that provenance, contextual relationships and the like are not confused or obscured.
- g) Recovered artefacts and specimens must be treated and stabilised responsibly, with a plan for acceptable long-term storage environments to protect the physical condition of the specimens. Artefacts, specimens and research records resulting from a project must be deposited or placed under the control of an institution with permanent curatorial facilities and acceptable storage environments.

9 MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS IN A TIMELY MANNER.

- a) Results viewed as significant contributions to substantive knowledge of the past or to advancements in theory, method or technique should be disseminated to colleagues and other interested persons by appropriate means, such as publication, reports at professional meetings or letters to colleagues.
- b) Members will prioritise dissemination of results when appropriate and as permitted under contractual and ethical agreements.
- c) Requests from qualified colleagues for information on research results ordinarily should be honoured, if consistent with the researcher's prior rights to publication and with their other professional responsibilities.

- d) Members will show or distribute restricted material only with express permission from those who provided or are responsible for it. Members will also consider the impact of disclosure on the wider cultural source group, and whether wider consultation is required prior to disclosure. This is particularly relevant where first disclosures and publication are likely.
- e) Members have a responsibility to prevent the publication of precise site locations whenever such publication might lead to vandalism of the sites.

REFERENCES

- AIATSIS, 2020. *Guide to Applying the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research*. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Canberra. Retrieved 27 August 2024 from <https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/aiatsis-guide-applying-code-ethics_0.pdf>. (See p. 27.)
- Australia ICOMOS, 2013. *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, Burwood, VIC. Retrieved 27 August 2024 from <<https://australia.icomos.org/publications/burra-charter-practice-notes/>>. Dunnell, R.C., 1984. The ethics of archaeological significance decisions. In: Green, E.L. (ed), *Ethics and Values in Archaeology*: 62–74. Free Press, New York.
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- UNESCO, 2001. *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*. UNESCO, Paris. Retrieved 27 August 2024 from <<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000126065>>.
- Wildesen, L.E., 1984. The search for an ethic in archaeology: a historical perspective. In: Green, E.L. (ed), *Ethics and Values in archaeology*: 3–12. Free Press, New York.