



**CODE OF ETHICS AND PRACTICES  
FOR FUND RAISING PROFESSIONALS AT  
WUWM MILWAUKEE PUBLIC RADIO**

*As individuals, ethical standards are part of our core personality and guide us throughout our lives, especially when we think that no one is paying attention.*

*As employees of the University of Wisconsin System, all WUWM staff members must comply with policies on conflicts of interest and ethical standards. These are outlined in separate documents. But as development professionals, our listeners trust us to behave in an ethical manner with full transparency regarding our fund raising practices.*

*This code draws liberally from the ethical guidelines adopted by the public radio Development Exchange Inc. as well as the work of the "Editorial Integrity for Public Media" project which engaged hundreds of executives and senior staff of public broadcasting organizations, faculty from schools of journalism, and advisers in the areas of philanthropy, community engagement, and new media.*

Adopted November 2013

## **THE PRINCIPLES OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE PUBLIC TRUST**

Public media organizations contribute to a strong civil society and active community life, provide access to knowledge and culture, extend education, and offer varied viewpoints and sensibilities.

The freedom of public media professionals to make editorial decisions without undue influence is essential. It is rooted in America's commitment to free speech and a free press. It is reflected in the unique and critical media roles that federal, state, and local leaders – of both major political parties – have encouraged and respected across the years. It is affirmed by the courts.

Trust is equally fundamental. Public media organizations create and reinforce trust through rigorous, voluntary standards for the integrity of programming and services, fundraising, community interactions, and organizational governance.

These standards of integrity apply to all the content public media organizations produce and present, regardless of subject matter, including news, science, history, information, music, arts, and culture. These standards apply across all public media channels and platforms – broadcasting, online, social media, print, media devices, and in-person events.

Public media, individually and collectively:

Contribute to communities' civic, educational, and cultural life by presenting a range of ideas and cultures and offering a robust forum for discussion and debate.

Commit to accuracy and integrity in the pursuit of facts about events, issues, and important matters that affect communities and people's lives.

Pursue fairness and responsiveness in content and services, with particular attention to reflecting diversity of demography, culture, and beliefs.

Aim for transparency in news gathering, reporting, and other content creation and share the reasons for important editorial and programming choices.

Protect the editorial process from the fact and appearance of undue influence, exercising care in seeking and accepting funds and setting careful boundaries between contributors and content creators.

Encourage understanding of fundraising operations and practices, acknowledge program sponsors, and disclose content-related terms of sponsor support.

Maintain respectful and accountable relationships with individual and organizational contributors.

Seek editorial partnerships and collaborations to enhance capacity, perspective, timeliness, and relevance and apply public media standards to these arrangements.

Expect employees to uphold public media's integrity in their personal as well as their professional lives, understanding that employee actions, even when "off the clock," affect trust, integrity, credibility, and impartiality.

Promote the common good, the public interest, and these commitments to integrity and trustworthiness in organizational governance, leadership, and management.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE OUR FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES**

We aim for respectful relationships with our donors and a clear understanding among donors and others about our fundraising operations. We acknowledge the sponsors of our programming and disclose the terms on which we obtain such support.

Our public service depends on donations of all sizes from many different sources. We maintain the trust and confidence of these donors and our communities by making clear the purposes and uses for which we seek their support, making every effort to understand a donor's intent and, after accepting a gift, working to carry out the donor's wishes.

We inform donors about how donor records will be used. We protect personal and confidential information that we obtain during fundraising activities or through our ongoing relationships with these donors.

We do not exchange or rent our donor lists to other organizations.

We communicate directly and explicitly with donors about our editorial standards that bring rigor and integrity to our work, the legal requirements that surround our donor relationships, and the boundaries between funders and our editorial process. Within that framework, we keep donors informed about operations, welcome their suggestions and feedback, and value their role as advocates in the community.

We always disclose, on air or online as appropriate, the funders of specific programs, areas of coverage, or other activities. We acknowledge any person or organization that gives us money or other valuable consideration to broadcast specific content, as follows:

We acknowledge donors that **sponsor the broadcast** of a program with broadcast announcements associated with the program. We also acknowledge with broadcast announcements (providing permission is given) donors that have provided substantial general support.

We acknowledge donors that **support the production** of specific programs in on-air announcements. We keep a list of these donors in a publicly available file.

We acknowledge donors that **sponsor political programming or discussions of controversial issues** of public importance (other than such discussions during regular news and public affairs programs) in on-air announcements. We keep a list of these donors and additional FCC-required information about the sponsors in a public file.

We do not accept anonymous gifts for the production of specific programs.

We publish a list of donors that have contributed substantial funds for our general support, where we have received permission to do so.

We report the overall costs of fundraising, including personnel, consultants, special events, and related support costs. This reporting is part of our overall disclosure of revenue and expenses in our public file as part of our Annual Financial Report to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

#### **GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY**

WUWM retains the right to decline gifts for a variety of reasons. We are particularly sensitive to any gift that might create the appearance of influencing a program decision or create the impression of endorsement with an individual or organization that could cause harm to the reputation of WUWM or the University of Wisconsin System.

#### **THE COMMON SENSE PRINCIPLE**

It is not possible for a document like this to address all possible situations that may occur. When an issue arises employees should discuss the matter with their supervisor. The supervisor should seek guidance from the general manager. The general manager may seek the guidance of others with expertise in journalist ethics. The decision of the General Manager is eligible for review by the Dean of the College of Letters and Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. WUWM employees who do not comply with the Code may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Additional information on the UW System Code of Ethics may be found at:  
[www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/uws/uws.html](http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/uws/uws.html)  
Click on Chapter 8 (Unclassified Staff Code of Ethics)