

Port Macquarie Museum

Code of Ethics

1 Introduction and Context

1.1 The Port Macquarie Museum is an independent community museum on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. The Museum collects, preserves and shares local cultural collections and their stories about Port Macquarie's identity with the local community and tourism visitors from across Australia and around the world.

1.2 The Port Macquarie Museum is custodian of a nationally significant collection of objects, archives and photographs and is responsible for their care and conservation for posterity. Such custodianship places the Museum in an important position of trust in relation to audiences, local communities, donors, partners, supporters and funders.

1.3 The Port Macquarie Museum site comprises the State significant historic Store building, c1836 and several building additions constructed from 1960 onwards.

1.4 The Port Macquarie Museum is a museum defined by the International Council of Museums: 'A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.'¹

1.5 The Port Macquarie Museum is bound by state and national laws and international conventions relevant to its museum operations, collections and staff.

1.6 This Code recognises that ethical reflection is an essential part of everyday museum practice and that the museum must make sound ethical judgements in order to maintain trust with its stakeholders.

1.7 This Code covers three key areas of museum practice:

- Public engagement and public benefit
- Stewardship of collections
- Individual and Institutional Integrity

2. Code of Ethics

2.1 Public Engagement and Public Benefit

The Port Macquarie Museum and those who work in and with us should:

- Actively engage and work in partnership with existing audiences and reach out to new and diverse audiences
- Treat everyone equally, with honesty and respect

¹ <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>, accessed on 19 March 2024
Port Macquarie Museum Code of Ethics – Final 19 March 2024

- Provide and generate accurate information for and with the public
- Support freedom of speech and debate
- Use collections for public benefit – for learning, inspiration and enjoyment

2.2 Stewardship of Collections

The Port Macquarie Museum and those who work in and with us should:

- Maintain and develop collections for current and future generations
- Acquire, care for, exhibit and loan collections with transparency and competency in order to generate knowledge and engage the public with collections
- Treat museum collections as cultural, scientific or historic assets, not financial assets

2.3 Individual and Institutional Integrity

The Port Macquarie Museum and those who work in and with us should:

- Act in the public interest in all areas of work
- Uphold the highest level of institutional integrity and personal conduct at all times
- Build respectful and transparent relationships with partner organisations, governing bodies and staff to ensure public trust in the museum's activities.

V1.0 Final 19 March 2024