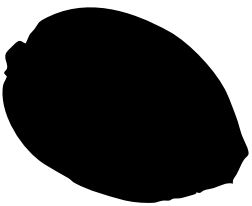


English

Kunsthalle Bern Code of Conduct



Kunsthalle Bern
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1 Introduction

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

At Kunsthalle Bern, we believe in the power of art to challenge, inspire, and transform. As an institution dedicated to contemporary art, we are committed to maintain an environment of openness, curiosity, and respect for artists, our visitors, our stakeholders, and each other.

Our values guide everything we do. Integrity, fairness, transparency and accountability are at the heart of our institution, shaping our artistic vision and the way we work together and with others. Just as we embody bold artistic expression, we also uphold ethical and responsible conduct in all aspects of our work. Ethics is a language we speak; without it, our institution would be silent.

This is why we decided to create this Code, developed through a collective and extensive consultation process and endorsed by the Board of Kunsthalle Bern. It is an important guide to help us navigate complex situations with thoughtfulness and care. While it cannot cover every possible scenario, it serves as a compass, reminding us of our shared commitments. By acting ethically, especially in moments of uncertainty, when no one is watching, or when doing the right thing is difficult, we strengthen the trust that artists, visitors, stakeholders, and colleagues place in us.

Ethics is not just about following rules; it is about a culture we create together. Each of us has a role in shaping an institution that is welcoming, fair, and respectful. Speaking up when something feels wrong, asking questions when we are unsure, and supporting one another in doing so are essential to maintaining the spirit of our institution.

We take this responsibility to heart, and we are here to support each other in upholding these values. If we ever have concerns or need guidance, I encourage all of us to reach out to our supervisor, the Director or to the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch). All concerns will be treated with care and confidentiality, and no one will face retaliation for speaking up in good faith.

I wholeheartedly commit to this Code and the principles and standards it represents, and I trust that each of us will do the same. Together, we ensure that Kunsthalle Bern remains a space of artistic excellence, ethical responsibility, and shared trust.

iLiana Fokianaki
Director, Kunsthalle Bern

B MISSION STATEMENT

Kunsthalle Bern owes its existence to the initiative taken by the Bernese Artists' Society (GSMBA, Bern section) in 1918 and is one of the oldest Kunsthalle in Europe. We are an institution founded by artists and are thus dedicated first and foremost to showcase and promote artistic practices from Switzerland and beyond.

Our exhibitions, events and learning programmes offer opportunities for people to encounter, experience and participate in contemporary art that inspires, challenges and transforms. To fulfil our core mission of presenting contemporary art and theory, we organise exhibitions, commission art, publish and develop educational and collaborative initiatives and events.

Furthermore, the Kunsthalle Bern is an institution where outstanding curatorial practice flourishes and a space where seminal exhibitions were mounted and developed for more than a hundred years, making it an integral part of Swiss but also Western contemporary art history. Our archive plays a pivotal role in safeguarding this history.

Our program seeks to platform different perspectives on today's social, cultural and political questions. Therefore, for us there is no space for, nor tolerance towards, hate speech or harassment of any kind. We are against ableism, ageism, anti-Muslim discrimination, anti-Semitism discrimination, or any other religious discrimination, gender discrimination, homophobia, racism, sexism, transphobia or xenophobia of any kind.

C HOW TO CONSULT THE CODE

Our Code expresses who we are, what we stand for, and the principles we hold ourselves accountable to. Simply put, it explains our commitment to making ethical and thoughtful choices.

While our Mission shapes our values and defines our culture, our ethical principles guide us in our daily decisions. The Code outlines these principles and expectations, offering support when we face dilemmas or ethical challenges in our work. It serves as a compass, helping us navigate difficult situations. We should consult it regularly, especially when we are uncertain about the right course of action.

The Code sets the ethical standards expected from all of us – Board members, employees, and contractors – regardless of role or seniority, as well as our visitors and other stakeholders. We are committed to applying it diligently in our daily work.

If laws, regulations, or external codes impose stricter standards than those outlined here, we will always follow the strictest requirements.

D MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS

The Code is an important guide, but it cannot cover every ethical question that may arise in our work. No matter the situation – even if the Code or our policies do not provide a specific answer – we must always act with honesty and integrity. When making a decision, we should pause and ask ourselves:

- Does the decision align with the spirit of the Code?
- Does it align with our statutes and the association's regulations?
- Does it reflect our Mission and values?
- Would I feel comfortable if it were made public?
- Could it harm our visitors, artists, stakeholders, the artworks we exhibit or our reputation?
- Am I acting with clear intent and prepared to take accountability for my decision?
- Am I actively listening to concerns, ideas, and different perspectives?
- Am I speaking up about my concerns?

E HOW TO RAISE ALERTS

At Kunsthalle Bern, we value openness and transparency. If we have a question, concern, or ethical dilemma – or if we suspect misconduct or a breach of the law, of the Code or of our policies – we are strongly encouraged to seek advice, ask for help, or speak up. We can reach out to our supervisor, our Director, or the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch).

Reports about misconduct and breaches are taken seriously and handled with the utmost care. As an institution, Kunsthalle Bern is committed to treating all concerns confidentially and does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith.

While anonymous reports are possible, we are encouraged to identify ourselves voluntarily. This helps ensure that all necessary information is available to fairly and fully address the issue. If we choose to share our identity, it will be kept confidential and only disclosed when absolutely required for a thorough investigation, to comply with the law, or to respect the legal rights of those involved.

We are committed to respond to concerns thoughtfully, fairly, and in a timely manner. By working together, we can maintain a culture of trust, respect, and integrity.

F THE CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

If, following a fair review in which everyone involved is given the opportunity to be heard, it is established that this Code or our policies were deliberately not followed, appropriate steps will be taken to address the situation. In line with applicable employment law, these may include verbal or written warnings or other measures, up to and including, if necessary, the possibility of ending employment.

2 Our Governance

A WE EMBRACE TRANSPARENT AND INDEPENDENT GOVERNANCE

- We uphold strong governance through a transparent and well-structured collaboration between our Board, Executive Committee (Geschäftsleitender Ausschuss), Directorship, the Ethics Committee and other key actors. We follow our Operating Regulations and our other applicable governance standards.
- We maintain control over the content and integrity of all our programs, exhibitions, and activities to uphold public trust. As evidenced throughout the Code, our decisions are guided by artistic merit, cultural relevance, and the public good, without undue influence from donors or other stakeholders.
- We make details of our resources, including fundraising, publicly available.

B WE REJECT CORRUPTION, MONEY LAUNDERING AND FRAUD

Corruption, money-laundering and fraud have devastating effects on society, on the environment, and are major obstacles to cultural transformation. We firmly reject all forms of corruption, money-laundering and fraud.

- We comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes on combating bribery and corruption.
- We interact with our stakeholders with the highest level of integrity.
- We do not give or accept payments or anything of value – directly or through third parties – for any improper purpose or unfair advantage. This includes interactions with individuals, organizations, institutions, government agencies, officials, political parties, politicians or any other individual or organization.
- We do not accept funding, excessive hospitality, gifts, donations, service contracts, free artworks, or discounted artworks – or any other benefit – that could be seen as an attempt to influence our curatorial, programming, organizational, or financial decisions.
- We do not offer funding, excessive hospitality, gifts, donations, service contracts, artworks – nor any other benefit – that could be seen as an incentive or reward to obtain or maintain any undue advantage or preferential treatment for the Kunsthalle Bern. We apply the gift standards from the Conflicts of Interest section to the gifts we give as well.
- We do not engage in or facilitate money laundering and comply with all applicable anti-money laundering laws and regulations. When required by such laws and regulations, we conduct due diligence on financial transactions to ensure transparency and legitimacy.
- We reject all forms of fraud that could compromise our assets and reputation, including collusion with third parties, falsifying invoices or documents, fraudulent bank transfers, misrepresenting expenses, theft or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information, unauthorized use of our institution's assets for personal advantage, and any form of hacking or cyber misconduct.

Q: For the installation of a large artwork outdoors, we need a special permit from the local authorities. I thought that to facilitate the process, we could offer the two public employees in charge of the decision a free annual pass for three years and invite them to all our private opening dinners. Would this be acceptable?

A: No. Providing these decision-makers with a transfer of value could create the impression that we expect them to grant the permit regardless of the merits of our application. Even if intended just as a courtesy, this could be perceived as an act of corruption and could have serious legal and reputational consequences for both us as employees and our institution.

C WE MANAGE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Conflicts of interest arise more often in close-knit environments, such as in places with small populations, small professional networks such as our artistic and local communities, and are usually resolved through proper disclosure and transparency. However, if left unaddressed – whether potential, actual, or perceived – a conflict of interest can harm our reputation and affect those involved. This occurs when an employee or Board member's personal interests influence, or appear to influence, their professional decisions.

- We make decisions based on what is best for the Kunsthalle Bern, and do not use our position in the institution for our advantage or to benefit friends or relatives.
- We do not accept gifts, meals, or invitations from anyone if they could affect – or seem to affect – our decisions or our ability to

act in the best interest of Kunsthalle Bern. (e.g., the Director does not accept a luxury dinner from a gallery that hopes to secure an exhibition for one of its artists). In particular:

- We share perishable gifts from third parties (e.g., fresh food, flowers, fruit, chocolate, wine) with colleagues at the office rather than taking them home.
 - We may keep nominal, inexpensive token gifts (e.g., a simple pen or mug) with a market value of no more than a few francs.
 - We return any other gifts to the sender or donate them to a non-profit organization.
 - We only accept invitations, hospitality, or entertainment from third parties if they align with the limits and parameters set out in this Code for our own employees.
- Other examples of conflicts of interests include, but are not limited to:
 - Employees or Board members, as well as their family members or close friends, hold a financial interest in or work for an entity that has or is seeking a business or professional relationship with Kunsthalle Bern (e.g., a supplier owned by an employee's spouse applies to provide printing services for us).
 - Employees or Board members work for or advise organizations that have similar activities to the Kunsthalle Bern (e.g., another Kunsthalle) or whose values are incompatible with ours (e.g., a weapon manufacturer or an association with a racist legacy).
 - Employees and Board members hire, supervise, or influence the employment conditions of family members or close friends at Kunsthalle Bern. This includes decisions related to hiring, wages, performance evaluations, promotions, investigations, training opportunities, disciplinary actions, and any other professional matters.
 - A romantic, sexual, or otherwise intimate relationship exists between employees and/or Board members, which may interfere with or influence decision-making about those individuals (e.g., an employee in a relationship with a Board member receives a salary increase due to pressure from the Board member).
 - Employees, Board members, their family members or close friends, take advantage of insider confidential information about activities at the Kunsthalle Bern for a personal benefit (e.g., an employee shares information with a close friend about a major yet-to-be-announced retrospective of a local artist. The friend, encouraged by the employee, then rushes to buy the artist's work, hoping its value will rise once the exhibition is made public).
 - Employees or Board members apply to display artworks at Kunsthalle Bern.
 - We avoid all private activities that could be construed as trading or dealing in cultural property (e.g., buying or selling artworks for profit using inside knowledge of upcoming exhibitions, having money invested in galleries or art dealers, or making deals that could seem to take unfair advantage of one's position with the Kunsthalle) unless authorised in advance by the Ethics Committee.
 - We vet final candidates for positions at Kunsthalle Bern to assess whether their hiring could create an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest, in line with this Code.

- We recognize that it is impossible to list every potential conflict, and the examples in this Code illustrate only some of the many ways a conflict of interest may arise. We therefore rely on each employee and Board member to uphold the highest standards of integrity, exercise good judgment, and seek advice when in doubt from their supervisor, our Director, or the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch).
- We promptly disclose to our supervisor, our Director, or the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch) all situations that may give rise to an actual, potential, or simply perceived conflict of interest.
- We will address conflicts of interest through appropriate measures such as recusal, disclosure, reassignment of responsibilities, independent review, divestment, or withdrawal from certain engagements.

Q: I am a junior curator at Kunsthalle Bern and in a loving relationship with a major international artist whose work perfectly aligns with our program. I truly believe we should invite her for a solo show. What should I do?

A: Inviting an artist with whom we are in a relationship will inevitably create at least the perception of a conflict of interest. Even if disclosed properly and in a timely manner, and even if we recuse ourselves from the decision, such an exhibition could still appear to the public as being granted due to the relationship rather than its artistic relevance.

D WE PROTECT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, PRIVACY, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Intellectual property, privacy, and confidentiality are safeguarded through fair agreements, respect for creators' rights, and secure, lawful handling of sensitive information.

- We respect intellectual property rights by ensuring fair agreements on ownership, reproduction, and usage of artworks and related materials, guided by VISARTE SCHWEIZ.
- We obtain explicit permission before recording, photographing, or sharing content related to commissioned or exhibited works, respecting the rights and intentions of creators.
- We handle personal data with care, complying with privacy regulations by collecting, storing, and processing it only for legitimate purposes, with clear consent and strict security measures.
- We limit access to personal and confidential information to authorized individuals and ensure it is not retained longer than necessary.
- We provide individuals with the right to access, correct, or request the deletion of their personal data.
- We implement data security measures to prevent unauthorized access, breaches, or misuse of personal and confidential information.
- We ensure that third parties handling data on our behalf comply with the same high standards of data protection and confidentiality.
- We maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information shared by our staff and stakeholders.

Q: A collector who is a member of the association Kunsthalle Bern is pressuring me to share undisclosed details of our upcoming exhibition program. What should I do? Should I refuse?

A: Yes, we must maintain the confidentiality of our exhibition program. While we appreciate our association members, sharing non-public details in advance could create unfair advantages and compromise our integrity. Exhibition plans should only be shared following official announcements and in line with our confidentiality policies. If pressured, we should politely but firmly reaffirm this commitment.

E WE EMBODY SUSTAINABILITY

Protecting the environment and ensuring sustainability are essential for a cleaner, safer world for all living beings, now and in the future. This commitment drives our efforts to minimize our environmental impact across all operations.

- We strive to reduce energy consumption and use sustainable energy.
- We implement water-saving measures and encourage responsible water use.
- We prioritize recycling, and waste minimization strategies, such as eliminating single-use plastics, promoting reusable materials (e.g., eco-friendly paints, adhesives, and construction materials). We separate our general waste and recycle as much as possible.
- We source eco-friendly and, wherever possible, locally produced materials for exhibitions, events, and supplies (e.g., exhibitions with modular, reusable materials, reusable exhibition signage instead of single-use banners).
- Our exhibition-making is guided by ecofriendly production principles (e.g., reuse and circular design).
- We routinely maintain our machines and tools, prioritizing repairs over discarding items and purchasing new ones. We apply the same approach to our building through maintenance and process-oriented refurbishment, focusing on preserving and extending the life of existing structures rather than replacing them.
- We strive to prioritize sustainability in our procurement process.
- We apply sustainable transport options for staff and our guests, such as cycling, public transportation, and carpooling. We discourage the use of air transport.
- We encourage artists and curators to incorporate sustainable practices in their work and installations.
- We minimize waste in the production of exhibitions, public programs, publications and archival practices.
- We strive to conduct public programs on sustainability and climate change, wherever it is curatorially relevant, and collaborate with local and international environmental organizations.
- We engage with our visitors with sustainability in mind. See section “We welcome our visitors”.
- We explore digital and low-impact alternatives to printed materials (e.g., digital programs, tickets and guides).
- We systematically seek feedback from staff and visitors on sustainability initiatives to foster continuous improvement.

Q: I am planning an exhibition and need to ship artworks from multiple international locations. What should I do?

A: We should first check if other editions or similar works are available closer to us or can be reproduced with low impact if the artist

agrees, to reduce unnecessary shipping while fully preserving our curatorial choices. If transport is essential, we should explore lower-impact options and consolidate shipments whenever possible. Prioritizing sustainability in our choices helps reduce our environmental footprint.

3 Our Program

A WE BORROW AND DISPLAY ARTWORKS

The borrowing and display of artworks are conducted with the highest standards of care and in accordance with industry best practices.

- We endeavor to install and exhibit artworks according to artists' expectations, while adhering to this Code's requirements.
- We respect content reproduction rights for the artworks and obtain necessary consent.
- We verify the provenance and ownership status of each artwork we borrow.
- We execute loan agreements in advance of every loan, following industry standards.
- We prepare condition reports upon receipt and prior to return of artworks.
- We ensure all loaned artworks are fully insured for the time they are with us.
- We handle shipping, storage, and installation of artworks with care and diligence.
- We strive to provide optimal display conditions, including appropriate lighting, temperature, and humidity levels, considering the historical features of our building.
- We implement security measures to safeguard artworks where needed.

Q: A lender has accepted to loan us an artwork for an upcoming exhibition but refuses to disclose their full address and will not sign a formal loan agreement. Can we still proceed?

A: No, we cannot accept a loan under these conditions. Transparency about ownership and provenance is essential to ensure the legitimacy of the artwork and to uphold ethical and legal standards. Without a clear agreement, we cannot guarantee proper responsibility for the artwork's care, insurance, and return. Accepting an artwork from an anonymous or unverified source could expose us to serious legal and reputational risks.

B WE CURATE EXHIBITIONS WITH INTEGRITY

The trust visitors place in our institution is preserved through curatorial integrity, ensured by transparent, merit-based processes that prioritize artistic and cultural significance, free from undue influence. Our curatorial decisions reflect ethical research practices, cultural sensitivity, and a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and collaborative engagement with artists and communities.

- We ensure transparency in the criteria and processes for selecting and presenting artists and artworks, and disclose these upon request, to maintain trust from our visitors.
- We collaborate closely with artists to ensure their creative visions and voices are integral to the curatorial narrative.

- We base exhibition decisions on artistic merit, cultural significance and the public good, free from personal, financial, commercial or market-driven interests.
- We resist external attempts to influence the selection, display and interpretation or content and artworks, including from lenders and funders.
- We consider the cultural, historical, and social contexts of artworks, providing meaningful insights that stimulate informed dialogue.
- We consider whose viewpoints are reflected in texts, cartels, and interpretations, allowing space for alternative views and multiple perspectives.
- We are committed to helping visitors appreciate diverse interpretations and understand the context behind curatorial choices, including the dramaturgy of displays, what is included or excluded and why.
- We strive to be fully aware of our speaking position, biases, power dynamics and privileges, especially when engaging with marginalized experiences, and acknowledge the power dynamics at play.
- We apply research ethics rigorously and we commit to thorough, long-term research into the experiences we represent, ensuring accurate, respectful, and nuanced portrayals without burdening marginalized individuals to educate us.
- We engage with represented communities from the outset to gain insights, incorporate diverse cultural perspectives, and enhance the exhibition's context. We actively listen to and learn from those with lived experiences, carefully considering their feedback. When appropriate, the creation of content is driven by those with direct experience, embodying authenticity in storytelling and curation.
- We consider how the community being represented can benefit from the content and ensure they are properly acknowledged, including through remuneration as applicable.
- We avoid cultural appropriation i.e., taking or using elements of one culture by members of another culture, often without permission or genuine understanding, and typically in a way that reinforces existing power dynamics, marginalizes the source culture, commodifies or fetishes.
- We reject "white saviorism", i.e., any situation where a white person, often from a position of privilege, takes on a role of "saving" or "helping" people of color, often from marginalized communities, in a way that is self-serving, reinforces power imbalances and stereotypes.
- We critically examine the potential impact of curation, recognizing that despite good intentions, it can have far-reaching and even harmful consequences if not handled responsibly.
- We consider the long-term impact of projects that address specific communities and participants. We do not create a temporary engagement that leaves these communities feeling tokenized or exploited.
- We acknowledge when we have used artificial intelligence for any aspect of our curatorial development.
- We ensure comprehensive crediting of all those that have contributed or whose work has been relied on.
- We ensure that when writing about sensitive personal experiences, we obtain explicit consent from the individuals whose stories are being shared, or their representatives, thereby respecting their dignity, privacy, willingness to stay anonymous, and agency.

- We do not accept unsolicited exhibition proposals or offers to display works from private collections. Exhibitions involving private collections are initiated solely by us, within our independent curatorial framework. Such collaborations are never gestures of gratitude, donor recognition, or reciprocal arrangements for financial, political, or personal benefit. Our curators retain full authority over selection, interpretation, and display.
- We apply these standards to our own curatorial activities and expect invited curators, artists and any other participant to adhere to them.

Q: I am under pressure to prioritize an exhibition expected to be a commercial success, even though it does not strictly align with our curatorial vision. I feel quite anxious about this. Our budget is not unlimited, so a small blockbuster exhibition would help our finances a lot! Should I agree to move forward with it, or should I stop the proposal as I feel uneasy about it?

A: Yes, you are right to feel uneasy, as we do not move forward with exhibitions based solely on their commercial appeal. While we recognize that successful exhibitions help sustain our operations, our curatorial decisions must always be guided by artistic and cultural significance. If budget concerns arise, we explore alternative solutions that align with our mission and duty of trust to our visitors, while maintaining our commitment to curatorial integrity.

C WE COMMISSION AND PRODUCE ARTWORKS WITH DILIGENCE

The commissioning and production of artworks follow fair, transparent, and ethical processes that uphold artistic freedom and support artists' rights, ensuring clear agreements, equitable representation, cultural and environmental responsibility, and the well-being of all involved.

- We honor our production and commissioning commitments to artists.
- We respect artistic freedom, ensuring that artists have full creative autonomy. We do not influence the artistic content beyond the agreed terms of the commission, unless responding to an unsolicited request by the artist.
- We provide clear and fair contracts with transparent terms regarding fees, production budgets, timelines, and rights, ensuring balanced and non-exploitative agreements.
- We ensure a fair and balanced negotiation process, never exploiting our position to the detriment of the artist or the artwork.
- We establish clear ownership and intellectual property rights, ensuring artists retain appropriate control over their work, including reproduction and display rights.
- We do not claim commissions on sales of the artworks we display, though production costs may be reimbursed as agreed. Exceptionally – in very limited cases – we may transparently receive a share of the proceeds as decided by the Board and the Director in agreement with the funding bodies of the Kunsthalle (e.g., Cantonale Bern Jura).
- We disclose all support, production, and commissioning details transparently (e.g., in the annual report).
- We ensure that all additional financial and institutional support to commissioning and production aligns with this Code, verifying that additional funding sources and partnerships uphold our values.

- We prioritize sustainability and environmental responsibility, considering the ecological impact of materials and production processes.
- We prioritize the safety and well-being of all involved, especially when production takes place on-site.

Q: A major international collector visited our exhibition and wanted to buy an artwork on display that we produced. They insist that we introduce them to the artist's gallery, expecting a better treatment that way. Can we request a 30% commission from the gallery on the sale to support our institution? After all, we produced the work?

A: No, we do not take commissions on artwork sales in our regular program. While we can facilitate connections between collectors and galleries, our role is not commercial. Any sales arrangements should remain strictly between the artist, their gallery, and the buyer. However, if we covered production costs, we may seek reimbursement for actual expenses, if previously so agreed with the artist.

D WE CONDUCT PUBLIC PROGRAMS, RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS AND MAINTAIN OUR ARCHIVE WITH INTEGRITY

Our public programs, research, publications, and archive are maintained with rigor, transparency, and intellectual integrity, ensuring that processes are impartial, ethically sound, and free from external influence.

- We ensure a rigorous and impartial process for conducting public programs, research, publications and archival choices.
- We uphold high public program, research, publication and archival standards, ensuring accuracy, proper citations, and freedom from plagiarism or distortion.
- We comply with key external research, publication, and archival ethics guidelines; obtain consent for interviews, reproductions, and archival use to ensure accurate representation of people's work and ideas; and respect copyright laws, fair use principles, and artists' rights when reproducing artworks or archival materials.
- We do not allow funders, market pressures, or political agendas to compromise our public programs, research, publications and archival choices.
- We clearly disclose all sources of support and any potential conflicts of interest in such activities.
- We make the content of public programs, research, publications and our archive available to broad audiences through open-access initiatives.
- We prioritize environmentally responsible printing and consider digital alternatives to minimize our ecological footprint.
- We apply the section "We Curate Exhibitions with Integrity" to these activities.

Q: I am working on organizing and cataloguing the Kunsthalle Bern archive, which includes materials from past exhibitions, internal correspondence, and artist collaborations. A donor who played a key role in funding early exhibitions has asked me to remove or restrict access to certain documents that reference the political affiliation of their family from the 1960s. They argue that these materials could damage their legacy. Should I reject their request even if this may negatively impact our relationship?

A: Yes, we do not alter or restrict archival records based on external pressure, unless required by law or by a law-enforcement decision. Our archive is a historical resource that must remain accurate, transparent, and accessible. While we respect donor relationships,

we uphold high archival standards and comply with research ethics guidelines, ensuring that materials are preserved in their original form. If sensitive concerns arise, we can discuss ways to provide context, such as including clarifying notes or curatorial framing, but we do not remove or manipulate historical records to protect reputations.

4 Our Stakeholders

A WE WELCOME OUR VISITORS

Kunsthalle Bern is dedicated to creating an inclusive, welcoming, safe and accessible environment for all visitors, ensuring that our exhibitions, programs, and spaces respect diverse perspectives, promote critical dialogue, and minimize environmental impact.

- We create a safer, welcoming, and accessible space for all, ensuring inclusivity in our programming.
- We are committed to making our exhibitions, workshops, and public programs accessible, both physically and intellectually, to all visitors, including people with disabilities and marginalized communities.
- We strive to provide linguistic access tailored to our diverse audiences. This includes local and international visitors as well as communities impacted by the exhibition.
- We warmly welcome people using mobility aids, explain to them how our building works, and how to reach accessible toilets.
- We ensure that our facilities are inclusive. This includes offering gender-neutral restrooms and ensuring that all visitors feel comfortable in our space.
- We acknowledge that some artworks may evoke strong reactions. When presenting works that include sensitive content, such as nudity, sexually explicit or violent imagery, we provide appropriate trigger warnings and, where relevant, additional support resources.
- We welcome and encourage feedback. Visitors and community members can share their thoughts through open and accessible communication channels such as info@kunsthalle-bern.ch, and we commit to responding thoughtfully.
- We provide well-researched, truthful, and balanced information in our exhibitions and programs. As highlighted in the section on curatorial integrity, we avoid misleading narratives or distortions of history, ensuring that our content respects diverse perspectives.
- We maintain a safer environment that prioritizes both physical and psychological well-being.
- We encourage critical thinking and dialogue. Our exhibitions and programs aim to inspire engagement, reflection, and thought-provoking conversations.
- We encourage our visitors to minimize their environmental impact (e.g., digital programs, tickets, and guides instead of printed materials).
- We respect visitor privacy. We handle visitor data, including ticketing information, surveillance, and online engagement with care.

Q: A group of overseas visitors attended a public program we produced about the culture, histories, and struggles of artistic movements in their country. They told me they felt excluded because it was conducted only in German, despite the program being entirely dedicated to their country and the fact that a sizable portion of foreign

workers in town are from that country. They expected translations or at least some form of linguistic support. How should I respond?

A: We are committed to making our programs as inclusive and accessible as possible, especially when they focus on the cultural and historical experiences of specific communities. While not all events can be fully multilingual, we recognize that offering translation or linguistic support in this case would have been particularly appropriate. We appreciate their feedback and take it seriously. Moving forward, we will explore ways to improve access, such as providing translated materials, live interpretation, or multilingual summaries for key programs. In the meantime, we can offer them whatever related information we have in their language and direct them to other accessible resources.

B WE EXPECT RESPECT FROM OUR VISITORS

Kunsthalle Bern asks visitors to engage respectfully with staff, fellow visitors, our building and the artworks, to uphold a safe, inclusive, and thoughtful environment, and to follow our policies to ensure a positive experience for everyone.

- We expect visitors to treat our staff and fellow visitors with courtesy, always maintaining a respectful interaction.
- We require all visitors to respect our staff's and fellow visitors' safety and well-being, refraining from any aggressive or disruptive behavior, including raising their voice, insulting or engaging in non-consensual physical contact.
- We have zero tolerance for harassment, whether directed at staff, visitors, or others, and will take immediate action against any such behavior, including promptly involving the authorities.
- We do not accept any form of discrimination based on race, colour, religion, nationality, age, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, class and on other grounds covered in this Code – regardless of its tone – whether directed at staff, other visitors, or others.
- We respect our visitors' freedom of expression, as long as it is exercised without physical or verbal violence and in a manner that upholds the values expressed in this Code, such as respect, inclusion, and non-discrimination – and complies with Swiss law. However, we do not allow visitors to use public events as a platform to promote political parties.
- We ask visitors to respect the artworks and artists by refraining from touching or damaging artworks and displays, unless physical interaction is explicitly encouraged.
- We expect visitors to show respect for others by maintaining appropriate behavior, managing noise levels (e.g., appropriate mobile phone usage), and following photography guidance (e.g., no flash), food (e.g., not bringing or consuming food and beverages in exhibition spaces), to ensure a smooth, respectful, and enjoyable experience for everyone.
- We encourage visitors to engage thoughtfully with exhibitions and be open to learning, even when content challenges personal beliefs or perspectives.
- We expect visitors to avoid plagiarism when using content from the Kunsthalle Bern for research or educational purposes, and to properly credit our institution and the relevant artists when sharing materials.
- We encourage visitors to minimize waste and respect conservation efforts, being mindful of their environmental impact while visiting (e.g., returning paper materials and visit plans).

- We may ask visitors who engage in inappropriate behavior to reconsider their actions, and if they do not comply, we will ask them to leave the premises; if they refuse, we will contact the authorities.

Q: I was working at the front desk when a visitor became upset during an exhibition, claiming that it promoted extremist views. They started loudly arguing with me, raising their voice and making derogatory comments about the exhibition's themes. Other visitors looked uncomfortable, and I started to feel unsafe. How should I handle this situation?

A: We expect all visitors to engage respectfully, even when they disagree with an exhibition's content. We acknowledge that exhibitions may provoke reactions, and we encourage dialogue, but always in a respectful manner. If a visitor becomes disruptive, we remain calm, mindfully listen to their concerns, and remind them of our commitment to presenting diverse perspectives. If they continue to raise their voice or say insults, we reach out to other colleagues to support us, if available, and we firmly state that such behavior is not acceptable and they should stop immediately. If they refuse to comply, we ask them to leave. If they do not leave, we do not hesitate to involve security if available or, if necessary, the authorities.

C WE CARE FOR ARTISTS

A respectful, fair, caring, and supportive relationship with artists is ensured through clear agreements, fair compensation, and the protection of their rights throughout the collaboration.

- We conclude written contracts with artists outlining expectations, compliance with this Code, timelines, fees, production support when needed, and intellectual property rights.
- We compensate artists promptly and adequately for the artworks we display, for their time and services, including presentations, texts, installation help, performances, and reimburse any associated expenses (e.g., per diem). We follow the standards set by Visarte.
- We apply the same travel policy to artists as we do to employees.
- We ensure adequate production resources are available for artists.
- We do not request gifts, donations, free artworks, artworks below fair market price, or any other benefits from artists, either directly or indirectly.
- We respect artists' creative freedom, offering advice only where appropriate or solicited and without controlling the artistic process.
- We engage artists from diverse backgrounds, avoiding exploitative or tokenistic representation.
- We obtain permission for the use of artists' works, images, and statements, ensuring proper credits in all materials, ensuring that artists retain appropriate control over their work.
- We communicate with artists in a respectful and transparent manner, fostering a safe environment and avoiding condescending, overpromising, predatory, misleading, or dominating language.
- We provide a supportive and welcoming working environment for artists, addressing any accessibility or logistical concerns. We strive to introduce the artists to our staff.
- We expect artists to treat our staff and visitors with courtesy, always maintaining a respectful interaction.

- We fully apply the section “We Curate Exhibitions with Integrity” to these interactions.

Q: An artist we are exhibiting was scheduled to give a talk as part of their exhibition. On the day of the event, we realized that we had failed to budget for their time, but they had assumed compensation was included. The artist was understandably frustrated and expected payment. How should we handle this situation?

A: We are committed to compensating artists fairly for their work, including talks, presentations, and other contributions. Since this was an inexcusable oversight on our side, we must ensure the artist is paid as expected; finding the necessary budget is not an option. In the moment, we should acknowledge the mistake transparently, reassure the artist that they will be compensated, and avoid putting them in a position where they feel pressured to proceed without clarity. We then ensure they are compensated without delay after the event. We also swiftly review our internal processes to ensure that all artist engagements, including talks, are clearly outlined in written agreements, with dedicated budgets, to prevent such inexcusable issues in the future.

D WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR FUNDERS

The support of funders is recognized as essential to our operations and mission, with all significant funding carefully reviewed to ensure transparency, alignment with ethical standards, and the preservation of independence, integrity, and our core values. Their contributions as partners are important in furthering our mission and impact.

- We publicly disclose funding details to maintain transparency.
- We ensure significant funding is thoroughly reviewed, approved in writing, and documented.
- We do not accept funding in exchange for favors, benefits, or influence on programming or operations.
- We evaluate whether accepting funding could compromise curatorial independence, artistic freedom, or institutional credibility.
- We assess whether the values, business practices, and reputation of significant funders align with our mission, values, and ethical standards as outlined in this Code. To this effect, we do not accept funding that could be perceived as “artwashing.”
- We strive to investigate the origins of significant funders’ wealth and conduct background checks to ensure they are not directly involved in unethical, illegal, or harmful activities. (e.g., arms trade, environmental destruction, human rights violations, financial crimes), and review media coverage, industry reports, and watchdog organizations for any controversies or public criticisms related to the funder.
- We also vet foundations we interact with and their boards, to ensure alignment with our ethical standards.

Q: I was approached by the PR agent of a collector and businessman who has recently been involved in a corruption scandal related to inappropriate payments to government officials, which also resulted in an oil spill. They suggested that, in a few months, his company could make a significant donation to our institution. Following a review of the case, it seems probable that this contribution might be aimed at rebuilding trust in his company within the local community and could even influence how authorities perceive him. Given our need for funding, should we consider accepting the donation?

A: No. We do not accept funding that could be perceived as an attempt to improve a donor's public image or influence authorities. Donations must be made with a genuine intent to support our mission, not as a tool for others' reputation management. Accepting such a contribution would compromise our integrity and reputation and risk associating us with unethical business practices. We must ensure that all funding aligns with our ethical standards and does not create the appearance of "artwashing".

E WE WORK WITH GALLERIES AND FAIRS

Transparent, fair, and respectful partnerships with galleries and art fairs support artistic integrity, curatorial independence, and alignment with our institutional mission and values.

- We interact with galleries and art fairs based on mutual respect, transparency, and shared values.
- We ensure all agreements with galleries and art fairs are clear, fair, and documented, including terms on exhibition participation, commissions, support, and financial arrangements.
- We avoid exclusive or restrictive agreements that limit artistic freedom or curatorial independence.
- We do not engage in any behavior – with galleries, fairs, or other stakeholders – that seeks to manipulate the art market or related transactions. This includes secretive, collusive, or abusive practices that could distort fair competition or transparency.
- We avoid any conduct that could artificially inflate the price of artworks or place undue pressure on artists, institutions, or market participants.
- We ensure that the selection of works for exhibitions is based on artistic merit, not influenced by commercial interests or pressure from galleries or fairs.
- We do not accept unsolicited financial or material support from galleries or fairs that could influence or be perceived as influencing any aspect of our curatorial, organizational, or financial autonomy. We may proactively request such support as needed but only based on a pre-existing independent curatorial choice of our institution.
- We respect the intellectual property rights of galleries, ensuring fair agreements on ownership, reproduction, and use of images or artworks.
- We ensure that our partnerships with galleries and fairs align with our institutional mission and ethical standards, avoiding associations with entities or practices that could harm our reputation or integrity. We conduct the necessary preliminary due diligence.

Q: A commercial gallery we have partnered with before spontaneously approached us, offering to provide significant funding for an exhibition of one of their artists. They emphasized that the artist's work aligns perfectly with our institution's sensitivity and mission. We hadn't planned at all for this show nor ever considered this artist, but given our budget constraints, it's tempting to accept. Since we have a good relationship with the gallery and the artist broadly fits our program, shouldn't we consider it?

A: No. We do not accept funding that could compromise our curatorial independence or create the appearance of external influence. While we value our relationship with the gallery and recognize that the artist's work may broadly align with our institution, our exhibitions must follow our standard independent selection process. Accepting unsolicited funding from a gallery to show their

artists risks favouritism and undermines our commitment to an impartial curatorial approach. However, if we independently select an artist beforehand through our own curatorial process, seeking additional funding – including from their gallery – is, in principle, acceptable.

F WE VALUE OUR VENDORS

Vendors are selected through transparent, fair, and responsible procurement processes that align with ethical standards and sustainability goals.

- We value our vendors, including suppliers, providers, consultants, and other commercial partners, as integral to our operations, recognizing their essential role in supporting our work and helping us achieve our mission.
- We conduct open, fair, and competitive selection processes to prevent favouritism or conflicts of interest. For commissions, expenditures, purchases and any other transaction, above 10,000 CHF, we review at least three different quotes.
- We select suppliers based on the required quality, pricing, and sustainability standards for exhibitions and operations, ensuring cost-effectiveness while maintaining quality and ethical considerations and avoiding unnecessary expenditures.
- We select suppliers also based on ethical labor practices, environmental standards, and human rights principles.
- We intentionally seek and support suppliers from underrepresented groups, including minority-owned and local businesses.
- We prioritize eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient solutions, and suppliers committed to reducing carbon footprints.
- We expect that vendors comply with relevant laws, including tax regulations, labor laws, and industry standards.
- We ensure that procurement decisions are free from personal or institutional conflicts of interest (e.g., hiring a service provider that is a family member of an employee).
- We establish clear terms, deliverables, and responsibilities in all agreements to avoid misunderstandings or disputes and pay our vendors fair market price for goods and services.
- We review supplier performance and compliance to maintain ethical and quality standards over time.
- We ensure that commercial activities and rental of our spaces to third parties are clearly distinguished from the curatorial program.

Q: We have been using the same cleaning company for a while, but we recently heard reports that they mistreat their employees: delaying salaries, imposing longer working hours than legally allowed, and enforcing harsh conditions. Given our commitment to ethical labor practices, how should we handle this?

A: We take labor rights and fair working conditions seriously. Upon learning about these concerns, we should promptly contact the company to obtain more information and assess their practices. If the issues are confirmed, we may decide to interrupt the service and switch to a supplier that aligns with our ethical standards. Regularly reviewing vendor compliance ensures that our operations reflect our values.

G WE ENGAGE WITH THE MEDIA

Engagement with media professionals, including journalists and influencers, is conducted with integrity, ensuring all communications are fair, accurate, transparent, and free from undue influence.

- We are committed to providing fair, balanced, accurate, substantiated, and transparent information in all media interactions, whether in traditional or social media, and whether engaging with qualified journalists or influencers.
- We answer questions by the media on the institution's name and behalf, only if we are authorized to do so. If not, we must refer all media questions to the press office and the Director.
- When communicating in public forums – personally or on behalf of another organization – we make it clear that the views expressed do not represent those of Kunsthalle Bern.
- We do not communicate or tolerate abusive, offensive, or harmful content, including hate speech, harassment, or explicit material.
- We avoid the dissemination of misinformation, ensuring all our claims are factual and well-supported.
- We prevent spam or harmful content, such as repetitive, off-topic, or unsafe material.
- We respect intellectual property rights, always accurately crediting original creators for their work.
- We do not allow promotional content of others, including advertisements, endorsements, or solicitations, in our media communications. We transparently and factually acknowledge the support of our commercial partners.
- We protect individuals' privacy by ensuring no personal contact details are shared or exposed.
- We reserve the right to remove any comments or content that violate these guidelines.
- We respect the impartiality and independence of the media, upholding their right to express opinions without interference.
- We do not offer extravagant hospitality, entertainment, gifts, donations, service contracts or other benefits that could be perceived as attempts to influence media coverage or professionals in our favor (e.g., providing luxurious hospitality or gifts pushing journalists to write a positive article, contracting them to draft a press release for us hoping that they would feel obliged to reciprocate with positive coverage, etc.)
- We may offer limited, modest hospitality to media professionals in a professional context (e.g., at press briefings or opening dinners), based on the same standards we apply to our employees and other stakeholders in this Code.

Q: I received a call from the editor of an art magazine who offered to feature an article about one of our exhibitions on the condition that we purchase advertising space in their publication. Given the visibility this could provide, should we consider the offer?

A: No. We respect the independence and impartiality of the media and do not engage in transactions that could be perceived as influencing editorial content. Paying for coverage would undermine our integrity and the credibility of the magazine itself. While we may choose to advertise in media outlets, this should never be tied to favorable editorial treatment.

5 Our People

A WE RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights, fair labor practices, and workplace safety are upheld by ensuring fair wages, humane conditions, and equal access for all while rejecting exploitation and forced labor.

- We uphold human rights and adhere to all relevant labor laws, regulations, conventions and to our employees' internal regulation.
- We respect our employees' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining.
- We prohibit all forms of abuse, coercion, corporal punishment, and threats in the workplace.
- We reject illegal, undeclared, or exploitative employment practices.
- We strictly oppose forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and exploitative working conditions.
- We provide fair and timely wages and legally mandated benefits.
- We ensure humane working hours, fair overtime compensation, and adequate rest periods.
- We do not impose wage deductions as punishment or require debt repayment through labor.
- We uphold our employees' rights to freely accept or leave employment without undue restrictions.
- We provide clear, written employment contracts in a language employees understand.
- We do not confiscate identity documents or impose restrictions on workers' mobility.
- We comply with child labor laws, ensuring that all employees meet the legal working age.
- We prioritize the well-being of people, integrating health and safety principles and laws into all aspects of our organization.
- We design and maintain facilities to ensure the highest safety and welfare standards for workers, including dedicated spaces for breastfeeding and worship.
- We strive to maintain an incident-free workplace and promptly report any actual or potential accidents or concerns related to security, environment, health, and safety to our supervisor, our Director, or the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch).
- We strive to provide accessible facilities.
- We strive to offer remote work, adjusted schedules, and reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities or specific needs.
- We use accessible formats for documents, meetings, and training to ensure full participation for all employees.
- We regularly assess our accessibility policies, seek employee input, and adapt to evolving needs.
- We expect stakeholders, vendors, and partners to uphold the same human rights standards.

Q: I tripped in the hallway and injured my ankle while conducting a guided tour. The floor was wet for some reason! The injury seems minor, and I expect it to heal on its own. However, I'm concerned about workplace safety but I do not want to make a big fuss out of it. Should I still report it?

A: Yes, all workplace incidents must be reported, regardless of the severity of the injury. Documenting accidents helps us monitor potential health risks and identify hazards that need to be addressed

to prevent more serious incidents. Prompt reporting ensures that we maintain a safe and supportive working environment for everyone.

B WE VALUE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

A diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is ensured through fair recruitment, career development, compensation, and communication practices, cultivating a culture where all employees – regardless of identity or background – feel valued, respected, and empowered to thrive.

- We promote diversity in terms of race, colour, religion, nationality, age, class, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, appearance, genetics, medical history, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, political affiliation, union membership, or any other legally protected characteristic.
- We foster an open, inclusive, and safe environment where everyone is encouraged to bring their authentic selves to work. We promote a “come as you are” approach, ensuring that all employees feel seen, valued, respected, and free from pressure to conform.
- We provide equal treatment and opportunities for all personnel in recruitment by intentionally and mindfully promoting applications by diverse candidates and debiasing the hiring process. To achieve this, we consider:
 - Posting job advertisements in spaces, both digital and physical, where diverse communities engage.
 - Using inclusive and bias-free language in job descriptions and we explicitly encourage applications from diverse candidates.
 - Assembling diverse hiring panels to ensure a range of perspectives in candidate evaluations and train them to recognize and mitigate unconscious bias.
 - Implementing structured interviews with standardized, skills-based questions and scoring criteria to reduce subjective bias.
 - Regularly reviewing recruitment data to identify and address any disparities in hiring outcomes.
- We establish clear, merit-based promotion and career development criteria while proactively supporting underrepresented groups in professional development to foster a diverse talent pipeline. To achieve this, we:
 - Implement structured performance reviews with standardized evaluation metrics to limit subjective bias.
 - Ensure that career development opportunities, such as training, special projects, and networking events, are equitably distributed across all employees.
- We provide equitable access to training, mentorship, and skill-building opportunities, ensuring all employees have the tools to grow in their careers. To achieve this, we:
 - Offer learning and development opportunities that encourage employees to enhance their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging topics, including senior employees to raise awareness about unconscious biases, promote inclusive behaviors, address microaggressions and develop cultural competence.
 - Support training, mentorship and sponsorship programs to facilitate career growth for underrepresented

- employees (e.g., giving employees training to address their own limiting beliefs).
- We commit to ensuring fair and equitable compensation for all employees, irrespective of gender, race, or any other characteristics mentioned earlier. To achieve this, we:
 - Conduct pay equity reviews to identify and address any disparities across all aspects of compensation, including salaries, bonuses, and benefits.
 - Use structured and transparent salary frameworks based on objective criteria such as role, experience, and performance to eliminate arbitrary pay gaps.
 - Require justification and documentation for salary decisions, promotions, and bonuses to ensure consistency and accountability.
 - Establish clear salary bands and communicate them internally to enhance transparency and prevent wage discrepancies.
 - Analyze compensation trends across different demographic groups to ensure equitable distribution and take corrective action if disparities are found.
 - Encourage open dialogue on pay equity and create safe spaces for employees to raise concerns or request reviews of their compensation.
- We foster inclusive and respectful written and verbal communication, including in in-person and online meetings, ensuring that all voices – especially those from underrepresented or less-heard groups – are acknowledged and valued in discussions and decision-making. To achieve this, we:
 - Challenge established limiting beliefs (e.g., “it will be difficult to hire a woman for this role” or “this is a job for a fit man”.)
 - Credit ideas fairly by ensuring contributions from all colleagues, especially those from underrepresented groups, are acknowledged and not overlooked or attributed to others.
 - Repair interruptions by actively addressing them and encourage equitable participation, particularly for colleagues who may face systemic barriers to being heard.
 - Listen attentively and give full attention to speakers without distractions. Recognize that dismissing or ignoring certain voices, intentionally or not, reinforces exclusion.
 - Ensure diverse perspectives are heard. If discussions are dominated by a single viewpoint, actively invite contributions from colleagues with different backgrounds, experiences, and identities.
 - Deliberately acknowledge the underrepresentation or absence of specific perspectives within a discussion.
 - Speak up and challenge biased or exclusionary comments respectfully, even when uncomfortable. Engaging in constructive disagreement helps build an equitable and inclusive environment.
 - We respect pronouns ensuring that all individuals are addressed and treated as they wish. We use gender inclusive language in all communications and never limit gender options in documents to male and female.
 - We ensure our presentations, training efforts, plans, and other materials reflect a diverse force, use inclusive

language, images, case studies and examples, to foster belonging and create imagery of opportunity for underrepresented colleagues.

- Remain proactive, not passive. Inaction in the face of bias or exclusion may be perceived as a form of complicity.
- We strive to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that employees with different abilities can fully participate in the workplace. To achieve this, we:
 - Adjust physical spaces by providing ramps, elevators, accessible and gender-neutral restrooms, ergonomic furniture, and designated quiet areas for neurodivergent employees.
 - Offer flexible work arrangements such as remote work options, modified schedules, and additional breaks for employees with medical conditions or disabilities.
 - Ensure accessible communication by providing materials in multiple formats (e.g., large print, braille, screen-reader-compatible documents, captions for videos, and sign language interpretation when needed).
 - Regularly review policies and seek feedback from employees with disabilities to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility and inclusion.
- We actively seek out, identify and include diverse suppliers, service providers and other third parties in our procurement process.
- We set measurable diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging goals, conduct regular reviews and surveys, and hold ourselves accountable.

Q: I've noticed that in meetings, a colleague tends to talk over others or dismiss certain perspectives, but I'm not sure if it's my place to intervene. What should I do?

A: Speaking up is essential to preserve an inclusive and respectful workplace. If a colleague is interrupted, you can redirect the conversation by saying, "I'd like to hear them finish their point." If an idea is overlooked but later repeated by someone else, you can acknowledge the original contributor by saying, "That's a great point, and I believe she mentioned something similar earlier." Small actions like these help ensure all voices are heard and valued, reinforcing a culture of respect and engagement.

C WE REJECT HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

A workplace culture rooted in respect, consent, and inclusion ensures that harassment, discrimination, and any conduct that undermines dignity have no place.

- We create a safe environment for everyone which is based on respect and consent.
- We unequivocally prohibit all forms of harassment or discrimination – whether verbal, written, digital, psychological or physical – in recruitment, employment conditions, professional development, career progression, or any other interactions. This applies to all individuals, regardless of race, colour, religion, nationality, age, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, appearance, genetics, medical history, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, political affiliation, union membership, or any other legally protected characteristic.
- Some examples of harassment and discrimination based on race,

- skin colour, ancestry, origin country or citizenship include but are not limited to comments on perceived attributes of a certain ethnicity (e.g., curly hair, accents, beliefs, clothing), racial slurs, jokes or stereotypes, intolerance of differences in attire, intolerance toward non-prevalent religious holidays, traditions or customs.
- Some examples of sexual harassment and discrimination include – but are not limited to – contact without consent, sexual-related advances, comments, repeated jokes, questions or gestures, mimicking body parts, invading personal space in a sexual way, insisting on invitations for romantic dates, promising promotions or avoiding termination in return to sexual favours, or stopping careers in response to declining invitations.
 - Some examples of harassment and discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation include – but are not limited to – being denied the same benefits and opportunities as cisgender or heterosexual colleagues; having one’s identity or pronouns disrespected; being excluded from meetings or promotions; being mocked for not appearing “leader material”; or facing suggestions that one’s gender identity or expression affects their professional competence.
 - Some examples of gender-based discrimination and harassment include – but are not limited to – reinforcing gender stereotypes about how people of different genders should or do behave; harassing a female-identifying employee for working in a role perceived as “a man’s job”; mocking someone for not being “leader material” after hitting the glass ceiling; displaying degrading material (e.g., comics, posters, emails, or memes) targeting women; repeatedly referencing gender norms in the workplace; systematically assigning less meaningful tasks to female-identifying colleagues; denying promotions or project opportunities based on pregnancy; and making sexist remarks (e.g., “women aren’t good at...”).
 - We actively recognize and address microaggressions, inappropriate jokes, stereotypes or other forms of bullying or conduct that may negatively affect a person’s dignity.

Q: A colleague often makes “jokes” about gender roles and repeatedly comments on what they think are “appropriate” tasks for men and women. For example, he recently said that “buying cakes for employees’ birthdays is a ladies’ job”. This makes me uncomfortable, but I’m not sure if it qualifies as harassment. What should I do?

A: Comments that reinforce gender stereotypes, even as jokes, can create a hostile or exclusionary work environment. It’s important to address them. If we feel comfortable, we can respond directly by saying, “I don’t think that comment aligns with our commitment to inclusion.” If the behavior continues or we prefer not to address it directly, we can report it to our supervisor, our Director, or the Ethics Committee (ethics@kunsthalle-bern.ch). Our workplace culture is built on respect, and everyone has a responsibility to uphold it.

D WE TRAVEL AND INCUR EXPENSES

Responsible, transparent, and sustainable management of travel and expenses is fundamental to prioritizing cost-efficiency, minimizing environmental impact, and ensuring the careful use of public funds.

- We obtain our supervisor’s approval in advance for all travel and expenses.

- We prioritize sustainability by prohibiting air travel unless the cumulative train journey exceeds seven hours.
- When air travel is permitted, we book economy class for all flights. Exceptions – premium economy, or business class if premium economy is unavailable – may be granted upon request for:
 - People with mobility issues, emergencies due to ailments or injuries.
 - Individual flights over seven hours for individuals aged 65 or older.
 - Individual overnight flights exceeding seven hours.
- We book economy class for all train travel, with business class exceptions granted only upon request for individual train journeys exceeding seven hours.
- We adhere to meal expense limits as outlined in our policy on meals and fees.
- We book accommodations below the five-star category.
- We apply these travel and expense standards to our employees but also to all individuals whose travel we support, including artists and curators.

Q: One of our curators needs to travel to New York for an important fair. Since there are no direct flights from Bern, they plan to fly via Zurich. They request a premium economy class ticket for the long-haul Zurich–New York flight, citing the need to be well-rested for work upon arrival. Would this request be approved under our travel policy?

A: Our travel policy permits premium economy class flights only upon request and under specific conditions: for people with mobility issues, for individuals aged 65 or older when the flight exceeds seven hours, or for overnight flights also exceeding seven hours. The Zurich–New York flight exceeds seven hours, so the key factor is whether it is an overnight flight. If the flight departs in the evening, the request qualifies for premium economy class. However, if the flight departs during the day, the policy requires an economy class booking unless the curator meets the age or mobility criteria.

DISCLOSURE: AI HAS BEEN USED TO PROOFREAD THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THIS CODE.