



## TASK FORCE FOXFIRE

*“To give protection to the weak. A voice to the forgotten. Comfort to the suffering. Promise of a future to those without hope. These things we pledge to those in need.”*

# Code of Conduct & Ethics

## I. Guiding Principles

### A. Responsibility, Service, and Public Mindedness

Sustainable progress, peace, and justice require that all organizations contribute to the common good. Thus, Task Force Foxfire integrates self-development and service to others, balancing individual and public concerns, focusing on higher, broader, and more public levels of service into our operations procedures.

#### Standards

1. Responsibly maintaining itself, Task Force Foxfire conducts its activities for the sake of others, whether for the public at large or a particular segment of the public.
2. Task Force Foxfire declares that public money must not be misused for selfish purposes and all public assets are to be treated with utmost seriousness, as a public trust.
3. Task Force Foxfire recognizes that its conduct and activities have an impact on the public's perception of NGOs and that it shares responsibility for the public's trust of NGOs.
4. Task Force Foxfire maintains a responsible and caring attitude toward the environment in all of its activities.

### B. Cooperation Beyond Boundaries

Significant progress toward world peace and global well-being can be fostered through inter-religious, intercultural, and interracial work, and across artificial barriers of politics and ethnicity that tend to separate people and their institutions. Taskforce Foxfire maintains ethical, cooperative relationships with other NGOs, and partners where possible and appropriate for the sake of the greater public good.

#### Standards

1. Task Force Foxfire is willing to work beyond borders of politics, religion, culture, race and ethnicity, within the limits of the organizing documents and with organizations and individuals that share common values and objectives.

## **C. Human Rights and Dignity**

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, are endowed with reason and conscience, and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1) The family is the fundamental natural group unit of society promoting human rights and human dignity. (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16)

### **Standards**

1. Task Force Foxfire does not violate any person's fundamental human rights, with which each person is endowed.
2. Task Force Foxfire recognizes that all people are born free and equal in dignity.
3. Task Force Foxfire is sensitive to the moral values, religion, customs, traditions, and culture of the communities they serve.
4. Task Force Foxfire respects the integrity of families and support family-based life.

## **D. Religious Freedom**

"Everyone has the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18)

### **Standards**

1. Task Force Foxfire respects religious freedom.

## **E. Transparency and Accountability**

Task Force Foxfire strives for openness and honesty internally and toward donors and members of the public. Periodic audits are utilized to ensure standards are maintained.

### **Standards**

1. Task Force Foxfire is transparent in all of its dealings with the government, the public, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other interested parties, except for personnel matters and proprietary information.

2. Task Force Foxfire's basic financial information, governance structure, activities, and listing of officers and partnerships shall be open and accessible to public scrutiny and the organization leadership is to make a concerted effort to inform the public about its work and the origin and use of its resources.
3. Task Force Foxfire maintains accountability for its actions and decisions, not only to its funding agencies and the government, but also to the people it serves, its staff and members, partner organizations, and the public at large.

## **F. Truthfulness and Legality**

Task Force Foxfire is honest and truthful in its dealings with its donors, project beneficiaries, staff, membership, partner organizations, government, and the public in general, and respects the laws of any jurisdiction in which it is active.

### **Standards**

1. Task Force Foxfire gives out accurate information, whether regarding itself and its projects, or regarding any individual, organization, project, it opposes or it supports.
2. Task Force Foxfire does not engage in any activities that are unlawful under the laws of the nation in which it is organized or works, and is strongly opposed to, and shall not be a willing partner to, corruption, bribery, and other financial improprieties or illegalities.
3. Task Force Foxfire has a policy for staff and volunteers to confidentially bring evidence to the governing body of misconduct by anyone associated with the organization.
4. Task Force Foxfire shall meet all of the legal obligations in the countries in which it is organized or works. Such obligations may include laws of incorporation, fundraising legislation, equal employment opportunity principles, health and safety standards, privacy rules, trademark and copyright legislation, and so forth.
5. Task Force Foxfire shall take prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered among its staff, governing body, volunteers, contractors, and partners

## **II. NGO Integrity**

Fundamental to the very character of each NGO is that it be not-for-profit, nongovernmental, organized, independent, self-governing, and voluntary. While these general criteria may appear self-evident, particularly for those NGOs whose national law codifies and requires such standards, they remain basic for the integrity and conduct of an NGO.

### **A. Nonprofit.**

#### **Standards**

1. *Not-for-profit.* Task Force Foxfire is organized and operated as a not-for-profit organization. Any surplus that is generated through its operations is to be utilized solely to help the organization fulfill its

mission and objectives. No part of the net earnings of the organization is to inure to the benefit of the directors, officers, members or employees of the organization, or to any other private persons, except that the organization may provide reasonable compensation for services provided to the organization.

2. *Trade or business.* Task Force Foxfire shall not be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business, unrelated to its mission and stated objectives.

3. *Governing instrument.* Task Force Foxfire's governing body shall prevent the organization from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of individuals both during operation and when winding up.

## **B. Non-governmental.**

### **Standards**

1. *Non-governmental.* Task Force Foxfire is not to be part of, or controlled by, a government or an intergovernmental agency.

2. *Politically independent.* Task Force Foxfire shall maintain independence and not be rigidly aligned or affiliated with any political party, although it may share a common political or legislative cause within the limit of its mission, stated objectives and legal structure.

3. *Foreign policy.* Task Force Foxfire shall not act as an instrument of government foreign policy, but act independently of governments. The NGO shall not seek to implement the policy of any government, unless it coincides with the mission of the organization and the organization's own independent policy.

## **C. Organized.**

### **Standards**

1. *Organizing features.* Task Force Foxfire has an organizing document, a board of directors, officers, and regular meetings and activities.

2. *Organizing documents.* The organizing documents clearly define the mission, objectives, governance structure, membership rights and obligations, and rules of procedure.

3. *Legal recognition.* These organizing principles apply whether or not Task Force Foxfire is legally recognized by any government outside of the United States of America.

## **D. Independent and Self-Governing.**

### **Standards**

1. *Independent.* Task Force Foxfire shall be independent. Its policies, vision, and activities shall not be determined by any for-profit corporation, donor, government, government official, political party, or other NGO.

2. *Self-governing.* Task Force Foxfire shall govern itself autonomously, according to the governance structure utilized in its operating agreement. It shall be equipped to control its own activities

## **E. Voluntary.**

### **Standards**

1. *Voluntary values and principles.* Rather than being required to exist by law, Task Force Foxfire is formed by private initiative, resulting from the voluntary actions of individuals who have chosen to pursue a shared interest. The retaining of voluntary values and principles shall remain a primary force in the operational practices of Task Force Foxfire.
2. *Contributions from volunteers.* In order to achieve its mission and objectives, Task Force Foxfire can utilize meaningful contributions from volunteers. These may include both target groups and supporters.
3. *Volunteerism of governing board.* Those who are part of Task Force Foxfire's governing body are to serve in a voluntary capacity, for no pay

## **III. Mission & Activities**

Task Force Foxfire's mission is its *raison d'être* — the reason or purpose why the organization exists and what it hopes to accomplish. Task Force Foxfire has an obligation to clearly identify and articulate their mission. This well-defined mission serves as the foundation and frame of reference for all activities and organizational planning of the organization. Task Force Foxfire has an obligation to utilize its resources in an effective and efficient manner toward accomplishment of its stated purpose.

### **A. Mission**

#### **Standards**

1. *Formal statement.* Task Force Foxfire formally and succinctly states its mission in a written document approved by the board of directors. This statement clearly sets forth why the organization exists and what it hopes to accomplish.
2. *Board of directors.* Each member of the board of directors fully understands and supports the mission of Task Force Foxfire.
3. *Public availability.* The mission statement of the organization is available to all officers, members, staff, partners, donors, program beneficiaries, and the public in general.
4. *Evaluation.* The mission of Task Force Foxfire is reviewed periodically (Annually) to determine if it is still relevant. Among issues it evaluates are:
  - (a) whether the mission has been fulfilled, either by the organization or another entity, and thus whether there is a need for the organization as currently constituted to continue to exist
  - (b) whether the mission should be revised to reflect societal changes
  - (c) whether there is a desire for the organization to address new needs which might require a new mission statement.

## **B. Activities**

### **Standards**

1. *Consistent with mission.* Activities shall be consistent with the organization's mission. Task Force Foxfire's mission is to serve as the foundation for strategic planning and as the blueprint for the organization's activities. The organization's focus shall be directed toward making sure that its goals are met.

2. *Effective and Efficient.* The programs of the organization shall effectively and efficiently work toward achieving its stated mission.

3. *Feedback.* Task Force Foxfires regularly seeks feedback on its activities from project beneficiaries, as well as other stakeholders.

4. *Evaluation.* The activities of Task Force Foxfire shall be critically examined periodically to determine their relevancy to the mission, their efficiency and effectiveness, the value of continuing the programs or revising them, and the need for new programs. Among issues to evaluate are:

(1) whether the activities are consistent with the current mission of the organization or whether they need to be revised or discontinued in light of changes in the mission

(2) the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs in achieving the organization's objectives

(3) the outcomes for the program beneficiaries

(4) the cost of the program relative to its outcomes

(5) whether new services should be offered.

Evaluations shall be open and honest and include input from stakeholders.

5. *Professionalism.* Task Force Foxfire shall carry out its activities with professionalism and centered on the concept of serving others.

6. *Percentage of expenditures.* The organization shall spend at least 80% of its total expenditures on program activities.

## **IV. Governance**

An effective governance structure and a strong, active, and committed governing body is crucial to the soundness of the organization and its ability to achieve its mission and objectives. The plan of governance of Task Force Foxfire reflects the core values, mission, and cultural standards of the organization. The board of directors holds ultimate responsibility for all activities and resources of the organization. This includes establishing the direction of the organization, beginning with its mission statement, and assuring that the mission statement is appropriate and relevant as times change. The board of directors also determines the organization's activities and monitors their compliance with the mission. The executive officer exercises responsibility for obtaining and appropriately employing the human and financial

resources to carry out the organization's mission and sustain the organization, and oversee fiduciary and legal requirements.

## **A. Governance Structure**

### **Standards**

1. *Plan of governance.* Task Force Foxfire has established a governance structure that best allows it to fulfill its mission, and reflects the core values and cultural standards of the organization.
2. *Organizing documents.* The organization's governance structure, including rules relating to the conducting of business by the board of directors and executive staff, is clearly specified in the bylaws, and are available to all interested parties.

## **B. Structure of the Governing Body**

### **Standards**

1. *Director resources.* Task Force Foxfire's board of directors consists of individuals who are dedicated to the mission of the organization, willing to volunteer their time and energies toward achievement of the mission, and able to offer substantial contributions to the organization. Among resources they bring to the governing body are experience and wisdom; prestige; the ability to raise money for the organization; and professional skills, such as legal, accounting, management, fundraising and marketing.
2. *Unrelated directors.* The board of directors shall have at least three unrelated members. Family relationships are accepted between two members at most.
3. *Policies on paid staff.* Task Force Foxfire has a policy restricting the ability for members of the board of directors from being paid staff, except by exception, the executive director who is not a voting member.
4. *Term limits.* There are no term limits for the board of directors, upon resignation from the board, the member shall submit a candidate, or candidates, for review and appointment by the remaining members of the board.
5. *Nominating committee.* The procedure for nominating individuals to the board of directors is found within the bylaws.
6. *Diversity.* The board of directors shall consist of individuals who qualify for the position based solely on merit. There shall be no effort made to prohibit or encourage selection of board members according to their race; religion; ethnicity; gender; political views; or sexual preferences.
7. *Bylaws.* Each member of the board of directors is presented with the bylaws of the organization and shall be familiar with the bylaws.
8. *Compensation.* Members of the board of directors are not to receive compensation for their board service. They may receive reimbursement for expenses directly related to their board duties

## **C. Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

### **Standards**

1. *Mission statement.* The board of directors has established the direction of Task Force Foxfire, by creation of the mission statement. It shall be reviewed periodically for accuracy and validity, and revised as necessary.
2. *Programs and compliance.* The governing body shall determine Task Force Foxfire's programs and services, and monitor their compliance with the mission and their effectiveness and efficiency.
3. *Resources.* The governing body shall ensure the organization has the proper resources to fulfill the mission.
4. *Annual budget and fundraising.* The governing board shall approve the annual budget and actively participate in the fundraising process. In approving the annual budget, the governing body is to ascertain the percentage of the resources spent on administration and fundraising, versus program expenses, and meet the 80% target set down in the organization's charter.
5. *Resource management.* The governing board shall manage the resources effectively, and provide oversight regarding fiduciary and legal requirements.
6. *Chief executive officer hiring and evaluation.* The governing board shall hire the chief executive officer, undertaking a careful search process to find the most qualified individual. The governing body also shall set the chief executive officer's compensation, ensure that he or she has the moral and professional support needed to advance the goals of Task Force Foxfire, and periodically evaluate his or her performance.
7. *Strategic planning.* The governing body shall actively participate with the staff in long-term and short-term strategic planning processes, including defining goals and objectives and the success of Task Force Foxfire toward achieving its mission.
8. *Code of ethics and conduct.* The governing board shall approve a code of ethics and/or conduct for Task Force Foxfire, and assure that the organization is in compliance with this code.
9. *Ambassadors for Task Force Foxfire.* Members of the governing board shall serve as ambassadors for the organization, articulating its mission, accomplishments and goals to the public, and garnering support for the organization

## **D. Conduct of the Governing Body**

### **Standards**

1. *Meetings of the governing body.* The governing body, and any subset of the governing body which is authorized to conduct the affairs of the organization between meetings of the governing body, are to meet as frequently as is necessary to fully and adequately conduct the business of the organization.
2. *Minutes.* Minutes of each meeting of the governing body, and reports of each committee when acting in the place of the governing body, are to be produced, distributed to each member of the governing board, and archived for future reference. The minutes also are to be available to an association's membership,



officers, staff, and the general public, with the exception of discussions related to personnel evaluation and other such confidential information.

3. *Responsibility for conduct.* The governing body shall be responsible for its own conduct. The governing body is to establish written expectations for board members (including expectations related to service on committees, attendance at meetings, and participation in fundraising and program activities), and annually evaluate its own performance. If not already established in the organizing document, the governing body is to establish job descriptions for its officers (chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.).

## V. Human Resources

A committed, capable and responsible staff is vital for the success of Task Force Foxfire. The foundation for this is effective human resource policies. Task Force Foxfire seeks qualified staff, offers them proper training and supervision, treats them with fairness and equity, and provides them with avenues for individual growth and development. Task Force Foxfire expects employees and volunteers to maintain the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, use information and resources responsibly, and avoid conflicts of interest.

### A. Responsibilities of the NGO

#### Standards

1. *Capable and responsible staff.* The organization shall seek capable and responsible employees and volunteers, who are committed to the mission of the organization.
2. *Training and working conditions.* The organization shall provide proper training and orientation for new staff, and provide them with suitable working conditions.
3. *Written human resource policies.* Task Force Foxfire is to have written human resource policies for its staff, including basic aspects of employment, and other fundamental policies such as confidentiality of information, computer policies, drug and alcohol policy, conflict of interest, and grievance procedures.
4. *Staff growth and development.* The organization shall provide opportunities for individual growth and staff development, and foster an atmosphere whereby supervisors encourage personal growth of staff.
5. *Fairness and rights.* All staff shall be treated with fairness and equity, and as individuals with rights to be honored and defended. Their rights to freedom of association, conscience and expression must be respected and protected.
6. *Code of ethics and conduct.* Each staff member shall be provided with the organization's code of ethics and/or conduct and any written human resource policies.
7. *Communication of serious concerns.* Key staff shall be enabled to communicate serious concerns to a member of the governing board or officer.
8. *Standards and responsibility.* Staff shall be encouraged and guided in maintaining the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, and in taking personal and professional responsibility for their actions and decisions.

9. *Confidentiality.* Guidance shall be provided to staff with access to official documentation or information regarding maintenance of the integrity, confidentiality, and privacy of such information to protect any individual concerned

## VI. Public Trust

Trust is the lifeblood of Task Force Foxfire — trust by the public, trust by the media, trust by the government, trust by corporations, trust by donors, trust by other NGOs, trust by beneficiaries, and trust by its employees and those who volunteer their time. To develop and maintain trust, the organization shall exhibit genuine public accountability and transparency, and shall be honest in the information that it makes available to the public.

### A. Public Information on the NGO

#### Standards

1. *Accuracy and timeliness.* Information provided about the organization to donors, members, clients, staff, and the general public shall be accurate and timely.
2. *Annual report.* Annually, the organization shall prepare and make available to the public information on its programs and services, and provide public access to appropriate records of those programs and services.
3. *Financial information.* Task Force Foxfire, annually, shall prepare and make available to the public basic financial information on the organization, including the source of its funding; the use of those funds; the percentage of the funds used for service and programs, administration activities, and fundraising; and any compensation provided to the governing body. The organization shall also provide public access to appropriate financial records.
4. *Listing of governing body and officers.* The organization shall make available the names of its governing body and management staff, publicize any changes in its governing board, and provide access to appropriate minutes of meetings of its governing board.
5. *Partnerships.* The organization shall make available, in a timely and accurate manner, information on any partnerships or other joint ventures into which it has entered.
6. *Confidentiality.* The organization shall maintain the confidentiality of personal information on staff, clients and others, unless the individuals waive this right, or disclosure is required by law.
7. *Comparison.* The organization shall describe itself in terms of its own merits, not in depreciation of other NGOs. Communications regarding another NGO shall not be made with the purpose of creating a self-benefit at the expense of the other.
8. *Communications channel.* The organization shall provide a communication channel for the public should they wish to make inquiries regarding the NGO and its activities.
9. *Disclosure.* The organization shall assign a compliance officer to assure that the organization is complying with national and local laws regarding disclosure of information to the public.

## **B. Public Advocacy**

### **Standards**

1. *Accuracy and in context.* Information that the organization chooses to disseminate to the media, policy makers or the public must be accurate and presented with proper context. This includes information presented by the NGO with respect to any legislation, policy, individual, organization, or projects it opposes, supports, or is discussing. Forward-looking projections are to be presented clearly as such, and not as fact.
2. *Verbal and written statements.* The organization shall have clear guidelines and approval processes for the issuing of verbal and written statements.
3. *Disclosure of bias.* The organization shall present information in a fair and unbiased manner. Where a possible bias is unavoidable or inherent, it is to be disclosed.
4. *Authority for statements.* Task Force Foxfire's statements must reflect its actual authority.

## **VII. Financial and Legal**

Task Force Foxfire shall have proper financial and legal procedures and safeguards in place, not only to stay within the law, but also as a measure of the organization's health and to assure donors, members, and the general public that investments in the organization are safe and being correctly used. The organization shall employ sound internal financial procedures, maintain financial records carefully, and make financial statements available to the public. The organization shall also have their financial records reviewed periodically by a qualified examiner who will certify that the organization is operating legally and according to generally accepted accounting practices. The organization shall be diligent that it is complying with applicable federal, state and local laws.

### **A. Financial Transparency and Accountability**

#### **Standards**

1. *Fiscal responsibility.* Members of the governing board hold ultimate fiscal responsibility for the organization and are to understand the organization's financial statements and reporting requirements.
2. *Annual budget.* The organization's annual budget is to be approved by the governing board, and is to outline projected expenses for program activities, fundraising, and administration. The organization is to operate in accordance with that budget.
3. *Internal financial statements.* Internal financial statements shall be prepared regularly and provided to the governing board. Any and all significant variations between budgeted expenses and actual expenditures, and between budgeted revenues and actual revenues, are to be identified and explained to the directors.

4. *Financial policies.* The organization shall have established financial policies, suitable for the size of the organization, regarding the receiving and disbursement of financial resources, investment of assets, purchasing practices, internal control procedures, and so forth.

5. *Internal control procedures.* The organization's internal control procedures shall have a safeguard against a person having the power to issue a check to himself or herself. The organization's internal control procedures shall have a safeguard against one person being able to issue a check over a certain amount, and shall have restrictions on checks made out to cash.

6. *Audit.* If the organization has substantial annual revenue, above \$1m, the accuracy of the financial reports shall be subject to audit by an independent, qualified accountant.

7. *Professional standards.* The organization shall adhere to professional standards of accountancy and audit procedures as stipulated by the laws of the United States and the State of Texas, and fulfill all financial and reporting requirements.

## **B. Legal Compliance**

### **Standards**

1. *Laws and regulations.* The organization's activities, governance, and other matters shall conform to the laws and regulations of the United States of America, the State of Texas, and any laws of nations in which operations are conducted.

2. *Attorney review.* The organization shall obtain attorney review of the organizing documents of the NGO to make sure that they are in compliance with existing laws and regulations, and shall make recourse to attorney services as appropriate to ensure continued legal compliance.

3. *Liability insurance.* The organization shall have liability insurance if funding allows.

4. *Internal review.* The organization periodically shall conduct an internal review regarding compliance of the organization with current laws and regulations. Summaries of this review shall be presented to members of the governing body.

## **VIII. Fundraising**

Task Force Foxfire raises funds from outside the organization, via seeking voluntary financial support from foundations, corporations, individual donors, and government agencies. However, such financial support is not simply the movement of money from these sources to the organization. It is a two-way street, involving value for and obligations to the donor. As a recipient of such funds, Task Force Foxfire shall be open and transparent, be accountable to the donor, use the funds responsibly and according to the intent of the donor, and allow the funding individuals and organizations to be able to have insight into the project at all times. Fundraising activity shall also be consistent with the mission of the organization.

### **A. General Fundraising Principles**

#### **Standards**

1. *Governing board.* The governing board shall be active in the fundraising effort, including being active in solicitations and in making individual contributions.
2. *Consistency with mission.* The organization shall only accept funding that is consistent with its mission, does not compromise its core principles, and does not restrict its ability to address relevant issues freely, thoroughly, and objectively.
3. *Truthful.* The organization shall be truthful in all matters relating to the raising of funds and their use.
4. *Mission priority.* Programs shall be designed to meet the mission of the organization and never designed simply to meet the needs of a funding source.
5. *Unethical actions.* The organization shall not tolerate any unethical activities such as double funding for one project, diversion of dedicated funds to uses other than the project for which funds were approved, or overstatement of achievements

## **B. Solicitations**

### **Standards**

1. *Solicitation materials.* The organization shall be careful to ensure that all solicitation and promotional materials are accurate, and that they clearly and truthfully present Task Force Foxfire, its mission, and its programs. All solicitations are to correctly reflect the organization's planned use of the solicited funds, and fundraising solicitations shall only make claims that the organization can fulfill. There shall not be any exaggerations of fact or material omissions, nor any communication or images that would create a false or misleading impression.
2. *Tax benefits.* The organization shall ensure that donors receive informed, accurate, and ethical information regarding the tax implications of potential gifts.
3. *Fundraising principles.* Fundraising shall be for the purpose of the organization's mission, and free of coercion, improper motive, inappropriate conduct, unreasonable reward, or personal inurement.
4. *Excess funds.* When funding for a particular purpose is invited from the public, there shall be a plan for handling any excess funds, and, where appropriate, the appeal should include information on how any excess funds will be used.
5. *Compensation to fundraisers.* The organization shall not provide compensation to fundraisers that is based on a percentage of charitable contributions raised or expected to be raised, nor will it provide a finder's fee. The organization may provide compensation based on skill, effort and time expended, and performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, provided such bonuses are in accordance with prevailing practices of the organization and not based on a percentage of charitable contributions raised.
6. *Sales promotions.* Fundraising promotions involving the sale of products or services shall indicate the duration of the campaign, and the actual or anticipated portion of the purchase price that will benefit the organization or program.
7. *Percentage of fundraising costs.* The costs involved in fundraising shall be reasonable relative to the revenue generated. Over the course of a number of years, the NGO's average expenditure on fundraising activities shall be 10% or less than the total funds raised.
8. *Information on solicitors.* Task Force Foxfire shall have policies in place to protect the donor's right to be informed whether the solicitors are paid staff, volunteers, or agents of the NGO

## **C. Use of Funds**

### **Standards**

1. *Use of contributions.* The organization shall ensure that contributions are used as promised or implied in fundraising appeals or for the purposes intended by the donors.
2. *Grant commitment.* When the organization accepts a grant, it is entering into a contract to carry out the program activities in an agreed-upon manner, and has an ethical and legal responsibility to honor that commitment.
3. *Donor consent for changes.* The organization may alter the conditions of a gift or grant only by obtaining explicit consent by the donor.
4. *Efficient and effective use.* The organization shall ensure efficient and effective use of grants and charitable contributions.

## **E. Relationship with Donor**

### **Standards**

1. *Donor relationship.* The directors, management, staff and volunteers of the organization shall not exploit any relationship with a donor or prospective donor for personal benefit or the benefit of any relative, friends, associates, colleagues, and so forth.
2. *Confidentiality.* Privileged or confidential information regarding the donor or donation must not be disclosed to unauthorized parties.
3. *Donor privacy.* A donor's privacy shall be respected and the organization shall safeguard any confidential information regarding the donor or the gift. Donors are to have the opportunity to remain anonymous, and to not have their names added to any lists that are sold, rented or given to others, unless the donor has had an opportunity to approve such lists or have their names removed.
4. *Privacy policy.* The organization shall have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public what information is being collected on individuals and donors and how that information will be used, how to contact the organization to review personal information collected and to request corrections, how to inform the organization that the individual does not wish his or her personal information to be shared outside Task Force Foxfire, and what security measures are in place to protect personal information.
5. *Unethical solicitations.* The organization or its agents must not use excessive pressure, coercion, undue influence or other unethical means in their solicitations.

## **IX. Partnerships, Collaboration and Networking**

When appropriate, Task Force Foxfire may find that cooperation with other civil society organizations, government and intergovernmental agencies, and for-profit corporations may be beneficial in advancing

their mission-related objectives. Such collaboration for common good may reduce duplication of services and eliminate using resources for competitive purposes rather than serving constituencies. Collaboration may allow pairing diverse strengths and resources and promote effectiveness in tackling priorities. However, the organization shall enter into such a relationship only if it is consistent with its mission.

## **A. General Principles of Partnerships and Collaboration**

### **Standards**

1. *Mission consistency.* The organization shall collaborate with other entities only if the relationship is consistent with the mission of Task Force Foxfire.
2. *Shared values.* The organization shall collaborate on the basis of shared values, common ground, and for the good of society.
3. *Mutual benefit.* The organization shall collaborate on the basis of equitable and genuine mutual benefit to each organization.
4. *Transparency.* Collaboration shall allow financial transparency and a two-way flow of information, ideas, and experiences.
5. *Adaptive to change.* Collaborations are to be adaptive to change. Changes in the relationship are to be developed through cooperation, and not forced by one or the other organization.

## **B. Relations with other NGOs and Civil Society Organizations**

### **Standards**

1. *Common objectives.* When appropriate, NGOs with overlapping missions, values, and target groups should partner with each other and civil society organizations, when it would be beneficial for the common target groups and for the achievement of common objectives.
2. *Competition and service duplication.* NGOs with overlapping missions, values, and target groups should refrain from competing with each other and with other civil society organizations, and should refrain from unnecessary duplication of services and disruption of each other's projects.
3. *Information sharing.* NGOs with overlapping missions, values and target groups should share relevant project information with other NGOs and civil society organizations, and mutually support each other.
4. *Support for other NGOs.* The NGO shall express solidarity with campaigns and actions of other NGOs, and promote the effectiveness and success of other NGOs, when it does not compromise the integrity or values of the NGO.
5. *Networking.* The organization shall network with other ethical NGOs as a means for promoting the growth, effectiveness and efficiency of the NGO sector and the ability to advance the public good.

## **C. Relations with Government Agencies and Intergovernmental Bodies**

## **Standards**

1. *NGO objectives and independence.* The organization shall enter into a partnership agreement with a government or intergovernmental body only when it is beneficial to achievement of Task Force Foxfire's objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization.
2. *Appropriate and mutually beneficial.* The organization shall seek to dialogue and cooperate with government and intergovernmental agencies when such cooperation would be both appropriate and mutually beneficial and could increase organization's effectiveness in dealing with issues and priorities in its agenda.
3. *Mission-led.* The organization shall not enter into a partnership with a governmental or intergovernmental body solely to promote the sustainability or competitive advantage of the organization independent of achieving its mission objectives.
4. *Political favor.* The organization shall not change its policies or non-partisan nature in order to curry political favor.

## **D. Relations with For-Profit Corporations**

### **Standards**

1. *NGO objectives and independence.* The organization shall enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation only when it is beneficial to achievement of Task Force Foxfire's objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization.
2. *Mission-led.* The organization shall not enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation if motivated by financial reasons versus achieving its mission objectives.
3. *Market advantage.* The organization shall not enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation if the main motivation of the corporation is to gain a market advantage over competitors.