

**MUSEUM EDUCATORS
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

Board of Directors Manual

2001 - 2003

HISTORY

The Museum Educators of Southern California (MESC) was founded in 1977 as a professional organization dedicated to the theory and practice of education in museums and related cultural and scientific organizations. Its members strive to enhance the visitor=s ability to understand and appreciate exhibitions, their objects, collections, and resources at museums and other cultural institutions, and to transfer the joy of discovery and learning to other areas of the visitor=s life.

Over the course of its existence, MESC has grown to be one of the largest and oldest museum education professional organizations in the country. MESC has undertaken many programs and served Southern California museum educators in a variety of ways including professional development, theoretical discourse, practical training and networking.

MISSION AND GOALS

The Museum Educators of Southern California (MESC) is a nonprofit organization for museum professionals whose work is focused on museum audiences. We strive to assure that museums place education at the center of all of their activities. We are dedicated to audience advocacy and enhancing visitors= learning opportunities and experiences. We work to bring greater diversity to the museum education field, strengthen the role of museum educators within institutions and provide professional training and development using current research.

MESC promotes excellence in museum education practice by 1) creating a professional network for its members; 2) striving to reflect the diversity of society in our museum audiences and within our profession; 3) providing training and development at all levels of experience; 4) provoking ongoing dialogue of intellectual interest to the members; 5) encouraging research and dissemination on the theory and practice of museum education; 6) increasing awareness among members of the variety of museum resources; and 7) serving as an advocate for museum educators.

SERVICES OFFERED

To reach these goals, consistently high quality and relevant offerings are presented. These include programs, seminars, publications, professional development opportunities, information, resources, research projects and networking.

AUDIENCE SERVED

The MESC audience is defined as museum educators, teachers, docents, museum directors, school administrators, and other individuals interested in the theory and practice of education in museums. The membership is comprised of a variety of museums and disciplines (art, crafts, history, historic sites, natural history, science,

zoos, children=s, arboretum, and aquaria).

MESC has substantially increased its membership over the years and is one of the oldest, largest, most diverse, and multi-disciplinary organization of its kind in the country. In 1989, membership consisted of 60 institutional and 128 individual members. By 1997, membership rose to 153 institutional and 368 individual memberships.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The board of directors is responsible for participating in the overall decision-making processes of MESC as required by the financial, business and programmatic concerns of the organization. Board members do the following:

- < Maintain MESC within all legal and governmental guidelines.
- < Recommend policies which effect the purpose, governing principles, functions and activities of MESC.
- < Participate in recruitment and development of committee members as openings appear.
- < Develop program ideas at the annual board retreat.
- < Annually review membership survey to determine needs and interests of the membership.
- < Provide four continuing-education programs each year, plus the Annual Summer Institute.
- < Set specific policy for honoraria, travel expenses etc.
- < Establish performance goals and standards for administrative staff.
- < Hire and monitor performance of administrative staff.
- < Clarify expectations with each other and with staff.
- < Develop funding adequate to support MESC's program and fiscal needs.
- < Keep good records and pay all taxes.
- < Authorize and monitor the annual budget.
- < Avoid any violations of fiduciary duty.
- < Evaluate the activities of MESC including committees, programs and operation.

INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- < Participate in board orientation and training activities and adhere to board duties and responsibilities as outlined in the board manual, bylaws and long range plan. Term limits for board members is set at eight years.
- < Attend regularly scheduled board meetings.
- < Attend annual retreat.
- < Participate by chairing, or assisting with, at least one program per year.
- < If possible, offer your institution rent-free for board meetings and programs.
- < Attend MESC general meetings.
- < Participate in networking opportunities with the membership to learn about problems, suggestions and interests.
- < Represent and introduce yourself as a MESC board member at local and national meetings.
- < Be willing and able to make a two year commitment.
- < Not become involved in matters of personal financial benefit through MESC.
- < Stay informed and show interest in MESC=s services, goals and mission.
- < Write thank you notes.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:

President

The president is responsible for the overall direction and control of financial, business and programmatic activities of MESC.

- < Preside over financial, business and programmatic matters of MESC in general membership meetings, monthly board of directors meetings and the annual board retreat.
- < Make diversity an agenda item for brainstorming sessions at the annual board retreat where program themes for the upcoming year are discussed.
- < Direct and oversee the activities of the board of directors, including all activities of officers and committee chairs, and add members to the board, in accordance with procedures stated in the by-laws, in the event of a board vacancy or need.
- < Designate a consistent day of every month for board meetings at the beginning of term of office.
- < Oversee the organization=s compliance with its long range plan.
- < Perform all duties pertaining to the treasurer, in the absence of, or other disability of the treasurer.
- < Design and implement board orientation for all new members at the annual summer retreat.
- < Represent MESC as necessary in professional association meetings and community functions, and assume a strong public position of advocacy for museum education.
- < Every three years, lead the organization=s long range plan process by assembling a board committee, hiring a consultant, etc.
- < Perform other duties or have other powers as may be prescribed from time to time by the board of directors or by the bylaws.

Vice President

The vice president is responsible for assisting the president in the financial, business and programmatic activities of MESC in general membership meetings and board of directors meetings. The vice president is also responsible for assisting the president in the organization's compliance with the long range plan.

- < In the absence of the president, preside over board meetings and general membership meetings.
- < Assume responsibilities of the president in the event of her/his leaving the position for any reason.
- < Supervise the membership secretary (paid position).
- < Ensure that members receive request for participation on committees and that committee chairs receive names of those who express interest.
- < Follow-up with committee chairs that they have contacted potential committee members.
- < Provide training for committee chairs on committee management if needed.
- < Follow-up with immediate past committee chair to see if new committee chair has been oriented.
- < Require each committee chair to make annual written (one page) and verbal end-of-year progress reports. Assemble reports and give to secretary for inclusion in annual report presented at following annual retreat.
- < Train board members in the use of the long range plan to ensure accountability.
- < Along with the immediate past president, annually update the board manual.
- < Along with president, ensure accountability and equitable distribution of workload among board members.
- < Perform other duties, or have other powers, as may be prescribed from time to time by the board of directors or by the bylaws.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for maintaining the organizational records, including a book of minutes of all meetings, proceedings and actions of the board and committees of the board, and of members= meetings.

- < Attend, record and disseminate minutes of all meetings, proceedings, and actions of the board in a timely manner. The minutes of meetings shall include the time and place that the meeting was held, whether the meeting was annual, regular, or special, and, if special, how authorized, the notice given, the names of those present at the meeting.
- < Compile annual reports including a financial summary, year-end summaries written by committee chairs (and complied by the vice president), *EdLine* editions, program flyers, Family and Teacher Calendars, board meeting minutes, evaluation reports, publications, membership survey results, list of board members, and all other pertinent information.
- < Present annual report at summer retreat.
- < Update and maintain organizational records.
- < Keep the articles of incorporation and bylaws current with the board=s decisions.
- < Perform other duties or have other powers as may be prescribed from time to time by the board of directors or by the bylaws.

Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for keeping and maintaining adequate and correct books and records of accounts of the properties and business transactions of MESC.

- < Present treasury reports at all board meetings.
- < Maintain MESC bank accounts: write checks, make deposits and balance monthly statements.
- < Determine amounts needed for maintaining bank and treasury functions, *EdLine*, fees (computer services, etc.), secretarial wages, long range plan, and special projects. Assign codes for programs to better track costs.
- < Prepare summary of past year and projected annual budget for board consideration and approval at yearly board retreat.

- < Analyze past and projected budgets to determine average annual costs.
- < Determine percentage of annual balance over and above income needed to maintain financial stability (financial cushion).
- < Project the amount of unencumbered money MESC has and inform the board of directors.
- < If it is determined that MESC has secure Along-term≡ discretionary income, and investing or establishing an endowment fund does not affect our 501c (3) status, establish a finance committee from the membership to inquire into investment options, including an endowment fund.
- < File tax returns in years during which MESC is required to do so (every 10 years) due to CT2 status.
- < File financial reports as needed.
- < Fill out forms and pay fees to maintain MESC=s non-profit status.
- < Aid and assist the president and the secretary.
- < Perform other duties or have other powers as may be prescribed from time to time by the board of directors or by the bylaws

Immediate Past President

The immediate past president participates in the decision-making processes of the MESC Board of Directors, as required by financial, business and programmatic concerns of the organization.

- < Along with the secretary, compiles annual report that includes a financial summary, year-end summaries written by committee chairs, ***EdLine*** editions, program flyers, Family and Teacher Calendars, board meeting minutes, evaluation reports, publications, membership survey results, list of board members, and all other pertinent information.
- < Along with the vice president, update the board manual that includes board responsibilities and accountabilities, the long range plan, and other pertinent information.
- < Heads the nominating committee.

Support Position: *Membership Secretary*

The membership secretary, a paid position, is responsible for the overall organization and maintenance of the MESC membership files and database. The position works closely with the board treasurer and is supervised by the vice president.

- < Promptly send membership information to interested individuals and organizations, upon request.
- < Retrieve MESC voice mail weekly.
- < Maintain and keep current membership roster and files.
- < Generate membership labels at the request of the board.
- < Mail membership renewal notices along with request for participation on committees on a monthly basis, and mail second and final notices to those members unresponsive to prior mailings.
- < Collect membership dues and forward checks to the MESC treasurer.
- < Compile responses from members interested in committee work for the board and send the responses to the vice president.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Chair Job Description:

Committee chairs are members of the board of directors and as such, participate in the decision-making processes of MESC as required by financial, business and programmatic concerns of the organization.

- < Along with elected officers of the organization, plan and implement general membership meetings.
- < Attend board of directors meetings and general membership meetings.
- < Assume leadership of respective committees and pursue and implement committee projects as spelled out by the long range plan.
- < Build committees by contacting potential committee members who show interest in working on committees.

- < Meet regularly with committee.
- < Provide annual written progress report of committee's activities to vice president for inclusion in annual report.
- < Participate in committee management training sessions provided by the vice president as needed.
- < Outgoing committee chairs are responsible for providing orientation training to incoming chairs.
- < Collect and review all receipts for expenses incurred by committee members and submit to treasurer.
- < Forward draft version of flyer to president and program committee co-chairs to review prior to printing and mailing.

Effective Committee Checklist:

- < Define the purpose of the committee.
- < Define limits (time frame, budget, authority).
- < Determine size and compositions based on committee's function.
- < Clarify members' roles and responsibilities.
- < Develop an agenda for committee meetings.
- < Set regular meeting times and locations.
- < Begin and end meetings on time.
- < Distribute agenda in advance of meeting.
- < Monitor committee progress.
- < Make effective use of the committee's product.
- < Credit the work of the committee.
- < Prepare and present reports and recommendations to the board of directors

for action.

- < Prepare annual progress reports and submit them to the vice president.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

Annual Summer Institute Committee

The Annual Summer Institute Committee, under the direction of the co-chair, is responsible for planning a museum teaching seminar, and on alternate years a management seminar. The aim of the annual summer institutes is to share models of best practices in museum teaching and museum management.

- < Organize committee to assist chair in planning and implementation.
- < Use current membership survey to select focus of the seminar and present to board of directors for approval.
- < Select sites, arrange logistics, develop programs and select speakers.
- < Prepare budget for seminar and present proposed budget to board for approval.
- < Confirm and hire speakers.
- < Advertise the seminar at least six weeks in advance by sending flyers to members and other interested people.
- < Present the seminar.
- < Review and submit to treasurer all receipts and expenses associated with the program, including those incurred by committee members.
- < Send thank you letters to seminar teachers and leaders.
- < Evaluate and present to board.

Membership/Development Committee

The Membership/Development Committee, under the direction of the two co-chairs, is responsible for formulating marketing strategies to broaden the membership. The committee's goals are to achieve the following: develop the membership to represent all museums in the Southern California area, become more reflective of the region's diversity (age, race and gender), and to vigilantly

encourage diversity in program development.

- < On alternate years, seek new members by sending letters and offering membership incentives in a membership drive.
- < Update and print new membership brochures as needed.
- < Compile a MESC membership directory by name, region and institution type.
- < Annually review and refine the membership enrollment and renewal processes.
- < Serve the whole geographical region by holding at least one general membership meeting per year outside of Los Angeles.
- < Review programs to assure that they accurately reflect the members' interests and concerns.
- < Monitor membership and program costs to keep them low.
- < Market memberships to relevant organizations that reflect diversity, including offering two free MESC institutional memberships each year.
- < Devise a method to annually provide three scholarships to each program and three scholarships to the Annual Summer Institute. Present plan to board of directors for discussion, approval and implementation.
- < Seek out the assistance of a volunteer intern to help with summer institutes.
- < Seek funding to finance new projects. Explore projects to be jointly sponsored by MESC and member institutions, write and submit grants, and oversee the grant requirements of funded projects.

Newsletter Committee

The Newsletter Committee, under the direction of the chair, is responsible for the publication of *EdLine*, the quarterly MESC newsletter. The committee, under the chair's direction, will establish themes for each issue and a publishing/ mailing schedule, including deadlines. The committee will also solicit articles from members, establish regular columns, and select guest editors on occasion.

- < Plan thematic publication schedule for *EdLine* and present for discussion to the board of directors.

- < Solicit articles on new theory and practice for *EdLine*.
- < Include dates of upcoming programs and institutional members programs in *EdLine*.
- < Solicit and serve as a clearinghouse for information regarding employment opportunities and internship programs.
- < Oversee editing, design and layout of newsletter.
- < Publish and distribute *EdLine* quarterly.
- < Evaluate newsletter and make recommendations.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is headed by the immediate past president and shall be composed of five people, who are appointed by the board. Two of the people must be outgoing officers including the outgoing president. The other three people should be MESC individual members or MESC institutional representatives in good standing, who have actively participated in at least one committee for at least one year.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for researching a new slate of officers and committee chairs by talking to present committee chairs and by soliciting the membership in the form of a mailing for interest. The committee is also responsible for researching other similar organization=s balloting procedures. The nominating committee should be fully appointed by the first of the year, and the slate should be identified by April 1. Ballots should be mailed out in May and the new board should be in place by July 1.

In order for there to be continuity in the programs and the long range plan, only one third to one half of the positions will come up for re-election every two years. Term limits for board members is set at eight years.

Persons being considered for officers and committee chairs on the board should be active members of MESC (individual or institutional representatives in good standing) and should have served on a committee - actively participating (70% attendance) at meetings for at least one year. Diversity is one of the criteria used by the Nominating Committee in evaluation of proposed board members.

Program Committee

The program committee, under the direction of the chair, assists with the development and implementation of all general meetings, collaborative programs, and the Annual Summer Institute.

- < Assist individual program chairs by coordinating arrangements with the hosting venues (including audio-visual needs, refreshments, room reservations, parking directions, and accommodations).
- < Review program announcements before they are mailed.
- < Manage reservations and registration at event and provide refreshments when necessary.
- < Work with the Public Relations Committee to advertise programs.
- < Develop, distribute and tabulate program evaluation for general meetings, and present results at next board meeting.
- < Conduct a membership survey to determine future programs every odd numbered year with board making necessary updates to survey.
- < Hire evaluator to tabulate and present survey results to board.

Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee, under the direction of the chair, is responsible for raising the awareness of the value of MESC locally and nationally.

- < Publicize events, create press releases, and distribute them to local newspapers and to the newsletters of appropriate organizations (WMA, NAEA, etc.)
- < Write letters to directors showing the value of MESC work as a professional development opportunity and as an asset to the institution=s quality of museum education.
- < Add museum CEOs and executive directors to the MESC mailing list for announcement of programs.
- < Publicize and distribute MESC publications.

- < Encourage members to note MESC affiliation when publishing and presenting at conferences.
- < Apply for and represent (or find a MESC representative) for the American Association of Museum=s Marketplace of Ideas, and other conferences as possible.

Special Projects Committee

In order to better serve the museum-going public, the Special Projects Committee, under the direction of the chair, develops special projects, as approved by the board of directors. The committee will assist with production, distribution and evaluation, as applicable.

Technology Committee

The Technology Committee, under the direction of the chair, is responsible for expanding online services and collaborations to serve existing audiences effectively and new audiences in a wider arena.

- < Continue to add or expand the following: *EdLine* and program information, to the MESC Web site.
- < Regularly update Web site (program information, format, etc.)
- < Provide links to the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, MESC institutional members= home pages, and other sites as appropriate.
- < Research the need for and cost of user feedback forms (program registration, membership registration, evaluation, and comment sheets).
- < Regularly calculate hits on Web site.