

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY

St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts (VLAA) provides free, arts-related legal and accounting assistance to artists and arts organizations who are unable to afford professional assistance. VLAA also provides information about arts law and business through its educational programming and collaborates with other agencies in promoting the arts.

To determine eligibility for pro bono assistance, we use established income/budget guidelines and a broad definition of art. Referrals for one-on-one consultation with a lawyer or an accountant are subject to acceptance of the case by a volunteer.

VLAA believes that the arts enrich our lives and that aesthetic and cultural diversity is dependent, in part, on artists who adopt a provocative approach to their disciplines and who work in experimental forms. We acknowledge that standards of taste vary, but firmly believe that our community is always better off supporting freedom of expression.

While it is not the role of VLAA to take sides in any dispute concerning the content of artistic works, we will argue against censorship and for an add-to-the-debate approach designed to promote the marketplace of ideas.

Consistent with these principles, VLAA's referral service will be made available to qualified artists and arts organizations without application of standards based on the content of the work(s) in question. In addition, we will promote freedom of expression in our educational activities and through advocacy.