



STATEMENT OF CULTURAL EQUITY

To support a full creative life for all, Arts for the Aging commits to championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, equitable nation.

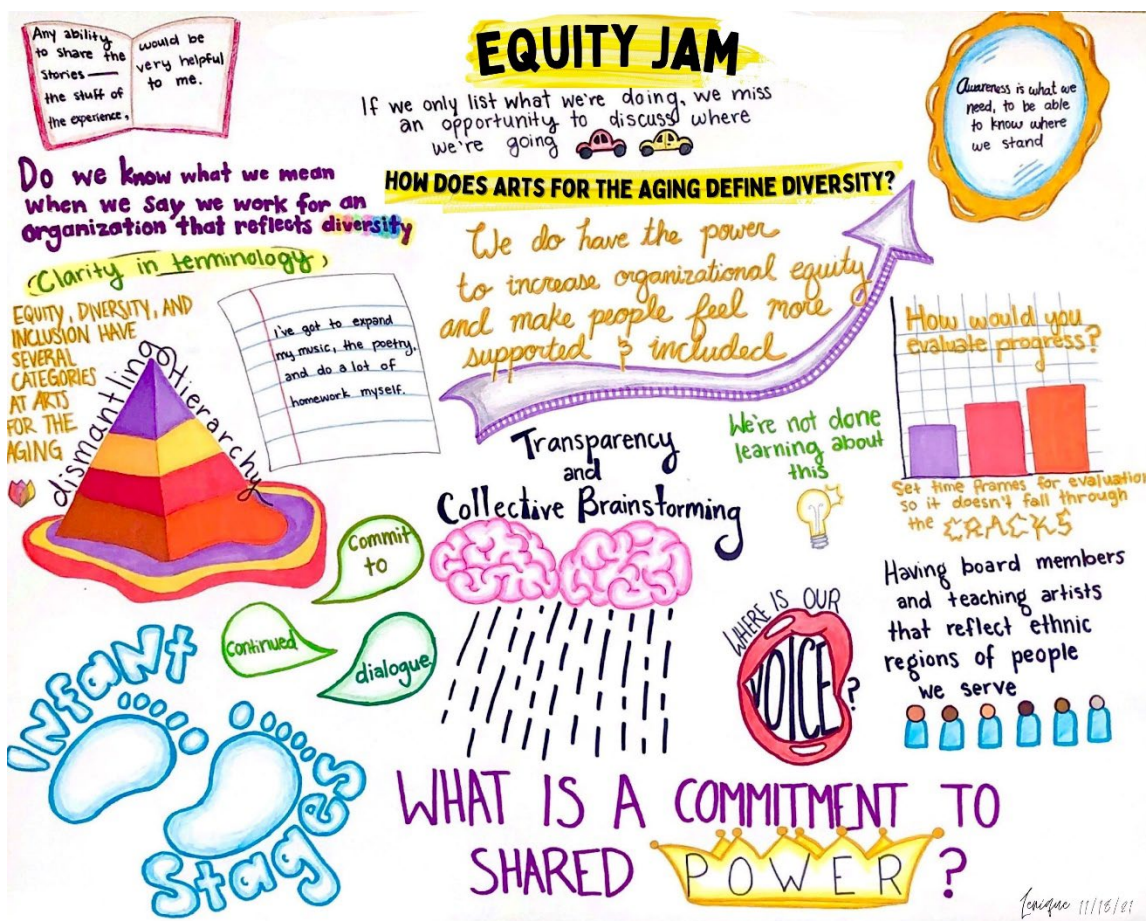


Illustration: Created by communications fellow Lenique Huggins, inspired by an Arts for the Aging equity jam.

DEFINITION OF CULTURAL EQUITY

Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts in healthcare; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving communities and venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & AFFIRMATIONS

- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result, and that must be continuously addressed and changed.
- Cultural equity is critical to the long-term viability of arts and social service sectors.
- We must all hold ourselves accountable, because acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.
- The prominent presence of artists challenges inequities and encourages alternatives.

MODELING THROUGH ACTION

To provide informed, authentic leadership for cultural equity, we strive to...

- **Pursue cultural consciousness throughout our organization** through substantive learning and formal, transparent policies.
- **Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities** within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and report organizational progress.
- **Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership** within our board, staff, teaching artists, volunteers, and advisory bodies.

FUELING FIELD PROGRESS

To pursue needed systemic change related to equity, we strive to...

- **Encourage substantive learning to build cultural consciousness** and to proliferate pro-equity policies and practices by all of our constituencies and audiences.

- **Improve the cultural leadership pipeline** by creating and supporting programs and policies that foster leadership that reflects the full breadth of American society.
- **Consider and incorporate quantitative and qualitative research and evidence related to equity** to make incremental, measurable progress towards cultural equity more visible.
- **Advocate for public and private-sector policy** that promotes cultural equity.

Source of statements above: AmericansfortheArts.org. Organizations are encouraged to discuss, adapt, or adopt these DEIAB statements. Email clord@artsusa.org to tell the story of how you do it.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Every community owes its existence and strength to the generations before them, around the world, who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy into making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to migrate from their homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical in building mutual respect and connections across all barriers of heritage and difference.

Arts for the Aging believes it is important to create dialogue to honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised. So, we acknowledge the truth that is often buried: We are on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway People, who were among the first in the Western Hemisphere. We are on indigenous land that was stolen from the Piscataway People by European colonists. We pay respects to Piscataway elders and ancestors. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today.

Source: UMD center for Multicultural Involvement Community Advocacy (MICA) and approved by Piscataway elders. <https://diversity.umd.edu/resources/land-acknowledgment>. When used by external groups outside of UMD, it is asked that none of the words be changed, aside from the name of the company and/or office as this was the exact language that was approved by Piscataway Tribe elders.

COMMUNITY AGREEMENT

A framework for conversations about diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging (DEIAB)

- Acknowledge that systemic racism and inequity is a problem permeating all corners of our lives. This is the starting point of those conversations.
- We are committed to having brave, collaborative conversations about racial inequality.
- We are committed to fostering change both among Arts for the Aging's equity cohort and within our organization.
- As part of attempting to create a "safe" space, we will strive to stay present in the conversation and share our concerns and discomforts with the group. We will strive to share if we have concerns, even if we don't feel safe yet sharing them.
- We are committed to "moving forward at the speed of trust," meaning that we will move slowly and intentionally to create a safe space, together.
- Speak personally, for yourself as an individual. Use 'I' statements.
- We arrive in this conversation from a different place in the path to understanding.
- Ask the question: commit to turning discomfort or confusion into curiosity, inquiry, and learning. For example, you might acknowledge uncertainty about how to phrase something respectfully by stating that you are "speaking in first draft."
- Challenging with care: Find ways to respectfully challenge others and be open to challenges of your own views. Think about how to question ideas without personal attacks. [From © created by AWARE-LA please credit author for more info visit: www.awarela.org]
- If you've been challenged or given feedback, what can you do to deepen your learning around the issue raised? The labor belongs to you, not the person harmed.
- Commit to repairing harm, whenever possible.
- Allow others to finish before you speak.
- We recognize the challenges and flatness of coming together on Zoom, including the technology's propensity for cutting people off, when several people start speaking at once.
- Respect all confidentiality or anonymity requests.
- Call people and groups by the names and pronouns they prefer (updating your preference in your Zoom name is a support for that).

Community Agreement Source: Race Equity Learning Cohort (RELC) of arts leaders in Montgomery County, MD