



STATEMENT ON

CULTURAL EQUITY

AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS
STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY

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

■ 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, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving 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 the arts sector.
- 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 organization progress.
- **Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership** within our board, staff, 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.
- **Generate and aggregate quantitative and qualitative research related to equity** to make incremental, measurable progress toward cultural equity more visible.
- **Advocate for public and private-sector policy** that promotes cultural equity.



This Statement on Cultural Equity was crafted and unanimously adopted by the Americans for the Arts Board of Directors and staff in April of 2016, and was inspired and informed by the work, commitment, feedback, and insights of more than 150 local, state, and national partners from both inside and outside the arts. It is our hope that this Statement, or some version of it, inspires and informs you as well.

We encourage you to use it, share it, think about it, and adopt or adapt it for your organization and community.

Find out more, including how we and many other inspiring organizations and individuals are taking action toward healthier, more vibrant, more equitable communities, at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CulturalEquity.



At Americans for the Arts, we believe in all the arts for all the people. With more than 50 years of service, we are dedicated to representing and serving local communities, and creating opportunities for every American to have equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.

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