STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Affirming the values embedded by its founders and building on the principles implicit in its name, DiverseWorks herein explicitly sets forth its position with regard to cultural equity and inclusion.

DiverseWorks continues its history of supporting diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion* by:

1. Presenting artist-driven programming that supports social justice and decentralizes the focus of the arts to include under-represented artists and diverse communities and neighborhoods across the city;

2. Supporting leadership and mentoring opportunities for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and Non-Binary (LGBTQ+) artists and emerging arts professionals;

3. Evaluating policies and developing more equitable practices to guide internal operations and governance; and

4. Participating in Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity and Inclusion, which includes anti-racism workshops and a board diversity program with the American Alliance of Museums.

The Cultural Equity and Inclusion Committee -- a cohort made up of volunteers from the board of directors, artist advisory board and staff -- is taking practical steps to create sustainable structural change within the organization, proposing actions, and holding DiverseWorks accountable by communicating progress to the public.

To date, the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Committee recommends the following:

1. Track DiverseWorks demographics for staff, board, artists, and audience and compare its numbers to those of the City of Houston (the most diverse city in the United States), with an eye toward bringing the organization’s diversity into close alignment with the City’s. Assess programming in relation to these demographics. Make this information public through an annual equity audit report distributed via email and posted on DiverseWorks’ website.

2. Increase racial, ethnic and age diversity of the board of directors and committee members by implementing inclusive, intentional recruitment and retention strategies, including:
   a. Improved member onboarding and orientation;
   b. Clarification of cultural equity and inclusion expectations;
c. A board mentoring initiative; and

d. Working with diversity accountability partners.

3. Conduct annual cultural equity, restorative justice and anti-racist training for staff and board; host and attend artist-centered public programs and workshops that address issues surrounding diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion on an ongoing basis.

4. Develop a reporting mechanism for staff and volunteers to bring instances of racial or gender bias, inequity or misconduct before the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Committee.

5. Provide equal access to non-English speakers and differently-abled individuals. Identify and overcome external and internal obstacles to accessibility based on location or organizational structure.

6. Assess existing community partnerships and establish new ones with BIPOC and LGBTQ+ led organizations. Publicly acknowledge the cultural-equity contributions of such organizations within the community. Prioritize business partnerships with BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and women owned businesses, and implement equitable policies for business relationships.

This statement was supported by the DiverseWorks Board of Directors on September 22, 2020. DiverseWorks’ staff and board members fully support the action items listed in this document and hope it may serve as a model for other small non-profit arts organizations as we work together to dismantle structural racism and eliminate racial and gender-oriented bias.

* For definitions of these terms, please visit the American Alliance of Museums, [here](#).

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**2021 CULTURAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

Natalye Appel  
Kathrin Brunner  
Eric Carpio  
Ashley DeHoyos  
Xandra Eden, Co-Chair  
Tara Kelly  
Nichelle Poindexter  
Anthony Suber, Co-Chair  
Tek Wilson, Co-Chair

*The 2021 Cultural Equity and Inclusion Committee will provide updates to this [website](#) on a regular basis.*