

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access: Resources for Arts and Culture Leaders

In today's environment, arts and culture leaders must ensure that inclusion, diversity, equity, access, and success (IDEAS) are a central focus in all aspects of their nonprofit organizations, universities, and government agencies. Program planning, hiring practices, and board governance reflect the communities that arts and culture organizations serve. The sector should therefore discuss, understand, and build consensus around IDEAS practices and goals, establishing clarity across stakeholder groups, including board members, donors, audiences, faculty, staff, vendors, and other community stakeholders.

However, each organizational dynamic is unique and therefore definitions of terms such as diversity, equity, and inclusion widely vary. Navigating complex and sensitive discussions regarding race, culture, socioeconomic, physical ability, gender identity, and other areas can be extremely complicated. Arts Consulting Group (ACG) encourages all arts and culture leaders to familiarize themselves with the many online resources for IDEAS in their respective industry to ensure they are considering best practices—or better yet, are at the forefront of IDEAS within the communities they serve. Included in this edition of *Arts Insights* is a list of suggested reading for IDEAS resources. The organizations referenced here are in varying stages of development with this work. Arts and culture leaders should review the full list to find relevant information outside their own discipline.

Choral

Chorus America – Washington, DC

Chorus America provides resources for advocacy, leadership, and research in the choral field. Its mission is to empower singing ensembles to create vibrant communities and effect meaningful change by offering services that promote artistic achievement, organizational strength, and advocacy. Offering a wealth of essays, editorials, and interviews covering all aspects of the choral industry, their [articles database](#) can be filtered by category, including Diversity/Equity/Inclusion. Additionally, Chorus America's [Resource Center](#) is searchable by the same category and includes studies, research, and other fact-based materials.

GALA Choruses – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses, more commonly known as [GALA Choruses](#), was built around the concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion. It offers a variety of vital resources on its [website](#), such as rehearsal tools, a guide to transgender voices. GALA Choruses also offers information on topics like mobility and ability, race and ethnic identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, privilege, and unconscious bias, plus a printable workbook to guide and explore these conversations.

Dance

Canadian Dance Assembly – Toronto, Ontario

The [Canadian Dance Assembly](#) (CDA) promotes a healthy, sustainable environment in which professional dance practice can grow and thrive. It is deeply committed to pluralism and strives to be an open and accessible organization to all genders, races, bodies, and sexualities. Working with [Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario](#) (CPAMO), the CDA formed a Pluralism Committee to provide support and create an operational framework that will increase access among indigenous people. The CPAMO also publishes [reports](#) and resources for advancing pluralism on its website.

Dance/USA – Washington, DC

[Dance/USA](#) provides advocacy for both individuals and organizations. In 2017 Dance/USA released an official [Statement in Support of a Healthy, Safe, and Equitable Culture](#) to support the cultural movement towards a more equitable future in the dance industry. Its [Resources on Harassment in the Workplace](#) provides employers and employees with information on sexual harassment definitions, compliance, and risk factors. Along with [Dance Theatre of Harlem](#) and the [International Association of Blacks in Dance](#), it created [The Equity Project: Increasing the Presence of Blacks in Ballet](#) with the mission to advance racial equality in professional dance companies.

Museum

American Alliance of Museums – Arlington, Virginia

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) lists diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of museum structure and programming as a key focus area in its most recent strategic plan. In an effort to support this, AAM has created two professional networks, the Diversity Committee (DivCom) and the LGBTQ Alliance, both of which are committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity at every level of museum practice. In addition to the LGBTQ Welcoming Guidelines for Museums, the LGBTQ Alliance has created a three-part tool kit for trans individuals, institutions, and coworkers. For current editorials, AAM's article archive also has a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion category.

Canadian Museums Association – Ottawa, Ontario

The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) is the national organization for the advancement of the Canadian museum sector, representing Canadian museum professionals both within Canada and internationally. In 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued a call to action for the federal government to provide funding to the CMA so it could undertake a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The CMA is working closely with its Reconciliation Council to complete a report, expected in the fall of 2021, with clear recommendations for the inclusion and representation of indigenous communities within museums and cultural centers. The CMA also publishes additional reports and guidelines on cultural heritage and other important issues facing the field.

Opera

OPERA America – New York, New York

OPERA America is dedicated to supporting the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera by providing services, resources, and education to artists, companies, and communities. Creating its own values statement and definition of equity, diversity, and inclusivity, OPERA America provides learning resources to facilitate conversations on the topic. Its ALAANA Opera Network—which represents African American, Latinx, Asian American, Arab American and Native American individuals and communities—provides resources and opportunities to support a more racially equitable field. It increases the visibility of people of color in the opera field, creates a space for networking and relationship-building, and fosters dialogue, learning, and support for people of color. In addition, its Women's Opera Network increases awareness of and discussion about gender parity in the field, creates action plans to promote the advancement of talented women, and provides support for emerging female professionals.

Orchestra

League of American Orchestras – New York, New York

As a service organization dedicated to the orchestral experience, the League of American Orchestras adopted a strategic framework in 2019 for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the field. This document provides a definition of terms and the League's vision, values, goals, and strategies related to equity, diversity, and inclusion to inform or inspire reflections, conversations, and statements by member orchestras. Orchestra leaders can also explore two pioneering diversity studies: *Racial/Ethnic and Gender Diversity in the Orchestra Field* and *Forty Years of Fellowships: A Study of Orchestras' Efforts to Include African American and Latino Musicians*.

Orchestras Canada – Peterborough, Ontario

The national association for Canadian orchestras, Orchestras Canada helps orchestras through research, knowledge-sharing, convening, and advocacy. Its resources in Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility cover a range of topics from indigenous music to building diverse audiences. Orchestras Canada also provides human resources tools for workplace harassment in the arts. Respectful Workplaces in the Arts, a national campaign to build a sector-wide culture of fairness, dignity, and respect, has created training videos to shape equitable, safe, and inclusive work environments.

Theater

Professional Association of Canadian Theatres – Toronto, Ontario

As an advocate for the value of live performance, the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) is a member-driven organization of professional Canadian theaters. Launched in 2016, the All In resource library is an equity, diversity, and inclusion initiative for Canada's theater sector, providing a capacity building program that promotes a social justice framework that gives equal importance to the barriers and inequities experienced by all equity-seeking communities. PACT is also a founding partner of Equity in Theatre, a multi-stakeholder initiative aiming to remedy existing gender and related inequities in the theater industry.

Theatre Communications Group – New York, New York

Theatre Communications Group (TCG) strengthens, nurtures, and promotes professional theater through research, communications, and events. With diversity listed among its core values, TCG is committed to supporting the plurality of aesthetic, perspective, race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, mission, organizational size, and structure. Its strategic plan includes an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Initiative (EDII) to transform the national theater industry into a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse community. In partnership with artEquity, the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Institute is a key part of the EDII, providing skills-building webinars, regional organizing, and one-on-one consultations. TCG's publication, American Theatre, also has an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion feature that is updated monthly with stories of those who are underrepresented in American theater.

Additional Resources

Americans for the Arts – Washington, DC

Providing creative resources and information on issues affecting the arts today, Americans for the Arts (AFTA) champions policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable nation. Review AFTA's resources and research such as Strategies to Encourage Equitable Investment by Local Arts Agencies, Equitable Investment Policies and Practices in the Local Arts Field, and 2017 Demographics of the Local Arts Field. AFTA provides definitions as well as various tools and templates that were useful in developing its work around cultural equity.

Cultural Human Resources Council – Ottawa, Ontario

The Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) brings together Canadian employers and employees in cultural industries to address training, career development, and other human resource issues. In 2018, with funding through the Canadian Arts Coalition, CHRC developed the Respectful Workplaces in the Arts project, a national campaign to build a sector-wide culture of healthy work environments, free from all forms of harassment.

National Art Education Association – Reston, Virginia

As the leading professional membership organization exclusively for visual arts educators, the National Art Education Association (NAEA) has taken action to diversify the visual arts education field. At the 2019 NAEA National Convention, its National Task Force on Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion presented 16 recommendations for further action in the area of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Its research site also provides news, publications, blog posts, and more on topics such as equity, special needs, multicultural/multiethnic concerns, and at-risk youth.

U.S. Department of Arts and Culture – New York, New York

The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC) is a people-powered, grassroots action network that encourages creativity to shape a culture of empathy, equity, and belonging. A non-government agency, USDAC is a learning laboratory for cultural democracy seeking to activate engagement in the service of social and environmental justice. They provide a multitude of toolkits, notably Honor Native Land, a guide and call to acknowledgment of the traditional Native inhabitants to open public events and gatherings.

VSA – Washington, DC

Founded in 1974, Very Special Arts merged with the Kennedy Center's Office on Accessibility in 2011 to become the Department of VSA and Accessibility at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (VSA). As the leading international organization on arts and disability, VSA offers resources for the general public, educators, parents, artists, and arts administrators. VSA also has an extensive archive of webinars that address topics related to art, disability, and education.

Editor's Note: ACG acknowledges that this article is not comprehensive in nature and that there are many other valuable resources both inside and outside the arts and culture sector. If your organization has resources for advancing inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, please let us know. ACG strives to bring the value of IDEAS to our work and to support those in the arts and culture sector who embrace these important initiatives.

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