

Arts for LA recognizes that our society is challenged to overcome a complex web of inequities – racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, and ableism among them. All of these forms of discrimination are powerful drivers of unequal individual and group outcomes.

Recognizing that achieving cultural equity is one of today's most pressing issues, and that advancing equity through a cultural lens will have a significant positive impact on challenging discrimination-based injustices, Arts for LA affirms working for cultural equity in the LA County Arts Sector as one of our organizational priorities.

Arts for LA affirms that

- All peoples, their cultures, and their art contribute to the meaning and understanding of our humanity and should be honored and celebrated.
- Artists, their art, their process, and the organizations they create and support can play a unique role in witnessing, demonstrating, and providing inspiration to resolve societal inequity and injustice.
- Systemic racism and biases in public policies and institutional practices, both conscious and unconscious, have resulted in unequal access to education and resources.
- These social inequities continue to be reflected in the programming of some arts nonprofits and the funding practices of some private philanthropy and governmental funders of the arts. Therefore, the arts sector should work toward rectifying these practices.

Arts for LA believes that

- Recommended solutions of the past, which have focused on diversity rather than structural inequities, have not resulted in nationwide successful outcomes in equitable inclusion and/or programming for and with local artists and audiences.
- A historic societal and philanthropic bias for European art forms has undervalued the contributions of art forms and artists from communities of color. Arts programmers and funders are encouraged to implement relevant programs and create new structures in which communities of color and other underrepresented communities, artists, and arts organizations, benefit as leaders, grantees, and partners.

Therefore, the Board of Directors of Arts for LA has made cultural equity a priority of the organization. We are committed to addressing structural inequities and increasing programming and support in the arts for all. To this end, Arts for LA will

- Conduct an annual cultural equity audit of the internal policies and external communications of Arts for LA to provide internal guidance.
- Assure that all Arts for LA programs and communications are developed using a cultural equity lens.
- Assure policies in governance and organizational administration are conducted using a cultural equity lens.
- Advocate research and data collection that accurately represents the demographics served by and serving in arts organizations and foundations.
- Intentionally consider members from underrepresented populations for the Arts For LA board of directors and staff.
- Select staff and members for board service whose values include cultural equity and social justice.

Definitions

Arts for LA utilizes Independent Sector's definitions of equity, diversity, and inclusion, which are based on language from the D5 Coalition, the Racial Equity Tools Glossary, and UC Berkeley:

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. Our definition also includes diversity of thought: ideas, perspectives, and values. We also recognize that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or 'implicit bias' helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

Indicators may include but are not limited to, the presence of some combination of:

- Organizational mission
- Executive, artistic, and governance leadership
- Programmatic content
- Artists