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The Columbus Museum Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Policy

Opened to the public in 1953 and a special partner of the Muscogee County School District, The Columbus Museum has a responsibility to be a museum for everyone. The Museum will be a place where every visitor, volunteer, and staff member feels welcome, safe, and heard. The Museum's trustees, staff, and volunteers have been, and will continue to be, committed to the principles of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. This commitment is foundational to our policies, programming, employment practices, operations, and to the fair distribution of institutional resources. The Museum prohibits discrimination or harassment and protects the right to be free from harmful or discriminatory activity based on age, ancestry, citizenship, creed (religion), color, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender, gender identity, level of literacy, marital status, place of origin, membership in a union or staff association, political affiliation, race, receipt of public assistance, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic by or within the organization.

Diversity is all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of groups to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented. We will honor, respect, and reflect these multiple perspectives in all aspects of the Museum's operation and outreach within our community.

Equity is the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Our strategic priorities, allocation of resources, respect for and civil treatment of our visitors, volunteers, staff, and patrons, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving these specified goals, will reflect this commitment.

Accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the unique characteristics of each person.

Inclusion refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. The Museum will ensure that all participants are welcome and valued as respected members of our organization and our broader community.



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To meet our responsibilities, The Columbus Museum will:

- See diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensuring the well-being of our staff and those we serve.
- Identify and work to eliminate any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, exhibits, such as including closed captioning on all virtual programs and meeting website content accessibility guidelines.
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how inequities can impact our organization's work and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership within our board, staff, committees, and advisory bodies.
- Lead with respect and tolerance. We expect all employees, trustees, and volunteers to embrace this notion and to express it in workplace interactions and through everyday practices.
- Create a safe system for members of the staff to report inequities that they see.
- Have a yearly self-evaluation by trustees and staff in how we are meeting these goals and to consider areas that have been overlooked and should be added.

For more specific information about the DEAI plan, please contact Lacey Yeend at lyeend@columbusmuseum.com or at 706-748-2562 ext. 4320.