



Committee for Antiracism and Equity Guidelines June 2020

1.0 PURPOSE & SCOPE OF THE COMMITTEE FOR ANTIRACISM AND EQUITY

1.1 History. Since its inception in 1978, Metro Arts: Nashville’s Office of Arts and Culture has provided the Metropolitan Nashville/ Davidson County community with access to the arts that tell the story of our city. As a local government agency, the Arts Commission has been at the forefront of expanding access to taxpayer dollars that fund the arts. Over the past four decades, various staff, board commissioners, mayors, councilpersons and community members have helped the organization grow. Key milestones include adding program grants in 1988; appointing its first African American commissioners in 1990; launching the public art program in 2000; appointing its first Latinx commissioner in 2011; hiring its first full-time person of color in 2014; and adopting a [cultural equity statement](#) in 2016.

As Metro Arts has expanded its access to funds and staff, the agency has increased its catalogue of programs to include THRIVE, Arts Build Communities (pass-through grant program from the Tennessee Arts Commission), Racial Equity in Arts Leadership, Learning Lab artist development, Poetry in Motion, Restorative Arts, Opportunity NOW, added project grant categories, and temporary public art.

The growth of Nashville, changes in the agency, and a mandate from the agency’s theory of change have caused the commission to consider its history, assess the present, and help discern how to best fulfill the tenets of its mission, which is to *Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts*.

1.2 Purpose. The Metro Arts Board of Commissioners established the Committee for Antiracism and Equity as a standing committee to support Metro Arts in keeping the promise of its mission to drive an equitable and vibrant community through the arts by holding the agency accountable in becoming fully antiracist in its identity and working for equity in all policies and practices with the goal of dismantling all systems of oppression within the arts ecosystem.

- 1.3 Vision and Practices of the Committee for Antiracism and Equity.**
- Be accountable to stakeholders of color, all genders and other marginalized groups by viewing questions, issues, and topics of discussion through an antiracist lens.
 - Identify connections between systemic racism and other forms of marginalization, exclusion, and oppression including those related to race, gender, sexuality, and ability.
 - Be able to name and define systemic racism and its roots.
 - Recognize existing injustices and commit to the ongoing work.
- 1.4 Scope.** To achieve its purpose, the Committee for Antiracism and Equity will do the following:
- Work to identify and transform policies and practices that perpetuate structural racism within its work as it impacts the larger arts ecosystem;
 - Support and clarify the work of the agency that leans toward antiracism;
 - Identify opportunities for antiracism education within the Nashville arts ecosystem;
 - Identify partnership opportunities within the arts ecosystem to work toward racial equity;
 - Make recommendations to the board that interrupt and eliminate racism and support race-based equity and inclusion in the arts ecosystem that impacts the community at large;
 - Regularly report action in progress to Metro Arts Board of Commissioners.

2.0 THE COMMITTEE FOR ANTIRACISM AND EQUITY MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Appointments.** The Arts Commission chair will appoint Committee for Antiracism and Equity members and name the co-chairs based on recommendations from the Committee for Antiracism and Equity.
- 2.2 Terms.** Members are appointed to a three-year term (initially staggered one, two and three years) and can be reappointed for one consecutive three-year term with each member serving no more than six consecutive years. Terms for Metro Arts Commission members serving on the Committee will correspond to their Commission terms. In addition to the thirteen voting members, the Metro Arts Commission Chair, the Metro Arts Executive Director and designated Metro Arts staff members will serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Equity Committee.
- 2.3 Composition and Qualifications.** The Committee for Antiracism and Equity will have no more than thirteen members. The composition will include at least two Metro Arts Commissioners and up to eleven community members

who represent the arts ecosystem. There will be two Co-Chairs, one Commissioner and one non-Commissioner member.

At least one member should be a professional artist and one member should represent an organization who receives funding from the Arts Commission. Membership should include representation from a wide range of organizational roles, skills and points of view. The Committee for Antiracism and Equity members will demonstrate:

- Representation of the population of Nashville/Davidson County;
- Evidence of attendance at a comprehensive antiracism training;
- An understanding of the existence and impact of racism and other oppressions that perpetuate societal inequities;
- Commitment to self-reflection and challenging one's perceptions, biases and internalized racism;
- Ability to articulate the value and benefit of eliminating bias, discrimination, and institutional racism;
- Ability to stay engaged in difficult conversations on bias, racism, and privilege;
- Willingness to be courageous, take risks, ask questions, and speak truth to power;
- Knowledge of arts ecology.

2.4 Attendance. The Committee for Antiracism and Equity will meet at regularly scheduled intervals. All Committee for Antiracism and Equity members must be highly committed to full participation in trainings, meetings, assignments, communications and other duties as determined by the Committee. If any member of the Committee misses three consecutive meetings without excuse, or one-third of the Committee meetings in a 12-month period, the Co-Chairs may encourage improved attendance or may inquire as to whether that member wishes to continue to serve or to resign.

2.5 Hardships. Members serve without compensation, but if barriers such as childcare coverage or loss of wages make it difficult for Committee for Antiracism and Equity members to participate, the Committee will work with individuals to identify accommodations.

3.0 RULES OF PROCEDURE

3.1 Accountability and Process. To fulfill its work, the Committee for Antiracism and Equity commits to ensuring that each member's voice is heard, acknowledged, and respected. To hold themselves and each other accountable, members will honor the following principles:

- Speak from personal experience, take individual responsibility for words and actions, and understand that impact is different from intent;
- Engage in dialogues designed to recognize and disrupt internalized racial behaviors and identities with an antiracist analysis and understanding;

- Make space for multiple voices;
- Work collaboratively to identify benchmarks and measurements of progress;
- Agree to utilize a “call in” method when problematic behaviors surface. The “call in” is defined as inviting each other into accountability around shared values, versus a “call out,” in which behaviors are shamed publicly;
- Resist the dominance and normalization of values, ideologies, and methodologies that perpetuate inequities in our agency and community;
- Honor and respect each other’s gifts, wisdom, and perspectives;
- Hold themselves accountable to progress.

3.2 Addressing Challenges and Conflicts. When challenges within the Committee arise, in order to uphold accountability, members will:

- Assume responsibility to name challenges when encountering or experiencing them;
- Accept the responsibility of being called in;
- Assume good intentions in the interest of moving the group forward;
- Conduct an ongoing analysis of one’s own actions and intentions;
- Create space and time to address challenges, utilize caucusing and other available connection and facilitation methods;
- Note when there is an absence of conflict and silence, which may be the result of members avoiding or failing to identify challenges or their own internalization.
- Embrace shared values of respect, listen to understand, take responsibility for one's impact, and make room for diverse voices;
- Once a resolution is found, members support the decision that has been collectively made, even if personally they disagreed with the choice.

3.3 Agreements on Decision-Making and Meeting Structure. The Board Equity Committee agrees on the following principles for making decisions:

- Agree to periodically review meeting times and dates;
- Utilize consensus methods to reach agreements on major decisions, recommendations, and tactics of the Committee;
- Utilize an array of facilitation tactics and tools;
- Rotate facilitators to make room for all voices and recognize group dynamics and nuances;
- Agree to utilize various technology tools for shared group work and maintain transparency whenever possible;
- Co-Chairs set meeting agendas and distribute to members at least two business days ahead of meetings so that each member has time to process information and prepare for participation;
- Co-Chairs are responsible for reviewing and prioritizing agenda items, leaving space for timely issues that arise.

3.4 Communications. The Committee for Antiracism and Equity agrees on the following communication principles:

- The Committee for Antiracism and Equity Co-Chairs will represent the Committee for Antiracism and Equity at regular Metro Arts Board Committee meetings;
- Metro Arts staff will serve as administrative and communication support to the Committee for Antiracism and Equity;
- Policy and programmatic recommendations by the Committee for Antiracism and Equity will be presented by the Committee for Antiracism and Equity Co-Chairs to the Metro Arts Board Committee.

3.5 Visual:

