

A spotlight and ticket for all at Summer of the Arts.

We honor this magnificent land on which we are simply stewards, and we acknowledge the importance of all who have cared for it over the centuries, particularly the Kickapoo, Iowa, Sauk, Meskwaki, and Očeti Šakówiŋ Nations. Summer of the Arts is committed to leaving the land it utilizes better than we found.

Inequality, bias, and exclusion persist in Iowa City, surrounding areas, and the great State of Iowa. We at the Summer of the Arts acknowledge members of our community who are impacted in very personal ways and who are vulnerable due to the crippling systemic effects of discrimination, racism, and violence. We stand with those who are not seen and heard. We strive for our community and world to gain a greater awareness of one another, to address unconscious and implicit bias, and to work towards greater understanding and empathy with all community members through the inclusive nature and expression of art and performance.

Summer of the Arts accepts everyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, ability, and genetics. We condemn all injustice, inequity, exclusion, and violence perpetrated against those who live in and visit our community.

We recognize that many marginalized people experience oppressive policies, restricted access to essential services and opportunities, as well as systemic and institutionalized unfairness throughout the Midwest. We pledge to put intentional creative and monetary resources towards improving how our organization interacts with and represents these communities. We prioritize making the communities we serve more just, equitable, and inclusive places to live, work, learn, and enjoy the Arts.

We have identified the following steps to support our diverse community and uphold ideals in our organization that promote setting the stage for all:

1. **Diverse Programming:** Offer various artistic performances, exhibitions, and events representing different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives. This

could include showcasing artists from marginalized communities and featuring works that explore social justice themes.

2. Representation: Ensure diverse representation among artists, performers, volunteers, staff, and board members. Actively recruit and collaborate with individuals from underrepresented groups to reflect the community's diversity.
3. Accessible Spaces and Events: Make physical spaces and events accessible to people of all abilities. This may involve providing wheelchair ramps, sign language interpreters, audio descriptions, and other accommodations to ensure everyone can participate fully.
4. Financial Accessibility: Offer affordable or accessible programming to reduce financial barriers to participation. Provide scholarships, sliding-scale ticket options, or subsidized rates for individuals from low-income backgrounds.
5. Community Engagement: Engage with diverse communities through outreach programs, workshops, and partnerships. Listen to community needs and preferences to tailor programming accordingly and involve community members in decision-making.
6. Cultural Competency Training: Train staff, volunteers, and board members on cultural competency, unconscious bias, and anti-racism. Foster a culture of respect, empathy, and understanding among all stakeholders.
7. Equitable Hiring Practices: Implement fair and transparent hiring practices to attract diverse candidates for employment opportunities. Ensure hiring processes prioritize qualifications and skills rather than perpetuating biases or favoritism.
8. Evaluation and Accountability: Regularly assess the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts through data collection, surveys, and feedback mechanisms. Set specific goals and benchmarks for improvement, and hold leadership accountable for progress.
9. Inclusive Policies and Procedures: Review and update organizational policies and procedures to promote inclusivity and address systemic barriers. This could include policies related to hiring, promotion, harassment, and discrimination.
10. Collaboration and Advocacy: Collaborate with other organizations and stakeholders to address systemic issues of inequality and discrimination in the arts sector and the broader community. Advocate for policies and

initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on a local, regional, and national level.

11. By implementing these tangible strategies, a non-profit arts organization can actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and create a more welcoming and accessible space for all individuals to engage with the arts.

Through the Arts, we see each other as human beings with a capacity for compassion, empathy, love, and hope. The Arts celebrate who we are as unique, inter-connected, vibrant people that honor all facets of human existence. It is through the creation and enjoyment of art, music, dance, song, and creative expression that we find our shared humanity and community.

Summer of the Arts believes that actual change will come through a commitment to ongoing collaboration and discussions with members of our community and through the education of our Board of Directors and committee members on how to best support and advocate for change while continually evaluating our programming for its cultural relevance to our local community. We look forward to our ongoing dialogue with the community to strengthen what we do for our future. Artists of every kind have a spot on our stage, and every person has a seat in our audience.

We see you. We hear you. And more than ever before, we stand with you.