

MASC Equity and Diversity Policy



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EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE

MASC's Equity and Diversity Policy is effective March 20th, 2021.

PURPOSE

For MASC, diversity and inclusion is more than a goal, it is part of our organization's mission and is one of MASC's [five priorities](#).

MASC's Equity and Diversity Policy ensures the development and implementation of strategies to promote equitable participation of individuals and communities of diverse backgrounds and identities in its workplace and in its activities.

OBJECTIVES

This policy affirms MASC's values and sets out its vision for equity and diversity, and outlines concrete actions that are intended to be applied to:

- program development
- strategic planning
- human resources management
- communications
- professional development
- staff training

DEFINITIONS

DIVERSITY is the existence of different characteristics in a group of people. These characteristics include everything that shapes people's identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, nationhood, nationality, sex, gender, sexuality, creed, disability, age, cultural background, etc.) as well as attributes that make a person unique, such as experiences, talents, skills, opinions, and personalities.

EQUITY is a principle and process that promotes fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society. It recognizes that while all people have the right to be treated equally, not all experience equal access to resources, opportunities or benefits. Achieving equality does not necessarily mean treating individuals or groups in the same way but may require the use of specific measures to ensure fairness.¹

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES are First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Indigenous people living in Canada include 630 First Nations communities, which represent more than 50 Nations and 50 indigenous languages.² Many Inuit in Canada live in 53 communities across the northern regions of Canada in Inuit Nunangat.³ According to the 2011 National Household Survey, 418,380 Canadians self-identified as Métis.⁴

¹ Canada Council of the Arts - <https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/equity>

² Government of Canada <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013791/1535470872302>

³ Government of Canada <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100014187/1534785248701>

⁴ Government of Canada <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100014427/1535467913043>

INUIT refers to Indigenous people primarily living in Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Québec), Nunatsiavut (Labrador), and Inuvialuit (Western Arctic). There are 65,000 Inuit in Canada with approximately 20,000 Inuit living outside of Nunangat (Inuit homelands). Inuit means “the people”. Inuit are not covered by the *Indian Act*.⁵

MÉTIS

1.1 “Métis” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of Historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

1.2 “Historic Métis Nation” means the Aboriginal people then known as Métis or Half-breeds who resided in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland.

1.3 “Historic Métis Nation Homeland” means the area of land in west central North America used and occupied as the traditional territory of the Métis or Half-breeds as they were then known.

1.4 “Métis Nation” means the Aboriginal people descended from the Historic Métis Nation which is now comprised of all Métis Nation citizens and is one of the “aboriginal peoples of Canada” within the meaning of s.35 of the Constitution Act 1982.

1.5 “Distinct from other Aboriginal peoples” means distinct for cultural and nationhood purposes.⁶

EQUITY-SEEKING GROUPS are communities that face discrimination and lack participation due to systemic barriers based on economic, political, cultural, historical, social, epistemological, and ontological causes. Specifically, Equity-Seeking Groups may face marginalization based on one or many of the following: age, race/ethnicity, culture, nationality, nationhood, geographies, sex, gender, sexuality, income, religion, physical and cognitive disabilities, among others.

INCLUSION is the process and principle of promoting and ensuring participation by Indigenous Peoples and Equity-Seeking Groups in decision-making, social planning, and quality of life.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY is the presence, expressions and participation of many different individuals and communities co-existing in the general culture of a society, and the explicit recognition that the contribution and participation of all peoples, particularly marginalized people, have the potential of equal value and benefit to the society at large.⁷

INTERSECTIONALITY is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.⁸

DECOLONIZATION, once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic, and psychological divesting of colonial power.⁹

VALUES

⁵ Ontario Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2013), *Supporting Bias-free Progressive Discipline in Schools*, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/SupportResGuide.pdf>

⁶ Métis Nation of Ontario, <http://www.metisnation.org/registry/citizenship/>

⁷ Canada Council of the Arts, <https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/cultural-diversity>

⁸ Oxford English Dictionary

⁹ Smith, Linda T., *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and indigenous Peoples*, pg. 101

- MASC recognizes the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation as the Host Nation for Ottawa. As such we affirm the words of Joan Commanda Tenasco, an Anishinàbekwe from Kitigan Zibi, Quebec:

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded. We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home. We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old. And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

- At MASC, we champion the fundamental diversity of Canadian society and oppose discrimination, harassment and stereotypes including those based on race, ethnicity, nationhood, nationality, sex, gender, sexuality, creed, disability, age, income, marital status, family status, literacy level, and conviction for which a pardon has been granted.
- MASC acknowledges the need for equal access to resources, opportunities, and benefits based on principles of social justice, human rights, and sustainable human development and treats all staff, volunteers, artists, participants, and clients equitably.
- MASC recognizes that decolonization and the removal of systemic barriers faced by Indigenous Peoples and Equity-Seeking Groups benefit everyone.
- MASC recognizes the diversity of Indigenous Peoples living in Canada and is committed to honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Actions and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- MASC is committed to protect cultural intellectual property of Indigenous Peoples and Culturally Diverse communities (Please see Cultural Appropriation Policy).
- MASC is committed to ensuring accountability to our communities regarding our efforts towards Equity and Diversity.

VISION

- MASC will be a fully decolonized organization at all levels, without systemic barriers that affect the participation of diverse communities and individuals in our workforce, programs, and activities.
- MASC's roster and programs are equitably accessible to Indigenous and Equity-Seeking artists and communities.
- MASC has a diverse staff and organizational leadership who are aware of and trained in the many important aspects of Equity and Diversity.
- MASC includes the perspective and guidance of Indigenous Peoples and Equity-Seeking Groups in MASC strategies and decision-making.

- School and community partners value MASC for its diverse artist roster and programming that celebrates Indigenous and Equity-Seeking artists as well as their cultures.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Form an Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee with representation from Indigenous Peoples, Equity-Seeking Groups, and members of the Board to guide MASC's programming, policies, and procedures.
- Develop and implement a Cultural Appropriation policy and procedures to ensure that an Equity and Diversity lens is applied to reviewing and selecting present and future MASC artists who present culturally specific programming.
- Create additional policies as appropriate (e.g., Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism, Accessibility).
- Develop strategies to promote community access to MASC programs and remove systemic barriers from the MASC's artist roster application for Indigenous and Equity-Seeking artists.
- Develop a comprehensive Road Map with clear goals, outcomes, and outputs, including regular training and protocols for engaging Indigenous Peoples and Equity-Seeking Groups, in order to meet the objectives of this policy.
- In keeping with MASC's commitment to accountability, report on progress in implementing this policy annually.

SUSTAINABILITY

MASC acknowledges that the removal of systemic barriers is a long-term process and will ensure that an equity lens is a constant element in our work. MASC commits to the sustainability of this approach for the future.

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5. Employment and Equity Act, S.C 1995, c. 44
6. Equity and Diversity Policy, City of Ottawa
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