



Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) Cultural Competency Manual

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Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) Unwavering Commitment to Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Dear Team,

As we navigate an evolving national landscape, we want to take a moment to reaffirm MCF's unwavering commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We recognize that the national conversation around us is shifting, and we understand that some may feel uncertainty about how these discussions will impact organizations like ours. In light of current affairs, our dedication to fostering an environment where every musician and individual feels respected, valued and supported remains stronger than ever.

At MCF, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is central to who we are and how we serve. As an organization specializing in the arts, we understand the profound impact Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has on our greater community. We are committed to ensuring that:

- Diversity is celebrated, recognizing that our differences make us stronger as an organization.
- Equity is embedded in our policies and opportunities for advancement.
- Inclusion ensures that every voice is heard and valued.

MCF remains focused on its commitment to fostering an environment where every person - regardless of background, identity or ability - can thrive. The data is clear: organizations that foster a strong sense of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion see higher quality outcomes.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is not just about compliance; it is about ensuring dignity, independence and equal opportunity for every musician and individual, extending beyond our participants and the communities we serve. As leaders, we know that true inclusion means creating spaces and systems that support every person's full participation.

We continue investing in our initiatives that strengthen our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We want to encourage you to engage in these efforts, share your perspectives, and help us build a culture that reflects our values.

Thank you for the role you play in making the Metropolitan Choral Festival a place of excellence, care and belonging for all.

7-11-25



Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) Cultural Competency Policy

Mission Statement:

The Metropolitan Choral Festival unites singers of all ages and abilities to perform choral masterworks, fostering a love of music and inspiring our community.

Vision:

To create a vibrant community where the power of choral music transcends differences, uniting voices to uplift and inspire.

MCF Cultural Competency Definition:

Cultural competency is the deliberate process of developing skills, behaviors, and attitudes that create an environment of respect, integration and acceptance for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Cultural Competency Description:

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors and attitudes that come together in an organization that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. "Culture" refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. "Competence" implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities. (Based on Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Issacs, 1989)

The Metropolitan Choral Festival understands that to continually work on our level of cultural competence, we must intentionally develop processes for the organization to continue learning the skills necessary to provide services and include diverse communities. These differences include but are not limited to ethnic, racial, sexual orientation, geographical, age, disability and low socioeconomic status.

The Metropolitan Choral Festival believes that the organization aims to intentionally and continuously evolve with our understanding and practice of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Our primary goal is to meet the needs and expectations of the members and surrounding communities.

The Metropolitan Choral Festival and its Board of Directors are committed to continually promoting a welcoming culture that fosters and supports culturally competent practices that will meet the needs of all members, community, funders and community. The



Metropolitan Choral Festival is invested in working with our funded network to develop a collaborative and comprehensive approach to cultural competency that is built on a foundation of understanding, acceptance, and inclusion.

The Metropolitan Choral Festival also recognizes the quality of service for all diverse communities. The incorporation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is integrated into all services. The Metropolitan Choral Festival is invested in promoting collaboration and partnerships with the communities and members to be effective in providing our service to diverse communities. Our organization must have a level of cultural competency skills to provide effective interventions in dealing with divergent norms, beliefs, and expectations.

Development of a Cultural Competency Committee:

The Metropolitan Choral Festival defines inclusion as the ability to behave in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of all. To this end, we have developed a Cultural Competency Committee that gives direction and partners with our community and funders. The Cultural Competency Committee requires participation and collaboration with experts in our organization who have direct experience with the diverse needs of our communities.

Committee purpose:

The role of the Committee is to promote an organization that can accomplish its mission by understanding and integrating the value of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This work will be accomplished by creating an organizational culture that is supportive of diversity, equity and inclusion for all members of the organization and groups and communities served.

Committee responsibilities:

1. Develop and make recommendations in collaboration with the Board of Directors on issues related to Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The committee will make recommendations on issues and procedures to meet the needs of LEP Clients.
2. Develop recommendations and educational strategies to continue building cultural competency as an organization where respect for differences is valued and integrated for all.
3. Provide definitions for cultural competency for the organization.
4. Increase the awareness of all members and partners associated with the organization on factors that contribute to exclusion of cultural competency.
5. Oversee, develop and monitor any surveys that seek to assess the organizational climate as related to diversity, equity and inclusion.



6. Develop a reporting structure that communicates the work of the Committee. Communicate regularly with the staff and Board of Directors.
7. Serve as ambassadors and advocate for the integration of diversity, equity and inclusion.
8. Recommend and develop cultural competency indicators for the organization.
9. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors on issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
10. Create meaningful opportunities to celebrate successes in relation to diversity equity and inclusion in the organization.
11. Serve as a resource for technical assistance and assistance for issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion to the organization.

Description of structure:

- Reports and are accountable to the Board of Directors
- Serves as representatives of the Board of Directors
- Involved in Cultural Competency Educational Activities provided to all members of the organization

Member Involvement:

- All members are expected to attend all meetings. Absence should be communicated to the chair or co-chair prior to the meeting.
- If absent, member is responsible to contact chair to “catch-up.”
- Members are responsible for following through on commitments made in meetings.
- All members are expected to uphold strict confidentiality on all sensitive issues discussed at the Cultural Competency Committee meetings.

Cultural Competence is a lifelong journey. Our member diversity and our diverse community environment provides the opportunity for us to expand our service, awareness and learn skills to effectively partner and collaborate our service. Part of our focus and direction at The Metropolitan Choral Festival is to educate, learn practical applications and work to integrating Cultural Competence at a personal and professional level for the organization. Part of the implementation of this focus includes education that includes experiential exercises to familiarize all members with the personal aspects of cultural competence when relating to diversity.



Our education objectives include:

- To educate all members of our organization to learn skills that will increase self-awareness in understanding our responses to diversity.
- To learn and identify the impact of our own socialization in the way we interact and relate to diversity.
- To present ways that cultural competence can contribute to an organizational inclusive environment.

Revised 7-11-25



**Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF)
Important Cultural Competency Definitions**

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| ACCESSIBILITY | The practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful and usable for as many people as possible. |
| ALLY | Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways. |
| ANTI-RACISM | Defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impact. <i>(https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html)</i> |
| ANTI-RACIST | Someone who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing antiracist ideas. <i>(https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html)</i> |
| CO-CREATION | The practice of working together and partnering with a team of stakeholders to lead, influence, guide and manage a plan or design process. |
| COLONIALISM | “The establishment and control of a territory, for an extended period of time, by a sovereign power over subordinate and “other” people which are segregated from the ruling power.” <i>(Chris Kortright (anthologist). What does it mean to be colonized: to take control of (a people or area) especially as an extension of state power, to claim (someone or something) as a colony. It occurs when one nation subjugates another, conquering its population and exploiting it, often while forcing its own language and cultural values upon its people. By 1914, a large majority of the world's nations had been colonized by Europeans at some point. About 20 percent of the colonies' inhabitants were enslaved African Americans, who came from a range of different ethnic groups and nations. (National Geography, 2003)</i> |



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| <p>COLONIZATION</p> | <p>Colonization can be defined as some form of invasion, dispossession and subjugation of a people. The invasion need not be military; it can begin—or continue—as geographical intrusion in the form of agricultural, urban or industrial encroachments. The result of such an incursion is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants. This is often legalized after the fact. The long-term result of such massive dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized. Ongoing and legacy Colonialism impact power relations in most of the world today.</p> <p>For example, white supremacy as a philosophy was developed largely to justify European colonial exploitation of the Global South (including enslaving African peoples, extracting resources from much of Asia and Latin America, and enshrining cultural norms of whiteness as desirable both in colonizing and colonized nations). See also: Decolonization.</p> |
| <p>CULTURAL COMPETENCY CORE COMPETENCIES</p> | <p>Refers to a person’s capacity to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform critical job functions or tasks (Institute for the Future of Aging Services).</p> <p>Examples: 1) Ability to work effectively with individuals and families from diverse backgrounds, 2) Ability to advocate on behalf of the agency’s mission and vision to promote inclusion and respect al cultures, 3) Identifies units of competency that an industry has agreed are essential to be achieved by a person to provide quality services. (World Health Organization).</p> |
| <p>CULTURAL COMPETENCY INDICATORS</p> | <p>Indicators are conditions that show that cultural competency, diversity and inclusion are integral to the function of an organization. Value of Indicators: 1) Creates accountability, 2) Helps assess progress toward integration of organizational cultural competency, 3) Provides a pathway and direction for sustainability.</p> |
| <p>CULTURAL HUMILITY</p> | <p>Putting into work the cultural competency skills you have learned.</p> <p>For example, 1) Addressing issues related to power differences, 2) Becoming active in addressing issues of inequality and equity, 3) Advocating and developing programs that are meeting the needs of those that are culturally different than you (programs, materials, interventions, assessments). Cultural Competency (skills) are necessary for Cultural Humility to happen (action).</p> |



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| <p>CULTURAL RACISM</p> | <p>Cultural racism refers to representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with white people or “whiteness” are automatically “better” or more “normal” than those associated with other racially defined groups. Cultural racism shows up in advertising, movies, history books, definitions of patriotism, in policies and laws. Cultural racism is also a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism. It does that by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate behavior, what is seen as beautiful, and the value placed on various forms of expression. All of these cultural norms and values in the U.S. have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions, (for example, what “nude” means as a color, which facial features and body types are considered beautiful, which child-rearing practices are considered appropriate.)</p> |
| <p>CULTURE</p> | <p>A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.</p> |
| <p>DISCRIMINATION</p> | <p>Discrimination is the process of making unfair or prejudicial distinctions between people based on the groups, classes, or other categories to which they belong or are perceived to belong, such as race, gender, age, religion, physical attractiveness or sexual orientation. (Wikipedia) This means treating someone less favorably than someone else because of a protected characteristic. In the case of age, treating someone less favorably than someone else may be justified. For example: An employer does not interview a job applicant because of the applicant's ethnic background.</p> |
| <p>DIVERSITY</p> | <p>Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ. It encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender -- the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used -- but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.</p> |
| <p>ETHNICITY</p> | <p>A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics, such as shared sense of</p> |



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| | <p>group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.</p> <p>Examples of different ethnic groups are: Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American (Black); Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian); Cherokee, Mohawk, Navaho (Native American); Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican (Latino); Polish, Irish, and Swedish (White).</p> |
| EQUITY | <p>The term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality. Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.</p> |
| HARASSMENT | <p>Harassment refers to words or behavior that threatens, intimidates, or demeans a person. Harassment is unwanted, uninvited, and unwelcome and causes nuisance, alarm, or substantial emotional distress without any legitimate purpose.</p> |
| IMPLICIT BIAS | <p>Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals’ attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals’ stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges.</p> |
| INCLUSION | <p>The process in which individuals with varying identities and cultural backgrounds have equal access to information and are “valued, welcomed, and empowered to participate fully in the life and decision-making processes within an organization” (Nave, G. 2019, p. 15, “The Perils and Promise of Privilege”) – The steps we take to ensure that all differences are respected and valued. <i>“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” African Proverb</i></p> |
| INCLUSIVENESS | <p>The ability to behave in a manner that is sensitive to the needs and varying backgrounds of individuals, constituents, and groups. This involves actively and consciously adjusting behavior and decisions in order to arrive at mutually beneficial choices and actions that result in better outcomes for all. Inclusiveness demands flexibility of mind requiring all to step outside of their pre-conditioned cultural norms, to attempt to understand the ideas, needs, desires, attitudes, beliefs, and</p> |

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| | behaviors of different individuals and groups, in a non-judgmental manner in order to maximize the ability to communicate with and provide reasoned support, voice, and power to all people. |
| INDIVIDUAL RACISM | Individual racism refers to the beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what he or she is doing. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, or believing in the inherent superiority of whites over other groups. •Avoiding people of color whom you do not know personally, but not whites whom you do not know personally (e.g., white people crossing the street to avoid a group of Latino/a young people; locking their doors when they see African American families sitting on their doorsteps in a city neighborhood; or not hiring a person of color because “something doesn’t feel right”). •Accepting things as they are (a form of collusion). |
| INSTITUTIONAL RACISM | Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color. |
| INTERNALIZED RACISM | When a person believes negative stereotypes or biases about their own group, culture and/or race. (https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html) |
| JUSTICE | Means we treat everyone in the same way. |
| MICROAGGRESSION | The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. (https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html) |
| MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY | Is your ability to understand and see your cultural identity and effectively employ cultural skills during cultural interactions. Multicultural competency is defined as the knowledge, skills and personal attributes needed to live and work in a diverse world. (https://tilford.k-state.edu/resources/multicultural-competency-development.html) |
| OPPRESSION | Mental pressure of distress. Unjust or cruel exercise of authority of power. <i>Ideological Oppression</i> is at the core of all forms of oppression. Starts when the dominant group |



| | |
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| | associates positive qualities with itself and negative ideas about marginalized or other groups. This leads to all the isms like racism, sexism, etc. |
| PRIVILEGE | Is a special benefit, entitlement, or something granted as opposed to earned and often “utilized for the advantage of the recipient and the exclusion or disadvantage of others” (Black and Stone, 2005, p. 244). |
| RACE | Invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. (Anthropology, Psychology, Physical Sciences, Sociologist, Education and more). |
| RACISM | Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. (https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html) |
| SELF-CARE | Means taking the time, necessary actions and steps to help you improve your personal physical, emotional and spiritual health. Self-Care leads to lower risk of stress, increased energy and more attention to focus of your wellbeing. |
| STRUCTURAL OPPRESSION | Describes the ways that multiple institutions and social practices maintain a hierarchy of privilege and power. The term <i>Structural Oppression</i> refers to a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate social inequities and disenfranchisement of targeted groups of people who have been marginalized based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability and more (Aspen Institute). |
| WHITE SUPREMACY | White supremacy is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white people for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege. (https://www.mpassociates.us/tools--publications.html) |

Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Resource: www.RacialEquityTools.org

Revised 7-11-25



CULTURAL COMPETENCY SCALE

Please think about your role as a member of the Metropolitan Choral Festival "Peer Mentor" and use this scale to assess yourself and other. Using the scale below, think about the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements provided about the knowledge needed to have Cultural Competency as a member of the Metropolitan Choral Festival.

Knowledge

| | Strongly Disagree | Mildly Disagree | Neutral | Mildly Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|----------------|
| • Awareness of your own culture | | | | | |
| • Know your biases | | | | | |
| • Know your limits | | | | | |
| • Understand the function of power and privilege | | | | | |
| • Seek to understand the history and experience of others | | | | | |
| • Recognize barriers to care / services | | | | | |
| • Recognize your potential to reduce or contribute to disparities | | | | | |
| • Self - accountability | | | | | |
| • Self - Examination - Interpersonal respect | | | | | |
| • Owning stereotypes and prejudices | | | | | |
| • Awareness of differences | | | | | |
| • Gain cultural knowledge | | | | | |

Knowledge - Knowledge

National Council for Mental Wellbeing
 This Scale was adapted from: Cultural Humility: Measuring Openness to Culturally Diverse Clients (Hook et al, 2013)



CULTURAL HUMILITY SCALE

Please think about your role as a member of the Metropolitan Choral Festival "Peer Mentor" and use this scale to assess yourself and other. Using the scale below, think about the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements provided about the knowledge needed to have Cultural Humility as a member of the Metropolitan Choral Festival.

ACTION - ACTION

| | Strongly Disagree | Mildly Disagree | Neutral | Mildly Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|----------------|
| • Is respectful | | | | | |
| • Is open to explore | | | | | |
| • Assumes they already know a lot | | | | | |
| • Is considerate | | | | | |
| • Is genuinely interested in learning more | | | | | |
| • Acts superior | | | | | |
| • Is open to seeing things from my perspective | | | | | |
| • Makes assumptions about me | | | | | |
| • Is open-minded | | | | | |
| • Is a know-it-all | | | | | |
| • Thinks they understand more than they actually do. | | | | | |
| • Asks questions when they are uncertain. | | | | | |

ACTION - ACTION

National Council for Mental Wellbeing
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MCF Member Guidelines

At times we face comments and statements that do not foster a supportive and welcoming environment. To address these issues, MCF members can consider the following "Guidelines".

- **Reflect** on your understanding of the message received.
- **Pause**, pay attention to your immediate and impulsive response before addressing the issue.
- Consider the **intent** and the **impact** of the message being related or received.
- Document and **reflect** on your feelings and emotions.
- Intent does not always **clarify** impact: communicate clearly and remain on the issue at hand.
- Don't discuss your **unresolved** feelings with other peers before getting some resolution to the situation.
- If you need **support**, discuss the issue with a person above your position.
- Be **open** to see how and when the issue is resolved.
- **Reflect** on your response.
- Be **proactive**.

Revised 7-12-25



Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) Cultural Competency Committee Job Functions

Mission Statement:

The Metropolitan Choral Festival unites singers of all ages and abilities to perform choral masterworks, fostering a love of music and inspiring our community.

Vision:

To create a vibrant community where the power of choral music transcends differences, uniting voices to uplift and inspire.

MCF Cultural Competency Definition:

Cultural competency is the deliberate process of developing skills, and behaviors, attitudes that create an environment of respect, integration and acceptance for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Essential Job Functions:

1. Develop recommendations and training strategies to continue building cultural competency at MCF. Promote an organizational environment where respect for differences is valued and integrated for all.
1. Ensure diversity, equity and inclusion remains at the forefront of MCF's mission, practices and procedures.
2. Provide direction, training and guidance in the implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion in the organization.
3. Develop short and long-term strategic plans for MCF to ensure cultural competence.
4. Coordinate with the Board of Directors to handle any issues or complaints related to cultural competency.
5. Act as an advocate for committee members voicing complaints of discrimination or cultural incompetence to ensure those complaints are investigated and addressed in an appropriate and thorough manner.
6. Develop, monitor, and evaluate the effectiveness of cultural competency in the organization.
7. Participate in developing and implementing practices to reflect a culturally competent organization.
8. Attend meetings on time and participate in meetings as deemed appropriate and necessary for the job.
9. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors on issues related to inclusion and diversity integration.



Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

1. Value and articulate understanding of the goals and importance of cultural competency for MCF.
2. Be a voice to advocate for the value and importance of diversity, equity and inclusion for MCF.
3. Serve as ambassadors and advocates for inclusion and diversity integration.
4. Able to listen effectively, synthesize and analyze information, and respond creatively to challenging issues that are discussed at meetings.
5. Demonstrate skill in oral and written communication.
6. Able to organize and prioritize multiple responsibilities simultaneously and exercise critical thinking and reasoned professional judgment.
7. Able to make sound decisions, using available information while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
8. Be able to establish and maintain a process for honest and open communication to all stakeholders associated with MCF.
9. Develop and disseminate definitions for cultural competency and diversity for MCF.
10. Understand how privilege is manifested by people within different groups.

*Any potential Committee member applicants would first meet with Cultural Competency Committee members as part of the interview process. The Committee members will share with potential applicants the vision of the Committee, what has been learned, the expectations of Committee members and any other pertinent information the Committee decides to share. Potential applicants may attend a committee meeting to be introduced to the function, scope and other members of the Committee.



Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) Cultural Competency Committee Application Questions

- 1. What is your definition of cultural competency?**

- 2. How do you think our organization would benefit from a Cultural Competency Initiative?**

- 3. List the top 3 priority issues you would like to see this organization address in their promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion?**

- 4. What can be some of your contributions to the Cultural Competency Committee?**

GOALS for the Cultural Competency Committee in addressing, maintaining and promoting Diversity Equity and Inclusion at MCF

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Committee's Purpose:

The role of the Committee is to promote an organization that can accomplish its mission by understanding and integrating the value of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This work will be accomplished by creating an organizational culture that is supportive of diversity, equity and inclusion for all members of the organization and groups and communities served.



The Cultural Competency Committee has the following mission:

- To identify and address issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion at Metropolitan Choral Festival (MCF) with specific attention to choir members' care, internal operations and community partners.

The Cultural Competency Committee has the following goals:

- To promote an equitable and respectful environment for all choir members and participants.
- To support and increase cultural awareness and responsiveness all activities performed by choir, musicians, artistic directors and orchestra advisors.
- To promote diversity at all levels of the organization and to seek, provide education, awareness and the promotion of issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion at MCF.
- To promote culturally and linguistically appropriate services when needed.
- To assess and promote equity, diversity and inclusion at all levels of MCF.
- To support and increase cultural competence, inclusiveness and diversity integration in MCF.
- To collaborate and partner with community groups to increase the diversity, equity and inclusion of participants, donors and stakeholders associated to MCF.
- To promote work, collaborate and learn in partnership with the community.
- To develop and establish a Cultural Competency Policy for MCF for clarity and understanding for all Officers and Directors.

The Committee will meet twice a month initially, then once a month thereafter. The expected time commitment of selected Committee members amounts to about 2 hours per month.

This application process is confidential. Please feel free to take as much space as needed to describe your interest in diversity and equity efforts, as well as your qualifications and experience.

Applicant's Name: _____

Please return this form by e-mail to:
Iris Reyes, info@metropolitanchoralfestival.org

Revised 2-25-26



Metropolitan Choral Festival 2026 Choir Participation Agreement

Welcome to the Metropolitan Choral Festival! We are proud to be Denver's only summer chorus that provides volunteer singers the opportunity to perform choral Masterworks with professional symphony musicians and present our annual concert to the public free of charge. At MCF, we embrace Cultural Competency as a continuous process of cultivating skills, behaviors, and attitudes that foster an environment of respect, inclusion, and equity for all individuals, regardless of their diverse backgrounds.

This document describes the expectations of MCF choir participation. Your signature is required to participate.

- 1) Eligibility: MCF is a non-audition choir made up of singers aged 16 years and up. All abilities are welcome. As a volunteer organization open to all, we welcome diversity, value inclusion, and respect the varied backgrounds and differences of our choir participants. We challenge each singer to reach their musical potential and strengthen our organization with your trust, tolerance, and talent. Our ability to come together in harmony is our greatest strength.
- 2) Fees: The annual participation fee for 2026 is \$140 and is due on or before your first rehearsal. Payment options are as follows:
 - a) Mail: Send a check to MCF, c/o Charles Miller, 4500 E. Cherry Creek Drive South, Suite 1080, Denver, CO 80246
 - b) Online: Pay by credit or debit card through our secure online platform, Zeffy. Visit <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/2026-singer-registration> to make a payment.
 - c) Cash: Bring cash to your first rehearsal.***Fees are not refundable after the second rehearsal.
- 3) Scholarships: A limited number of scholarships are available to assist those facing financial hardship. We are committed to ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent anyone with a desire to participate from joining MCF. Please send an email to metrochoralfestival@gmail.com to inquire about scholarship requirements and availability.
- 4) Attendance: While there is no strict attendance policy, consistent participation is crucial for the success of the choir. If you anticipate missing more than three rehearsals, please communicate with your Section Coordinator.
- 5) Rehearsals: Rehearsals are held twice weekly for seven weeks, beginning on the first Sunday following July 4th. To facilitate independent learning, practice tracks and links for all vocal parts are available on the 'Singers' page of our website. Singers are strongly encouraged to utilize these resources for individual practice between scheduled rehearsals. Rehearsal time is dedicated to refining ensemble balance, exploring dynamic nuances, and achieving harmonious vocal blending. Our collective effort ensures the highest artistic quality and expressive performance for the concert.
- 6) Tech Rehearsal: Due to the condensed rehearsal schedule, a single rehearsal with the orchestra will take place on Friday, the day preceding the Saturday concert. Attendance at the Tech Rehearsal is MANDATORY for all singers.
- 7) Performance Attire Options: 1) All black floor-length dresses, skirts or palazzo pants that resemble a skirt, paired with black tops featuring sleeves that reach the elbow or longer. 2) Black tuxedo suits consisting of black pants and a black jacket, accompanied by a white shirt and a black bow tie. To ensure a fragrance-free environment for all singers, please refrain from wearing any strong scents. Jewelry should be kept modest and understated. Black socks or nylons and closed-toe black shoes are mandatory. It is crucial to adhere to the specified performance attire for the concert. Failure to comply may result in being asked to leave the stage and not perform.
- 8) Music: The annual participation fee covers the cost of the music. Printed scores will be available at the first rehearsal, are yours to keep, and may be marked as needed. Electronic scores will be available in advance of the first rehearsal.
- 9) Marketing: MCF has a website and a robust online presence. We routinely post photos and videos of our rehearsals, events and concerts. Being an active MCF participant indicates your

agreement for these images and videos to be used at the discretion of MCF. The MCF is committed to only capturing images and videos in the context of MCF activities and will not use them for any reason other than our online presence (Facebook, Instagram, and the MCF website). We encourage you to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates and exciting news. Please share our posts with your friends and family to help spread the word about MCF!

10) The following are MCF's Core Competencies to uphold Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within our organization. This includes the following:

| | Core Competency | Demonstrated Ability |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Ability to work effectively with individuals from diverse cultural background | Contributes and creates a welcoming environment for diversity and behaves in a manner that shows respect for diversity and cultural differences for all. |
| 2 | Ability to respect the unique characteristics of others | Seeks advice from choir members and staff that have beliefs and values different than your own. |
| 3 | Ability to assess cultural factors and integrate them into service | Uses cultural information to tailor services and interventions to meet the specific needs of choir members and staff. |
| 4 | Ability to examine one's own values, stereotypes and beliefs and how these may impact others in the organization and service | Verbalizes awareness and recognizes that one's values and beliefs vary based on individual differences. Uses this knowledge to reflect on how differences can impact the way one relates to other members and the service of the organization. |
| 5 | Ability to manage one's own values and beliefs when they conflict with values and beliefs different from our own | Applies understanding of differences in values and beliefs to effectively resolve and address conflict. |
| 6 | Ability to seek information on behaviors, customs and expectations that are unique to others different than our own | Continually learns and participates in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion conversations and trainings. Independently and intentionally seeks information on cultural differences for the purpose of increasing knowledge in understanding differences. |
| 7 | Ability to advocate on behalf of the organization's mission and vision to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and respect for all cultures | Behaves in ways that demonstrate inclusion and respect for diversity. Advocates for inclusion of all individuals and cultures in fulfilling the vision and mission of MCF. |
| 8 | Ability to learn and understand the impact of using the correct information, descriptions, words and titles when working in the context of differences | Displays behaviors and uses words that show respect for diversity. Verbalizes the difference of intent vs. impact when using descriptors, words and titles in the context of diversity. |
| 9 | Ability to assess the needs and provide resources and services for linguistically appropriate services for clients and families | Has knowledge of resources to provide services in the language preferred by members, including sign language. |

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 10 | Ability to understand and comply with Title VI Civil Rights Act and HHS Office of Civil Rights Policy Guidance for Servicing Limited English Proficient (LEP) service recipients | Has knowledge of the application of Title VI Civil Rights Act and HHS Office of Civil Rights Policy Guidance for Servicing Limited English Proficient (LEP) service. |
|----|--|--|

11) Singer Conduct: All MCF participants are expected to conduct themselves in a dignified, orderly, and respectful manner on and off the stage, in person and on social media.

- a) As a member of MCF, you are an ambassador of the organization. Conduct yourself with dignity and respect at all times, both during rehearsals and performances, and across all platforms, including social media. Refrain from any behavior that could negatively impact the organization's reputation, such as exploiting other participants for personal gain.
- b) Inconsiderate and disruptive behavior, such as inattention during rehearsals or performances, excessive talking, and inappropriate cell phone usage, can negatively impact the morale and artistic quality of our choir. Such behavior will not be tolerated. It is important to note that if a guest accompanies a singer to any choir rehearsal or event, these guidelines for appropriate behavior also apply to the guest.
- c) Occasional disagreements may arise. It is important to approach conflict resolution with respect and integrity. Communicate with each other kindly and respectfully, both during and outside of rehearsals. If a disagreement cannot be resolved amicably, please discuss the situation with the Artistic Director or a member of the MCF Board of Directors.

12) If any choir participant experiences any form of threat, harassment, or intimidation from another singer, board member, staff, or musician, and feels unable to resolve the issue privately, they are encouraged to promptly discuss the situation with a member of the MCF Board of Directors to seek support and resolution or send an email to: info@metropolitanchoralfestival.org.

13) Failure to comply with these listed expectations may result in removal from the choir.

To the MCF directors, singers and musicians: With my signature below, I affirm:

- I have received a copy of the choir participation agreement.
- I have read and understand the expectations.
- I agree to comply with all singer expectations.
- I understand that failure to do so may result in my removal from the choir.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Cell Phone _____

Date _____

Email _____

MCF Board of Directors
Ricki Vorrath-Moyer, MCF Artistic Director