



Racial Equity in Arts Funding

Statement of Purpose and Recommendations for Action

Grantmakers in the Arts recognizes that our society is challenged to overcome a complex web of inequities – racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and ableism among them. All of these forms of discrimination are powerful drivers of unequal individual and group outcomes. However, it is our belief that ALAANA individuals whose identities intersect with those of other “minority” social statuses often experience compounded mistreatment that is amplified by the interaction of race.

We support the work being undertaken to dismantle the array of social and economic injustices; however, GIA has determined that we must focus our efforts to heighten our effectiveness. We move forward from our assessment that racism is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and that meaningful progress on advancing racial equity will have significant positive impact on challenging other discrimination-based injustices. Therefore, our current priority is working against racism by working toward racial equity in arts funding.

Statement of Purpose

Grantmakers in the Arts’ board of directors developed a statement of purpose for their work in racial equity in arts funding with a goal to increase arts funding for ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American) artists, arts organizations, children, and adults. Originally published in 2015, this statement continues to be updated as GIA builds its knowledge of practical applications to assist institutional funders in achieving this goal.

Grantmakers in the Arts affirms that

- All peoples, their cultures, and their art contribute to the meaning and understanding of our humanity and should be honored and celebrated.
- Artists, their art, their process, and the organizations they create and support play a unique role in witnessing, demonstrating, and providing inspiration to resolve societal inequity and injustice.
- Sustained racialized public policies and institutional practices, both conscious and unconscious, have resulted in unequal access to education and resources for African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) communities and artists. This systemic unequal access to opportunity has resulted in generations of unjust and inequitable outcomes for ALAANA communities.
- These social inequities continue to be reflected in the funding practices of private philanthropy and governmental funders in the arts. Therefore, in order to more equitably support ALAANA communities, arts organizations, and artists, funders should take explicit actions to structurally change funding behaviors and norms.

Grantmakers in the Arts believes that

- Recommended solutions of the past, which have focused on diversity rather than structural inequities, have not resulted in nationwide successful outcomes in equitable inclusion and/or grantmaking to ALAANA artists and audiences.
- A historic societal and philanthropic bias for European art forms has undervalued the contributions of ALAANA art forms and artists. Arts funders are encouraged to implement relevant programs and create new structures in which ALAANA communities, artists, and arts organizations benefit as leaders, grantees, and partners.
- Addressing historic injustices is a vital component of achieving equity for ALAANA communities.

Therefore, the Board of Directors of Grantmakers in the Arts has made racial equity in arts funding a primary focus of the organization. We have committed financial and human resources to educating funders on institutional racism and the power struggle innate within grantmaking. We are committed to addressing structural inequities and increasing philanthropic and governmental support in the arts for ALAANA artists, arts organizations, children, and adults through the following actions:

- Maintain a Racial Equity board committee to oversee and direct GIA's work in this area.
- Conduct and annually revisit a racial equity audit of the internal policies and external communications of GIA to provide internal guidance.
- Assure that all GIA programs, i.e. arts education, capitalization, support for individual artists, and others are developed using a racial equity lens.
- Assure policies in governance and organizational administration are conducted using a racial equity lens.
- Convene funders nationally/regionally to provide resources and share best practices to create equity for ALAANA organizations and artists.
- Regularly promote racial equity throughout all GIA's communication platforms.
- Advocate research and data collection that accurately represents the demographics served by and serving in arts organizations and foundations.
- Require all Grantmakers in the Arts board and staff members to attend structural racism training.
- Intentionally consider and select members from ALAANA populations for the GIA board of directors and staff.
- Select staff and members for board service whose values include racial equity and social justice.
- Assure that racial equity conversations are integrated into sessions at the annual conference and that specific sessions or preconferences are offered to educate attendees on inequities in funding ALAANA organizations and artists, understanding structural racism, and the grantmaking power structures.
- Assure representation by ALAANA artists, keynote speakers, and panelists at annual conferences and other convenings.
- Maintain a topic area webpage on racial equity in arts funding that includes up-to-date research and information available to funders and the general public.

- Provide support for individual members and collective groups of funders who are seeking to achieve greater racial equity in arts funding in their own communities.
- Collaborate with other national, regional, and local organizations who are also working toward greater racial equity in philanthropy.

Definitions

Grantmakers in the Arts' definitions are adapted from Change Philanthropy's, RacialEquityTools.org's, and Independent Sector's - which are based on language from the D5 Coalition, the Racial Equity Tools Glossary, and UC Berkeley.

Equity: The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. We recognize that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or 'implicit bias' helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

Racial Equity: Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Racial equity is one part of racial justice. Therefore, we also include work that addresses root causes of inequities and not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

Philanthropic Racial Equity: Racial equity in philanthropy is the investment of social and financial resources in policies, practices, and actions that produce equitable access, power, and outcomes for African, Latinx, Arab, Asian, Native-American (ALAANA) communities/communities of color.

An **ALAANA organization** is one whose primary intentions, practices, and mission are by, for, and about ALAANA artists, cultures, and communities. (The word "for" refers to the intention of the organization to perpetuate, promote, and present art that is representative of an ALAANA culture and people and/or is given form by ALAANA artists.)

Indicators may include but are not limited to, the presence of some combination of:

- Organizational mission
- Executive, artistic and governance leadership
- Programmatic content
- Artists

Recommendations for Action

Grantmakers practicing racial equity in arts funding consider root causes and systems to understand historic inequities in funding ALAANA artists and arts organizations. They execute a course correction with explicit intent to structurally change funding behaviors and norms compensating for past neglect and move forward with equal opportunities resulting in better funded and supported ALAANA communities, artists and arts organizations.

Funders can help strengthen ALAANA organizations by providing the following resources:

- Networks for learning, sharing and resources
- Connections to learning communities, mentorships, technical assistance, financial and governance power structures
- Money; intentional funding programs that build capacity both artistically and administratively, support artistic growth following capitalization recommendations of general operating support, and fully support of programs and necessary over-head and salary costs
- Visibility
- Power-sharing opportunities working in partnership

Grantmakers will benefit from the following:

- Cultural competency training about ALAANA artists and arts organizations within their funding constituency
- Systems analysis of the constituency community, with a historic perspective defining successful outcomes
- Values and evaluation processes that may be unique for developing ALAANA organizations who have been in the past denied access to financial, administrative, and programmatic resources
- Data frameworks based on racial equity and the collection of information on ALAANA organizations and artists that exist and may or may not be apply for funding.
- Prioritizing community accountability with ALAANA stakeholders as partners

What can be done as an Individual Practitioner?

Consider how you and your organization can be educated on institutional racism, transformed and changed over time. This should come first.

- Everyone should be educated on historic, systemic racism. Find a training that is right for you. This training, particularly for white people, will give you confidence in a vocabulary, greater understanding as an ally, and a truer understanding of the structures that have had an historic impact on preventing equity.
- Find allies who want to learn with you, read articles/books, and broaden your understanding of the historic context.
- Recognize the difference between diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- Learn about implicit bias and its impacts on your philanthropic and personal practices.

- Seek support from colleagues who are in the process of creating change within their institutions.
- Be committed to a lifelong process of learning and change.
- Be available to your peers as a resource.
- Conduct data analysis (using a racial equity lens) on your own portfolio to identify where dollars are going and opportunities for change.
- Use inclusive and welcoming language in your external communications.
- Seek research and data about racial equity to present to institutional leadership.
- Mine your own institutional history for past efforts and lessons learned.
- Identify resources and allies within your own organization and/or your community.
- Learn the history of local ALAANA communities and become familiar with leaders.
- Seek opportunities to institutionalize your work.

What can be done in your Institution?

- Establish a racial equity advisory committee or working group of colleagues that will inform programming direction and guide institutional change.
- Regularly promote racial equity throughout all communication platforms.
- Advocate research and data collection that accurately represents the demographics served by and serving in arts organizations and foundations.
- Provide an opportunity for board and staff to attend structural racism training.
- Intentionally consider, select, and support ALAANA candidates for board and staff.
- Intentionally consider, select, and support board and staff who value racial equity.
- Assure that a racial equity lens informs all decision-making, programs, policies and procedures.
- Collaborate with other organizations working toward greater racial equity to provide resources and share best practices to create equity for ALAANA organizations and artists.

Resources from GIA

[Outline of GIA's Work in Equity, 2008–Present](#)

[2016 Web Conference Series: Practices for Advancing Racial Equity in Arts Grantmaking](#)

[Supporting ALAANA Organizations: GIA Racial Equity Forum](#)

[Example of an Organizational Racial Equity Audit RFP](#)

[Racial Equity in Arts Funding Organizational Audit: Executive Summary](#)

Other Recommended Resources and Readings

A short sample of excellent writing about oppression of ALAANA people, racism, social justice, and what we can do.

["Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City,"](#) Nikole Hannah-Jones

["The Case for Reparations,"](#) Ta-Nehisi Coates

["How 'White People' Were Invented by a Playwright in 1613,"](#) Ed Simon

["Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy,"](#) Helicon Collaborative

["A History: The Construction of Race and Racism,"](#) Western States Center

[Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity's resources page](#) is specifically geared toward philanthropy.

[Portal created by Kellogg Foundation.](#) Covers written materials (books, research reports, magazines, articles, etc.)

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Supporting a Creative America

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