

Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters

Strategic Vision for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Board Approved September 2, 2020



DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)

DEI embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people are represented in the sciences, arts, and letters—including, but not limited to, those who have been historically underrepresented based on race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, and religion. DEI engenders support of creatives and innovators and the nurturing of accessible, thriving avenues for expression and problem solving; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.

Acknowledgements and Affirmations

- There are historical and persisting systems of power that have benefited the founding and early operation of the Wisconsin Academy.
- The Academy recognizes that physical and intellectual labor, as well as natural and cultural resources, have been exploited and at times been taken without credit or context in the development of our organization's legacy, and that reckoning with this past will allow the organization to help build a better future.
- Cultural equity is critical to the long-term viability of all fields in the sciences, arts, and letters.
- Organizations and institutions must all hold themselves accountable because acknowledging and challenging social inequities and working in partnership promotes effective change.
- The Academy must be of service to the broadest range of people in Wisconsin as equal access to creativity and discovery is essential to a healthy and democratic society.

DEI IS EMBEDDED IN OUR INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

Our Mission and Vision

The Academy's mission: Create a better world by connecting Wisconsin People and Ideas.

The Academy's Vision: A brighter future inspired by Wisconsin ideas.

At the Academy, we believe this better, brighter future will:

- Always strive to be more equitable and just while critically examining history and exclusionary systems,
- Value and protect cultural resources and the natural world,
- Embrace diverse cultures and voices by actively bringing marginalized voices to the table for dialogue and deliberation,
- Celebrate diversity by making participation in the sciences, arts, and letters more inviting and inclusive,
- Encourage lifelong learning within and outside of traditional education systems.

[Our Values](#)

The Academy's values include:

Curiosity: asking questions that spark deep thinking, creative problem solving, and rational decision making; spark the interest of citizens to continue learning throughout their lives.

Critical thinking: welcoming diverse perspectives to foster a better understanding of the world around us; promoting creativity, and laying the foundation for scientific innovation and healthy democracy.

Creativity: celebrating and elevating imagination and creative expression across the rich cultural diversity that exists in Wisconsin; supporting excellence in the arts and literature, and the artists, writers, scientists, and problem solvers along their creative journey.

Civil discourse: convening leaders with diverse perspectives across the state in developing timely and impactful solutions to issues affecting all Wisconsin residents.

[Our Core Activities](#)

Academy programming aims to:

- Celebrate creativity and achievement across disciplines,
- Amplify Wisconsin ideas that inform and empower,
- Elevate our capacity to thrive and be resilient,
- Affirm the value of the sciences, arts, and letters in the lives of Wisconsin residents.

[TRANSFORMING VISION INTO ACTION](#)

[Desired Outcomes](#)

Actualizing our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility requires us to move beyond vision and explore opportunities for intentional and meaningful change. Our short-term action plan and metrics will be developed and guided by the following long-term goals:

[External outcomes:](#)

- Increase diversity of, and accessibility to, Academy membership and participation to better represent the geographic, racial, cultural, gender, orientation, and generational demographics of Wisconsin.

- Increase diversity of Academy partnerships and contributors to elevate and celebrate excellence and achievement among historically marginalized cultures and communities in Wisconsin.
- Foster equity and inclusivity in Academy programs through attendance and active participation of more diverse audiences.
- Increase statewide participation by developing program delivery models that are welcoming and accessible.
- Leverage our statewide leadership networks to uplift historically underrepresented voices in developing solutions to challenges facing Wisconsin.
- Develop program content that invites a diverse audience by centering inclusivity and relevancy.
- Leverage publishing and presentation capacities to promote Wisconsin ideas and innovations that make progress toward improving equity for citizens and amplifying diverse voices and perspectives.

Internal outcomes:

- Transparency and accountability in organizational culture that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in staffing and board member recruitment strategies.
- Allocate time and resources to cultivate diverse leadership within our board, senior staff, and advisory bodies.
- Pursue cultural consciousness throughout the organization through substantive learning and formal, transparent policies.
- Identify, acknowledge, and address any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and report organizational progress.
- Maintain diversity, equity, and accessibility as integral components in Academy programming and event planning with measurable indicators of progress.

Developing an Action Plan

A list of specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) actions will be developed to move forward with DEI progress in an intentional and well-informed way. SMART goals will be developed in a cooperative manner with input from the Academy Board of Directors, executive director, program directors, support staff, and partner organization whenever possible. Systems of accountability and reciprocal feedback will be utilized to maximize impact. The Academy will actively seek the input of historically underrepresented communities in developing these goals and these systems of accountability.

[**Measuring Success**](#)

The Academy will generate and aggregate quantitative and qualitative research related to diversity, equity, and inclusion to make incremental, measurable progress towards cultural equity more visible.

[**Assessment and Revision**](#)

The Academy will develop a plan for assessing and reporting progress and impacts of DEI efforts based on benchmarks corresponding to the quantitative and qualitative data collected. Systems of feedback from stakeholders – including the Academy Board of Directors, Academy staff, partner organizations, and program participants – will be developed for reviewing progress. Regular progress reports will be made available to said stakeholders and the public. The frequency and delivery method for progress reports will be determined during the development of the data aggregation system and based on the needs of program directors, the executive director, and the Academy Board of Directors.