

BOULDER ARTS COMMISSION  
2022 STATEMENT ON CULTURAL EQUITY

---

The Boulder Arts Commission supports a full creative life for all residents and champions policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable community.

*The Arts Commission approved their first Statement on Cultural Equity in 2015. This update responds to the adoption in 2021 by City Council of the City of Boulder Racial Equity Plan: a policy document designed to adapt internal infrastructure and communication. And describing the steps the city must take to eliminate systemic and institutional racism in its policies and practices. ([Learn more: Racial Equity Plan](#)).*

#### DEFINITION OF RACIAL EQUITY

Racial equity is a process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color. ([Learn more: Race Forward](#)).

#### EQUITY STARTS WITH RACE

Race is often the greatest predictor of access to success in our current system. The creation and perpetuation of racial inequities is embedded into government at all levels. Initially focusing on racial equity provides the opportunity to introduce a framework, tools and resources that will then be applied to other marginalized groups based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, and age, among others.

#### CULTURAL EQUITY

Racial Equity impacts every aspect of society. It is a generational project that involves every person in the City of Boulder. It is a project that requires shifts not only in law, policy and regulation, but also in language and visual images, the stories that we tell, and the heroes we celebrate. These cultural ingredients will amplify the work of Racial Equity by strengthening the connections between, resilience of, and justice for, everyone in our community. Therefore, the work of artists and cultural leaders are foundational for progress on Racial Equity.

#### WHAT CULTURAL EQUITY MEANS TO US

- > Cultural Equity accelerates the community's progress on Racial Equity. When effective, the cultural leadership of Boulder will integrate Racial Equity into their work. For instance: nonprofits will adopt their own Racial Equity plans, artists of color will consider Boulder a great place for their businesses, and a vibrant, diverse set of cultural offerings will authentically represent a wide variety of perspectives and voices.
- > Cultural Equity contributes to the success of government cultural affairs. When effective, the community funding, programs, and policies of Boulder's Office of Arts and Culture will demonstrate the values and practices that ensure that all people are inclusively represented. For instance: arts policy will address systemic racism, our city's arts venues will be accessible, thriving venues for expression for all, and our grants and public art will be part of the system that fosters fully accessible and welcoming opportunities for artists and audiences of all races, identities, and backgrounds.

#### FUELING FIELD PROGRESS

- > Encourage and celebrate the competency of arts leadership in cultural equity, pro-equity policies and practices in the sector, and representation in the leadership of nonprofits, businesses, among artists, and in cultural audiences generally.
- > Improve the ability of artists and arts leaders of color to thrive in Boulder, including progress on the cultural leadership pipeline.
- > To accelerate equity in the cultural community leverage the policies and criteria of public funding especially in grants and public art.

#### EQUITY PRACTICES IN MUNICIPAL CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Considering the goals in the Racial Equity Plan, the following practices will guide the Arts Commission and Office of Arts and Culture:

- > **Everybody Gets It:** pursue cultural competency of our staff, commission members, and collaborators through substantive learning, transparent policies, and use of the Race Equity Instrument and Rapid Response Tool.
- > **Justly Do It:** acknowledge and dismantle structural inequities in our policies, programs, and services. Conduct evaluation related to equity to make incremental, measurable progress toward cultural equity more visible.
- > **Community Commitment:** partner with organizations and leaders to advance our work. Listen to and value the experience of those leaders working with and for communities of color.
- > **Power to All People:** address barriers to access, improve the quality of community engagement, and purposefully expand outreach.
- > **Representation Matters:** Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership on our staff, among commission members, and in our panels and advisory groups.