

Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism

COA's Equity, Inclusion and Access Statement

Equity, inclusion and access involving all populations are critical to the vitality of our neighborhoods, towns, and cities. We acknowledge that there is much work to do in this area. The Connecticut Office of the Arts is committed to supporting and fully engaging diverse members of our communities in arts policy, practice, and decision making. Continually changing demographics invite opportunity for responsible and responsive social change by attracting new perspectives that connect minds to a vision and hands to a purpose through the arts.

The Connecticut Offices of the Arts will insist upon using the lenses of **relevance**, **equity**, **access**, **diversity**, and **inclusion** to guide programmatic and investment decisions within the framework of artistic excellence.

Here are our definitions of what that means to us:

RELEVANCE: Meaningful or purposeful connection to one's aspirations, interests, or experiences in relation to current society or culture.

We commit to a culture that supports curiosity, action and awareness in, about, and through the arts.

EQUITY: Policy and practice that is fair and just. Our processes and systems are designed to insure that we distribute resources without bias.

We commit to a level playing field for constituents to access the resources in our control and the systems we can influence.

ACCESS: We will create pathways that invite participation and communication and that provide opportunities for constituents from all populations.

We commit to cultivating channels for engagement on all levels for all people.

DIVERSITY: A mosaic of individuals offering unique perspectives and experiences influenced by their ethic, cultural, social, economic, and ability backgrounds. As Malcolm Forbes says, "Diversity: the art of thinking independently together."

We commit to enhancing creativity through diversity.

INCLUSION: Active participation by constituents who represent and reflect communities we are all a part of.

We commit to building a community that is respectful and responsive to the diverse talents, skills, and abilities of all people.