

Community Engagement and IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access)



The Indiana Arts Commission has adopted community engagement and IDEA as principles to support our values and funding imperatives and address structural inequalities by providing access to programs, services, and resources.

So what exactly IS Community Engagement and IDEA?

Simply put, it's what you do and how you do it.

Community engagement (the "what") describes the intentional cultivation of two-way, exchange-driven community relationships. IDEA (the "how") describes ways we intentionally remove barriers and welcome all to participate in those relationships.

Community Engagement Defined

The IAC defines community engagement as the activity of consistently cultivating two-way community relationships – beyond conventional programmatic partnerships. Community partnerships are rooted in programs, activities and marketing, whereas community engagement is rooted in people and requires long-term commitment.

Why Community Engagement?

- To build a better community, not just a better organization

- To understand what the community cares about
- To build better programs and a more loyal audience
- To share control with community groups and members
- To produce things that are meaningful to the community
- To challenge organizations and the community
- To propel change in organizations and the community
- To build a more sustainable, long-term organization

IDEA Defined

IDEA is an acronym for **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access**. IDEA highlights efforts toward underserved communities. Organizations that embrace IDEA are able to foster cultures that minimize bias and recognize and address systemic inequities, which, if unaddressed, create disadvantage for certain individuals or groups.

- **Inclusion: All feel welcomed and valued**

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcome, respected, represented, supported, and valued to fully participate.

- **Diversity: All the ways we differ**

Diversity includes all of the ways in which people differ, encompassing different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance, geography, and any other identifiers that make one individual or group different from another.

- **Equity: All having the opportunity to fully participate**

Equity encompasses the policies and practices used to ensure the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time trying to identify and eliminate barriers that have historically prevented the full participation of some individuals or groups.

- **Access: Of any and all abilities**

Access refers to the commitment for everyone to be included in all programs and activities.

What Can Be Done as an Individual Practitioner?

- Learn about implicit bias and its impact on your organizational work and personal practices.
- Educate yourself on historic, systemic racism.
- Find a training that will grow your vocabulary and help you gain greater understanding of the structures that have had a historic impact on preventing equity.
- Identify resources and allies within your organization and/or your community.

- Seek support from colleagues who are in the process of creating change within their institution.
- Be committed to a lifelong process of learning and change.
- Conduct data analysis on your own portfolio to identify where dollars are going and opportunities for change.
- Use inclusive and welcoming language in your communications.
- Seek research and data about equity to present to leadership.
- Learn the history of local ALAANA communities and become familiar with leaders.

What Can Be Done in Your Institution?

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

Resources

- [Community Engagement Ladder \(https://www.in.gov/arts/files/IAC-CE-Ladder.pdf\)](https://www.in.gov/arts/files/IAC-CE-Ladder.pdf)
- [Defining Community Engagement for Organizations \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLy_tAHLEw&t=2s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLy_tAHLEw&t=2s)
- [Defining Community Engagement for Individual Artists \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLGCpq37Sxs&t=4s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLGCpq37Sxs&t=4s)
- [Making Meaningful Connections, The James Irvine Foundation \(https://irvine-dot-org.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/5/attachments/MakingMngfulConnections_2014DEC3.pdf?1418669563\)](https://irvine-dot-org.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/5/attachments/MakingMngfulConnections_2014DEC3.pdf?1418669563)
- [Questionnaire to aid in understanding your community \(http://www.artsengaged.com/understanding-your-community\)](http://www.artsengaged.com/understanding-your-community)
- [Ways to build authentic partnerships with organizations led by POC \(https://nonprofitaf.com/2018/08/20-ways-majority-white-nonprofits-can-build-authentic-partnerships-with-organizations-led-by-communities-of-color/?fbclid=IwAR1daUIKRdP6toB1yWlQPj3bdsWtdN7atuzRpX61rLY7Sb0WQik5DpFw9EM\)](https://nonprofitaf.com/2018/08/20-ways-majority-white-nonprofits-can-build-authentic-partnerships-with-organizations-led-by-communities-of-color/?fbclid=IwAR1daUIKRdP6toB1yWlQPj3bdsWtdN7atuzRpX61rLY7Sb0WQik5DpFw9EM)

- [Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matter \(https://independentsector.org/resource/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter/\)](https://independentsector.org/resource/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter/)
- [Racial Equity Tools \(https://www.racialequitytools.org/home\)](https://www.racialequitytools.org/home)
- [RE-Tool: Racial Equity in the Panel Process \(https://www.jeromefdn.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/Re-Tool_2018.pdf\)](https://www.jeromefdn.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/Re-Tool_2018.pdf)

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