



**Saskatchewan Orchestral
Association
2019-2020
Communications/Diversity Plan
Summary**

Saskatchewan Orchestral Association

Our mission is to foster, support, and represent string and orchestral activities through advocacy, resource sharing and providing opportunities for learning and growth. The Saskatchewan Orchestral Association (SOA) has an opportunity to engage its funded members, volunteer base, funder and donors through several different communication methods and tactics.

Our vision is an enhanced quality of life in Saskatchewan from stimulating a thriving orchestral community. The SOA is actively pursuing opportunities to provide and create accessibility to orchestral education province-wide and to expand educational opportunities to new and more culturally diverse populations.

Through education and advocacy, the goal of the SOA is to celebrate and share a variety of multi-cultural experiences available through orchestral music. The SOA's diversity plan will highlight inclusivity throughout the province using a communications strategy.

Our Values

We perform our Mission and pursue our Vision with behaviors that demonstrate the following defining values:

- Integrity – showing fairness and transparency; accepting accountability and managing our affairs according to the highest principles.
- Flexibility – being responsive to the needs of members, innovative in our approaches, and sensitive to the application of rules and policies in ways that recognize unique community settings.
- Openness – providing a welcoming environment that encourages new participants and demonstrates support for diversity.

Who We Are

Where the SOA came from and where it is going:

It became apparent in the early 1980's that access to provincial cultural funding was not available to amateur orchestral activities for both young and mature musicians. It was recommended to those who sought Provincial Trust monies for orchestras that a provincial organization be formed. Thus, the Saskatchewan Orchestral Association was incorporated in November of 1985.

Since then, the organization has grown to support and encompass virtually all orchestral groups and activities in the province, both amateur and professional. In 1992, an agreement was signed making SOA the provincial arm of the Association of Canadian Orchestras (now Orchestras Canada).

The SOA gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the
Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation



Communications Objectives

The SOA Communications/Diversity Plan is a living document that will continue to change in a way that fulfills the goals of the organization's mission, vision and values. It is a method of implementing the Strategic Plan and is crucial for successful roll-out and sustainability. The commitment of the SOA is to serve a diverse membership in a way that is meaningful to each member and member group and where member groups will engage with each other. This will be achieved through communications tactics that yield measurable results through either uptake or participation. The overarching objectives are:

1. To provide access to orchestral music through funding, advocacy, resource sharing and SOA driven programming.
2. To provide leadership opportunities in smaller communities including First Nations.
3. To offer opportunities for people to experience traditional and contemporary cultural expressions, experiences and activities.
4. To communicate the importance of recognizing orchestral music as a unique discipline where built-in funding systems are not readily available unlike school music programs with salaried teachers. To expand access to orchestral music to new and more diverse populations through advocacy, resource sharing, and providing opportunities for continuous growth.
5. To provide mentorship and resources to build capacity in new communities, remote and First Nations communities and with newcomer groups where orchestral education is currently inaccessible.
6. To expand educational opportunities in remote communities where access to orchestral activities are not present due to location, and socio-economic circumstances.
7. To continually adapt process and practice to the needs of diverse members.
8. To maintain strong relationships with members through board member liaisons and SOA engagement with member events.
9. To purposely engage with social media audiences.
10. To use metrics to monitor the success of communications tactics and to re-evaluate and re-plan as needed.

Diversity Objectives

Diversity relates to the inclusion of different types of people in a group. All have layers of diversity which make their perspective unique. Inclusion involves and values human differences and views such differences as strengths. The SOA believes that orchestras are for everybody. The everyday activities of the organization reflect the values of diversity and inclusiveness and send messages to the population that accepting, respecting and valuing individual differences is a benefit to everyone. Working with a living, breathing organization means that those who influence the direction of the organization must be alert to change, and flexible to obstacles that need navigating.

The SOA values Diversity by:

- Accepting, respecting and valuing individual differences.
- Engaging diverse populations and creating inclusive communities.
- Capitalizing on the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our staff and community members.
- Taking advantage of sharing educational opportunities between members from a variety of diverse backgrounds.

The SOA values Inclusion by:

- Identifying, addressing and removing barriers in processes, policies, plans, practices, programs and services.
- Facilitating opportunities that result in effective and meaningful participation.
- Creating ideas and solutions built upon a range of perspectives.

The SOA values an organizational Culture in which:

- People are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated.
- Individuals are encouraged to take action and be creative when resolving problems.
- Self-awareness and personal accountability are expected.

The SOA provides an environment where participants feel they can engage safely by:

- Seeking and supporting instruction that is relevant to the local character of the community.
- Enlisting the support of local mentors to increase trust and engagement.
- Providing opportunities for newcomers to become active in local groups.

The SOA engages communities by sharing the orchestral experience by:

- Offering presentations that outline a diverse definition of orchestras to school board meetings, First Nations band meetings, local cultural organizations, social services, and local groups. This is clarified through information packages that explain the SOA and its strategic goals.
- Highlighting the importance of music education, and the benefits of learning a stringed instrument in communities where orchestral music is not readily available.
- Publicizing a clear definition of an “orchestra”
- Develop materials showing orchestras in different lights tailored to a variety of audiences and including diverse content.
- Provide resources that define orchestral activities in a variety of cultures.
- Providing orchestral instruments to new audiences allowing a tactile opportunity.
- Create a real-time connection with orchestral players of a different skill level in a different geographical location using technology.
- Promote the work of members or non-members who are taking on new projects in new communities where access is limited.
- Increasing engagement by presenting ideas that are low or no cost.

The SOA formally adopted Orchestras Canada's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Declaration as part of their diversity strategy:

DEFINITIONS

Inclusion: The commitment to ensure active engagement of all people, and the removal or mitigation of barriers to that engagement.

Diversity: The representation of all people, including but not limited to: Indigenous peoples, people of varied gender identities, gender expressions and sexual orientation, ethno-culturally diverse groups, people with (dis)abilities (including physical, mental health, sensory, learning and/or chronic health disabilities), diverse language communities, people of various ages, people of varied socio-economic status, and people living in urban, suburban, rural, and remote communities.

Equity: Access to opportunities for all individuals.

Accessibility: The ability for all individuals to access, connect to, be aware of, and benefit from a system or organization.

GENERAL PRACTICES

We are **supportive partners**, developing mutually beneficial artistic and community collaborations with individuals and groups with diverse perspectives.

We engage in **ongoing internal training and education** to strengthen our work in inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

We are **familiar with funders' requirements and legislation** governing inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility, and seek to meet or exceed these standards.

We acknowledge that **our approaches to this work will evolve over time**.

LEADERSHIP

Leaders champion the commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

Our artistic programming reflects our commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

We acknowledge and articulate our role in developing future generations of orchestral musicians, conductors, and composers, and we help address inequalities of access to training and development opportunities, on our own or with partners.

RECRUITMENT

We consider tactical, strategic, and systemic factors as we recruit, retain, develop, and promote diverse artists, orchestra and administrative personnel, board members, and volunteers.

AUDIENCES

We gather and use comprehensive, current information about demographics and trends in the communities we serve.

Recognizing that everyone has the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community, we identify and work to mitigate factors that impede access to involvement in classical and/or orchestral music.

We work with our venues to create genuinely welcoming and safe spaces for all patrons.

Reference: <https://oc.ca/en/resource/inclusion-diversity-equity-and-accessibility-idea-declaration/>

External Communications Summary

2020-2023

Create Partnerships

- Meet with/contact other arts organizations to develop and initiate new programs

Create opportunities to build a board that is reflective of the entire cultural community specifically FN and Metis peoples, rural population, northern populations, youth and newcomers

- Board liaisons connecting to current and new groups using existing connections
- Converse and offer PR information packages to cultural, newcomer and rural audiences

Expansion – New Northern Initiatives

- Determined by available Annual General Funding amounts
- Explore opportunity for travelling workshop to be implemented throughout Saskatchewan

Create a pen-pal connection with an orchestral player of a different skill level in a different geographical location

- Create database of interested participants listing common interests and approach participants individually (or through parent/guardian/instructor) to create a match

Celebrate and publicize member stories/successes through various media channels

- Create Social media strategy/policy
- Create consented image database to highlight SOA and member programs
- Share member stories/successes/events via digital channels
- Release on already established digital channels

Create downloadable information package explaining who the SOA is and its strategic goals and create Public Member Profiles

- Release on web and social media

Prepare SOA prospective member/member orientation information package for new members, groups and communities

- Make available for download

Email Communications

- E-newsletter during key events
- Periodic email blasts around one key issue
- Implement mail chimp
- Share key information

Promotion of Member Events

- Web/Social Media, digital publications

Member Support

- Offer expertise from within the organization, connect member groups to each other
- Ensure membership is aware of contact information
- Potential for forums with a re-vamped webpage
- Re-vamped application process
- Clear guidelines for report and funder recognition process