



## **Saskatchewan Orchestral Association**

### **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Declaration**

#### **DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES**

Diversity relates to the inclusion of different persons 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 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 alerted to change and flexible to obstacles that need navigating.

#### **COMMITMENTS**

The Saskatchewan Orchestral Association is committed to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. Because we care about the vitality of our art form, we seek to better understand, reflect, engage, and celebrate our diverse community.

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 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.

#### **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.

## **PARTICIPATION**

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

## **ORCHESTRAL PROGRAMMING**

The SOA and its funded groups create orchestral programming that reflects our commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

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 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.

## **COMMUNITY 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 programming opportunities, on our own or with partners.

The SOA engages communities sharing the orchestral experience by:

- Supporting grass roots organizations to build the overall orchestral community.
- 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.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We acknowledge that orchestral organizations benefit from supportive public policy and community investment, and we acknowledge our responsibility to Western classical music traditions, to music of other cultures, and to the development of music inspired by the diversity of the people of Saskatchewan.