



MINNESOTA COUNCIL
ON FOUNDATIONS

Vision and Values of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



This is our **inspiration and framework** for our strategies and planning. It describes what we **aspire to build**...serving as a **touchstone for our future** actions.

Defining the “why”

At MCF, we value Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Our D.E.I. vision is a framework for how we strategically place our values in action while measuring organizational impact. This vision is a tool used to support our programs, services, methods of communication, internal policies and systems and on-going learning as a bold commitment to collectively advance prosperity and equity within the philanthropic community and beyond.

Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity

Diversity is a value that brings unique perspectives of life experience to the decision-making table. Diversity focuses particularly on:

- Racial and ethnic groups (Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinx, African Americans and other blacks, American Indians and Alaska Natives)
- LGBT populations
- Individuals with disabilities
- Women and womxn (trans and non-binary inclusive)
- Geography (rural)

Equity

Equity promotes justice, impartiality, and fairness within procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the degree to which individuals with diverse perspectives and backgrounds are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes of an organization or group. While a truly inclusive group is necessarily diverse, a diverse group may or may not be “inclusive.”

We visualize a future of...

Generosity

- We are generous. We strive to offer people feedback when intent is misaligned with impact, grounded with the benefit of the doubt.
- We seek to share knowledge (and skills) from our successes and mistakes. We suspend judgement, and graciously recognize the vulnerability it takes to share.
- We value and include the voice of members and other stakeholders in our work and decision making. We center the voice of those most impacted by the work and the decision(s).

Our Vision of Generosity

Those who are sharing experience, knowledge, and/or skills feel recognized and valued. Those most impacted are authorized to make decisions.

Honesty and Transparency

- We are honest. We seek to provide greater transparency in all aspects of our work, particularly in relationships and processes.
- We acknowledge the presence and impact of historical and existing power dynamics. We commit to naming those dynamics and minimizing them by shifting organizational structures and systems.
- We are open about our challenges and mistakes.
- We share how decisions are made.

Our Vision of Honesty and Transparency

We have the relational capital to be able to name when a power move is being made, and have a process established to address what happened and why. We assess power dynamics regularly and intentionally, institutionalizing policies and practices that minimize and neutralize harm. We name our mistakes, and institutionalize learning by documenting challenges, mistakes, and the steps taken toward finding solutions. We provide a rationale that includes critical reflections for the decisions we make.

Courage

- We are courageous. We speak up on issues that threaten the fabric of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our communities.
- We are willing to take a stand on contested grounds.
- We employ our influence and leverage our power to make a significant impact for progress toward Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Our Vision of Courage

We use our voice to speak up on actions and activities within our organization that do not align with our vision and values for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; without fear of retaliation. We spend our political, financial, and other capital in ways that make meaningful impact for our broader community, especially for those most impacted by inequities and injustice. We do this even when it may be unpopular, or the perceived risk seems high.

Endurance

- We have endurance.
- We acknowledge the continuous nature of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work and make an intentional commitment to stick with it, even when it's hard or we don't know what to do!

Our Vision of Endurance

Board, leadership, staff and members develop skillsets, mindsets, and toolsets of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We commit to the ongoing nature of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work; there is no finish line. Year after year is measurably more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive.

We acknowledge that no one of us, alone, has all the answers, but together we can keep making progress toward Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We can recognize when practice is hard, but we cannot excuse ourselves from the work.

A **vision** helps us have **shared meaning** while collectively **advancing prosperity and equity.**



A **vision** is the bridge between purpose and strategy—it **keeps us grounded**, connected, and **holds us accountable** to doing this work in an impactful way.



We strive to **cultivate a culture that generates a sense of belonging**, especially for those pushed to the margins



We take **every opportunity available to implement practices, principles, and policies that further Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.**



Practice

- We are practitioners. We strive to walk the talk!
- We take every opportunity available – incremental to significant – to implement practices, principles, and policies that further Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Our Vision of Practice

Our professional and organizational actions and activities represent our vision, values, and commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. MCF provides practical support for itself and its members to create and implement practices, principles, and policies that change their respective organizations. Our organizations shift their respective cultures to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. With as much intention given the day-to-day practices, as the bigger, larger, more public initiatives.

Humility

- We are humble. We don't have all the answers.
- We acknowledge that the best solutions come from those most impacted.
- We have genuine curiosity, especially of ourselves, in order to build and hone awareness of self and others.
- We embrace the tension that comes with the growth of increased understanding about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our Vision of Humility

We are comfortable saying, "I don't know," asking questions, and seeking consensual guidance from individuals and communities most impacted. We recognize that there can be many solutions or approaches to problem solving, and value diverse forms and systems of knowledge, particularly as they rise from those most impacted. We recognize that growth happens in discomfort and we embrace pushing the edge of our comfort zones.

Transformation

- We listen, learn, and adapt.
- We are intentional about understanding philanthropy's role, contribution, and perpetuation of social inequities and how we can contribute to solutions.
- We take learning personally and make a commitment to continuous development around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – no matter our role or our positional authority at our organizations or in the field.
- We reflect individually and collectively so that we can adapt. Listening to members and stakeholders and centering those at the margins is a core function of organizational strategy in policy and practice.
- We recognize that change work is iterative, and we hold space and grace for learning and growth to take place.

Our Vision for Transformation

We take accountability for understanding the historic and existing ways in which our profession, organization, and field contribute to and perpetuate social inequity and injustice. We leverage our capital to contribute to solutions, especially the solutions put forth by those most impacted. Responsive listening, particularly to those most impacted, is a core competency and organizational function. We recognize and understand how we professionally and organizationally contribute to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion outcomes, and continuously and intentionally increase our capacity to do so. We are critically reflective, individually and together, in order to make meaningful adjustments that move Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion forward.

Belonging and Connecting

- Here, you belong! We strive to cultivate a culture that generates a sense of belonging, especially for those pushed to the margins.
- We understand the history of harm, in some ways inflicted by philanthropy, and look to engage in the restorative work needed to repair those harms.
- We lift healing, self-care and compassion as an essential capacity for endurance in order to make change and impact in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- We extend trust and put our trust in action.

Our Vision of Belonging and Connecting

We put people first, and at the center of our work, focusing on the diversity dimensions of race/ethnicity, LGBT, disability, gender, and geography. We work to repair harm, and prioritize harm reduction for ourselves, for our communities. We create cultures of care within our organizations so that we can sustain the ongoing nature of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work. We build and demonstrate trustworthiness through words and actions.