APASO 2014
Brave Space: Equity in the Arts
Preconference
Participant Snapshots

Age

Race/Ethnicity
Gender

Sexual Orientation
### Ability

- **able-bodied**: 50%
- **currently able-bodied**: 12%
- **NA, none or No Response**: 27%
- **arthritis**: 4%
- **CFS**: 4%
- **mobility issues**: 4%

### Religion

- **Catholic**: 12%
- **Christian**: 27%
- **agnostic**: 4%
- **atheist**: 8%
- **Christian/ Eastern**: 4%
- **I believe in God.**: 4%
- **spiritual**: 4%
- **Unknown or No Response**: 3%
Stage for the Arts Sector

- "The Club" Organization: 16%
- Compliance/Token Organization: 60%
- Affirmative Action Organization: 24%

Stage for Participant Organizations

- "The Club" Organization: 3%
- Compliance/Token Organization: 20%
- Affirmative Action Organization: 40%
- Re-defining/Self-renewing Organization: 32%
Anything else you would like to share

I am looking forward to this discussion for diversity and its challenges/opportunities are starting to be explored by our membership. As a service organization, we are looking at a variety of ways we can help the membership as they tackle this important issue.

I think I feel that most of 'us' are in 'The Club' phase but I don't think it is conscious for the most part. This is what is so uncomfortable. 'We' think we are better and may even pride ourselves on 'being pretty good.' The self-reflection that will be necessary to confront how stuck we really are - is damn uncomfortable.

Very interesting as an ASO to be part of this conversation, and to try and drive it in the community. Also interesting to see a number of organizations "struggle" to hire staff, designers, stage managers of color, and not be able to find them. And as an ASO, try to help with that.

I am tired of conversation about inclusivity/diversity in the arts which revolve around niceties. Diversity is not a goal. Diversity is a qualifier. When you say "we are diverse" you aren't saying anything. More diverse than who? An object singularly cannot be diverse. The goal should rather be to address a problem. That problem is oppression (racism, ableism, homophobia, sexism, etc.). Until arts leaders are ready and willing to own up to the fact that their art-making systems and institutions (including the philanthropic world) are systemically oppressive, then we're going to end up talking in a circle of platitudes. And that serves no one.

I would also love to address either the selection of material arts orgs pick for their season, color blind casting, or how do we make our city's arts organizations and ourselves more attractive to diverse communities thereby attracting more artists and management.

Struggling with the challenge of balancing deeper conversation/action on individual types of oppression (race, ability, gender, etc) with also keeping equity for ALL in the forefront. Sometimes people broaden the conversation as a way to avoid a deeper dive into issues they find most challenging, usually race.

I think that women should be divided from people of color. In arts organizations there is far more room for women than there are for people of color, and putting them together often makes an organization look more enlightened than it is.

As an organization, we have just truly started on this journey. The more I learn and grow, the more I learn how much more I need to learn and grow. The process has been very layered and, at times, very uncomfortable as I confront who I think I am and who I really am. I am very much looking forward to this session.

From anecdotal observations: trends in social media are reflecting/influencing the next generations' view on gender identity. Cos-play, Cons, and Tumblr "fandoms" allow today's youth (wow, I sound so old) to be more fluid in their own gender identities. Just something to watch...

While I feel that the broad based arts sector is in a compliance/token organization, I feel that my community is closer to the club stage.

Most organizations want (or say that they want) to be more inclusive. Most of us mean it, I hope. Inclusion takes a lot of work and there are constantly other fires to put out as we struggle to survive as arts organizations. I greatly appreciate the building fire on this issue to push us organization-wide and industry-wide to do the work of prioritizing this. I wish as freaking arts organizations that we'd be leaders on this issue instead of acting (finally) when chased. But since we have not led, I'm glad we're being chased. Also, regarding this survey -- if the white male specificity were less prominent in the categories, I'd have an easier time identifying where we are. There are a lot of women run organizations (including mine) that have not succeeded in being as inclusive as we should be either.

I think we all think we are higher up on this scale than we really are.

I am particularly interested in discussing strategy and tactics - we've talked these issues pretty well to death in this field without making substantive progress.

how do you expect to authentically discuss inclusion when the resource utilized above references "interethnic" and includes gender bias pronouns? references only "white men"?
Your thoughts on the “heart” of inclusion and equity issues most impacting the arts

Understanding any fear folks have regarding diversity and equality.

Gosh - I’m even afraid to try and verbalize something for fear of saying it wrong. What does that say?

The idea around privilege, and that if we don’t figure this out, we are going to lose the power the arts have to transform. And that as ASOs, we have to be brave in our fight for justice and equality, however we define it. We can’t let up.

Pay your interns. Unpaid internships are ubiquitous in the arts sector both in the for profit and non-profit sectors. Unpaid internships are bad for everyone. They depress wages for paid employees, they provide inferior work experience and lower rates of subsequent employment, and open up employers to legal risks. Also, unpaid internships serve as a de facto barrier to entry into the arts making it exponentially more challenging for people of color, queer, and people with disabilities to enter the professional arts field since all these communities are disproportionately affected by poverty.

Artists who are resistant to work/perform/go into "bad" neighborhoods.

Finding ways to make it possible and productive to build multi-racial, multi-gender, multi-ability etc groups who can work together effectively to dismantle systems of oppression. Particularly, how to acknowledge the additional risk/harm in this for people in oppressed groups - how to build support systems around that. And how to engage more people with privilege in the action-oriented efforts.

Race and social equity

Proper recruitment and training of new arts leaders

How to educate an organization about diversity and to truly buy in to the implementation of the commitment.

I would look at economic situations and education. I think these two factors influence how people interact with the arts.

How do we, as APASO organizations, lead our communities into these discussions and help make impactful changes towards inclusivity, particularly when facing resistance from our member organizations?

Overcoming our own individuals biases and learning how to think more openly.

Education...formal and extended.

"cultural competency and building real relationships outside your comfort zone"

Training for our managers and leaders on not just the importance of this issue for our field, but language on how to speak about it with our colleagues. I think this includes training existing white managers on how to be "White Allies"

How does an organization address and/or rectify perceptions of inequity in balloted awards systems?

how do you build trust in a community that is underrepresented in programming now, but that you want to build more inclusion and equity among?

I would like us to discuss why we talk so damn much about diversity, but we don’t REALLY take steps to deal with this - most of our organizations are dominated by underpaid white women, according to the most recent AFTA survey about this, so what are we actually doing about it? What are some seriously practical things we can do to solve this? Can we agree that in one year, when we meet again, we will have X accomplished? What is that X?

mixed casts that reflect the mixed reality we live in

"first voice perspective"

How do you communicate to those that do not think inclusion and equity are values important and vital to sustaining the arts. (Not sure if this is the first conversation I would have, but certainly one I would like to hear).

How to expand and diversify the personal experiences of leaders/decision-makers in order to expand the knowledge, understanding and relationships that support inclusion and equity.