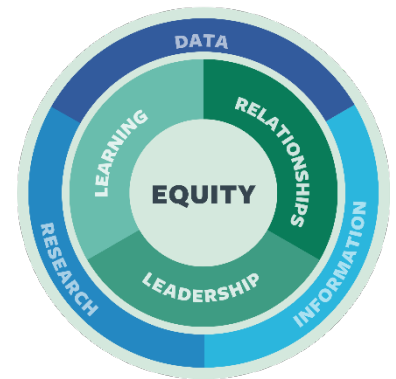


# Equity Commitment

*This Corporation and the Board of Directors are committed to incorporating the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (“DEI”) in the governance and operations of the Corporation. These values shall be codified in a DEI policy adopted by the Board of Directors.*

In 2013, Maine Philanthropy Center (MPC) began a formal commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by including it as a priority in our 5-year strategic plan. Since then, the organization has continued to explore the ways that equity is interwoven in our work. In 2021, MPC developed a new strategic framework that squarely places equity at the center of everything we do. Our new vision commits to creating a world that is equitable:

*We collaborate to create a vibrant, just, and equitable Maine. A vibrant, just, and equitable Maine is built upon the acknowledgment of the deep, rich history and contributions of the Wabanaki peoples and works to be in a restorative relationship with Indigenous communities and the earth – so that the natural environment is stewarded sustainably and with care. It is a state that promotes and secures the health and wellbeing of all Maine people. In this Maine, all people are ensured, under the law and in practice, equal rights, protections, opportunities, and access to the resources they need regardless of race, gender identity and expression, age, ability, socio-economic level, immigration status, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.*



Through this commitment, we acknowledge the role that philanthropy has and does play in perpetuating inequities. While the intention of philanthropy has always been to “do good”, it was created by and for those with great access to power. Much of that power came from wealth tied to Indigenous land theft, the slave trade, the extraction of natural resources, and other harmful practices designed to consolidate power and further marginalize those without it. Philanthropy continues to benefit from this infrastructure to this day. It is our duty and obligation as philanthropic professionals to interrogate this system, work to repair the harm caused by it, and shift power with the intention of undoing inequity.

As an organization we strive to embody the call to action of *Decolonizing Wealth*: finding ways to “effectively mov[e] money to where the hurt is the worst — using money as medicine” by building “deep, authentic knowledge of the issues and communities” most impacted.

As part of our organization’s ongoing commitment to equity, and to create a legal accountability mechanism, the organization added the requirement for a DEI commitment in our most recent by-law review. The commitments outlined below are initial ways in which MPC is committed to uprooting inequitable policy and practice within our organizational structure and creating an organizational culture that centers equity.

## Our Commitments

Below are categorized action items we are committing to implement over the course of the next few years. These items are intended to give staff and Board of Directors guidance in this work. We anticipate the Executive Committee reviewing these items every three years or as needed.

### Programming & Services

Systemic barriers exist within our programming model – including financial barriers in accessing programming and resources, lack of diverse voices and perspectives in decision making and design roles, and barriers to participation.

We will:

- Build feedback systems and place impacted and historically excluded communities at the center of program design and decision-making;
- Develop and employ policies that mitigate barriers to participating in MPC programming and create more accessible spaces;
- Ensure meaningful compensation for individuals and organizations invited to share their knowledge, experience, skills, and expertise.

### Governance & Operations

Traditional governance structures reinforce systemic inequities and power differentials. We are committed to reimagining what governance looks like in our nonprofit and advancing more equitable models. We also recognize that to embody an equitable organization, we must transform how we operate. To this end, we are committed to interrogating practices and policies that do not align with our values, are extractive in nature, and reinforce systems of inequity. We are committed to channeling our organizational resources to support organizations and companies that align with our values.

We will:

- Foster a board culture that meaningfully welcomes, incorporates and retains diverse voices from historically excluded groups and represents our membership and the rich diversity of Maine;
- Engage in continued learning about anti-racism and anti-racist organizational models and governance and share what we learn;
- Ensure that the voices of historically excluded communities are prioritized and welcomed in board recruitment, including removing systemic barriers to participation in our board;
- Annually benchmark our racial equity work against our peers in the philanthropy serving community;
- Build a learning organization that deepens our understanding around intersectional equity issues;
- Create equitable recruitment, hiring, and retention practices;
- Create compensation policies and benefits that align with our values;
- Interrogate harmful power structures within staff and shift toward trust based decision-making models and non-hierarchical organizational models;
- Use policy to drive resources to historically excluded communities that have been most impacted by anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism and systemic oppression and ensure we are channeling organizational resources toward service providers (including vendors & businesses) that align with our commitment to equity

### Advocacy & Leadership

Policy and issue advocacy are critical to making Maine a more equitable state. MPC strives to lead our sector to harness its collective power in advocacy, allowing transformational change for the community.

We will:

- Use our voice and leadership to advance policies and legislation that center the voices of historically excluded groups and increase financial resources and power to these groups;
- Build resources, tools, and systems within philanthropy that advance equity, build relationships, foster understanding, and reduce barriers to funding;
- Be transparent about the changes we are making within our organization through regular communication and accountability tools and model for the sector what shifting toward an equitable organization looks like.

## **Accountability**

The governance committee with the President & CEO are responsible for ensuring these values are reflected in our work while the board still retains collective responsibility to measure the progress of these commitments. A requirement to have this commitment is enshrined in our by-laws and it compels us to maintain this organizational document as a critical piece of our governing documents.

Additionally, our staff work plan will itemize specific action steps we will take on an annual basis.

If you would like to share anonymous feedback of how we are doing with our equity commitment, please use this fill out [this form](#).