

## **Mission Statement**

Heritage of Pride works toward a future without discrimination where all people have equal rights under the law. We do this by producing LGBTQIA+ Pride events that inspire, educate, commemorate and celebrate our diverse community.

## **Heritage of Pride's Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion Policy**

### **A More Vibrant Rainbow**

Diversity, accessibility and inclusion are essential to Heritage of Pride's (HOP) mission of working toward equality for all. HOP strives to act as a model for best practices on the fronts of diversity, accessibility and inclusion. We respect, value, and celebrate the unique attributes, characteristics, and perspectives that make each person who they are. We believe that by bringing a diverse spectrum of individuals together, we collectively and more effectively may address the issues that face our communities. Our aim is for our leaders, volunteers, staff, participants, attendees, organizational strategies, public communications, marketing efforts, sponsors, partners, and events/programs all reflect these core values.

### **Definitions:**

**Diversity:** The quality of being different or unique at the individual or group level, including on any of the following non-exhaustive bases: age; ethnicity; gender; gender identity; gender expression; language(s) spoken; nationality; immigration status; political affiliation(s); parental status; physical, mental, and developmental abilities; body type; race; religion; sexual orientation; serostatus; skin color; socio-economic status; work and behavioral styles; the perspectives of each individual shaped by their nation, experiences, and culture—and more.

**Inclusion:** A strategy to maximize diversity. Diversity always exists in social systems. Inclusion, on the other hand, must be created. In order to maximize diversity, an environment must be created where people feel supported, listened to, and able to do their personal best.

**Accessibility:** A project that makes it possible for all people to meaningfully participate in the organization. Like inclusion, accessibility must be created. It must be possible for all people physically to attend meetings and events, to obtain or use the programs we provide, to understand and appreciate the experiences and information we offer, and to feel welcomed and accommodated.

## **Statement of Principle**

Half a century ago, a civil uprising at the Stonewall Inn provided the inspiration for the first Pride and sparked a movement for LGBTQIA+ people to come together and fight for equal rights under the law. Heritage of Pride was founded in 1984 to carry that legacy forward through the annual NYC Pride events.

As Pride has grown over the last 50 years, so, too, has our understanding of what it means to represent our diverse community, to foster an inclusive experience, and to expand the accessibility of all that we do. That means respecting the intersectionality of identity and promoting the visibility of hidden or unknown communities, engaging people directly to find solutions for the communities they represent, and operating under a framework that values justice and equity for those communities that have suffered discrimination. A characteristic-neutral opportunity may not actually provide equality if we fail to recognize the cultural contexts of our society. Our work requires bias-conscious fairness, active efforts to identify and dismantle barriers to participation, and a commitment to making amends for historical and current discriminatory practices. Today, we are committed to making diversity, accessibility, and inclusion central to all that we do.

Not only is diversity, accessibility, and inclusion vital to achieving our mission of equal rights under the law for all people, it's also essential to the long-term success of NYC Pride from both a cultural and financial perspective. We believe that NYC Pride, as an organization, must be diverse, accessible, and inclusive to remain relevant, fiscally sound, and socially impactful over the next 50 years.

Among our current and upcoming initiatives include the following:

- The Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion committee meets monthly to examine ways to promote these values within our organization.
- We provide visibility platforms to increasingly diverse community leaders and representatives. This includes our entertainer selection, our March grand marshals, VIPs, and line-up, our speakers at educational events, and more.
- We have emphasized diversity in our staff hiring guidelines and tolerate no discrimination in the workplace for paid staff or volunteers.
- We are making efforts to improve our leadership pipeline to achieve greater representation of the community we serve.
- We have enacted a number of projects to make our volunteer experiences more inclusive and accessible.
- We endeavor to make our marketing and communications more reflective of our entire community, our events more welcoming to all, and our efforts more

educational to address the needs and concerns of underrepresented voices in our movement.

- We are working toward a better model of volunteer and staff training that values diversity, accessibility, and inclusion as core expectations.
- Every year, we examine our budget for more opportunities to increase the accessibility of our events, whether that means providing accommodations for people with handicaps, translation services for people with different language skills, or free and reduced-cost options for individuals of various socio-economic resources.
- We have begun to prioritize diversity in our supplier and service provider contracts.
- We offer an annual community grants program, which provides direct financial assistance to local nonprofits, and we endeavor to prioritize groups and projects that represent the most vulnerable or under-represented among us.
- We are actively seeking partnerships with organizations that center transgender, gender nonconforming people, and people of color to collaborate on events that will be by and for those communities.