



CINCINNATI BALLET COMPANY INC.
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Cincinnati Ballet Company Inc. (CB) begins its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) plan by acknowledging its guiding principles grounded in its Mission, Vision, and Beliefs.

MISSION

Cincinnati Ballet's mission is to enrich, expand, and excel in the art of dance through performance, a high-caliber academy, and impactful education and engagement in local to global communities.

VISION

Cincinnati Ballet is recognized as a premier ballet company, acclaimed for inspiring excellence through the power of dance, attracting world-class artists, and building a supportive and diverse audience.

BELIEFS

- We believe dance expresses a humanity that can be felt by everyone.
- We believe collaboration ignites new possibilities.
- We believe a disciplined approach is essential to success and creativity.
- We believe in creating a culture of belonging.

WHY A DEIA PLAN

CB has pledged to move forward to become a more inclusive and welcoming company and to understand how to eliminate racism within CB, the ballet industry, and the community in which it lives. This is reflected in CB's strategic narrative. CB believes it can influence a new direction in dance, embrace programming, impact diverse and expanding audiences, and increase community outreach, all while creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for its dancers and staff.

PURPOSE

This document serves to record CB's charter to become a more diverse and inclusive organization. CB has employed Lean Six Sigma Methodology to develop and implement this Board-approved DEIA plan. This is a living document, and the overall strategy and goal are constant. Changing market forces, resources' emerging trends, and best practices can impact and change the tactics, KPIs, and timeline.

CB DEIA TIMELINE

CB has a long history in promoting DEIA in its art form and community. CB's adoption of the Horton Technique in 1970 created the platform for CB to incorporate diverse elements into its productions. Horton developed his own approach to dance that incorporated Native American Folk Dance, Japanese arm gestures, Javanese and Balinese isolations, and Afro-Caribbean elements, to name a few. This technique is highlighted in the *New Works* program.

CB is recognized for elevating female choreographers, including Jennifer Archibald (BIPOC choreographer) as a resident choreographer, and programs that are exclusively choreographed by women. CB was highlighted in *Pointe Magazine* in 2019 for these efforts. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* recognized CB in 2015 for its efforts for creating a diverse dance company.



CincyDance! has provided dance curriculum for the underserved in Cincinnati Public Schools for 25 years. Ballet Moves has served the community of unique abilities (Downs Syndrome, Autism, and Cerebral Palsy) since 2012.

The Otto M. Budig Academy provides scholarships to 25 dancers annually to increase the pipeline of diverse dancers to the professional ranks.

The below high-level timeline demonstrates CB’s ongoing commitment to provide an outlet for diverse voices, dancers, and choreographers and increase access to dance for BIPOC and members of our community with disabilities.

CB DEIA TIMELINE	
1963	CB Founded
1970	Horton Technique
1991	First BIPOC Dancer
1994	Ballet Center Opens
1995	CincyDance! Launched
1996	Otto M. Budig Academy Founded
1997	Female Artistic Director
2004	Asylum Seekers Join CB
2012	Ballet Moves Launched Academy Boys Class Launched
2014	BIPOC Resident Choreographer Elementz Collaboration
2015	<i>Lady of the Camellias</i> (BIPOC lead) Enquirer Article on Diversity at CB
2016	<i>The Nutcracker</i> (First Dancer with Disabilities)
2017	<i>New Works</i> 100% Women <i>The Nutcracker</i> (First BIPOC Clara)
2018	First HR Director (Vet/Hispanic) DanceUSA: The Equity Project
2019	CB Gender Pay Equity Review IABD Auditions Blind Resumes
2020	Implicit Bias Training First Person Language Walnut Hill Area Council Listening Sessions (Internal & Community) Natural Hair and Costume Protocols DEIA Task Force Launched DEIA Survey
2021	DEIA Plan Submitted to ArtsWave Board Diversity Measurement Margaret and Michael Valentine Center for Dance Opens

DEFINITIONS

CB adopted the definitions set forth by D5 Coalition, UC Berkeley, and Racial Equity Tools Glossary. The following definitions have been adopted by CB:

- **Diversity** – Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender – but also age, national origin, religion, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.
- **Equity** – Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources.
- **Inclusion** – Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.
- **Accessibility** – Accessibility is the ability to access the functionality, and possible benefit, of some system or entity and is used to describe the degree to which a product such as a device, service, or environment is accessible by as many people as possible.

The following definition of “cultural equity” is adopted from ArtsWave:

- Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people – including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion – are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Dance is for everyone by everyone.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility move us.

Cincinnati Ballet is committed to transform our company to be more reflective of the diversity in our communities onstage, backstage, and in our offices, studios, classrooms, and boardroom.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are foundational to the mission and values of Cincinnati Ballet. We welcome and celebrate cultural differences, all socioeconomic backgrounds, and embrace our responsibility to provide and prioritize access, inclusion, and belonging.

We are passionate about creating art that is innovative, reflective, and accessible. We will continue to create a professional and educational environment that is a safe place for expression for anyone who intersects with our organization. Through our inclusive environment, we empower everyone to share their unique stories, points of view, and ideas as we continually learn, improve, and develop.

GOALS

1. Increase the diversity of the trustees.
2. Implement robust processes to attract, recruit, hire, and retain an inclusive administrative staff, dancer roster, artistic staff/faculty, independent contractors (choreographers/designers), and vendors.
3. Present programming to further attract audiences that reflect our community, tells community stories, and is accessible to everyone.
4. Further develop Otto M. Budig Academy initiatives and training acumen to better serve as a pipeline of diverse talent to professional ranks, whether in Cincinnati or elsewhere.
5. Develop focused programming and initiatives to deliver to the Walnut Hills community, its school-aged children, and regional communities with specific accessibility needs.

AREAS OF FOCUS**Board**

- 1) Deliberate recruitment.
- 2) Develop benchmark for open positions to be filled by diverse candidates.
- 3) Implement training.
- 4) Remove perceived monetary barrier.

Staff

- 1) Deliberate recruitment.
- 2) Blind resumes.
- 3) Implement on-going training for staff - Sensitivity, Unconscious Bias, People First Language.

Dancers

- 1) Deliberate recruitment.
- 2) Define core dance characteristics of a CB dancer and implement a hiring rubric.
- 3) Implement on-going training for dancers - Sensitivity, Unconscious Bias, People First Language.

Programming

- 1) Increase BIPOC/ALAANA choreographers.
- 2) Form a "Programming Sensitivity Advisory Committee" to evaluate programming annually.
- 3) Cultivate diverse local talent.
- 4) Implement policies to support natural hair, tights, and make-up on stage.
- 5) Nutcracker-specific:
 - a. Adjust Act II Divertissements in program.
 - b. Implement changes to remove suggestive offenses specifically re: Chinese, Spanish, Arabian.

Audiences

- 1) Host community partner performances.
- 2) Implement audience education on programmatic choice making.
- 3) Launch Community Performance Series as an introduction for dance.
- 4) Launch accessibility solutions.
- 5) Launch Spanish language program for Family Series.

Academy Training

- 1) Integrate artistic staff in the education and promotion of academy students.
- 2) Integrate higher level faculty in Ballet Foundations.
- 3) Launch PTD and CB2 mentorship to CincyDance!.
- 4) Introduce new and expanded offerings for recreation and adult training.
- 5) Fully fund scholarships for female students of color
- 6) Increase the diversity of the PTD program.
- 7) Implement career progression and advancement of students from the Academy to PTD to CB2.

Education

- 1) Enhance and expand education programming.
- 2) Grow pathways of greater accessibility.
- 3) Deploy the Community Studio.
- 4) Expand programs that utilize the mobility system.

Community

- 1) Deploy the Center for Dance as a community resource.