

Instruments of Hope

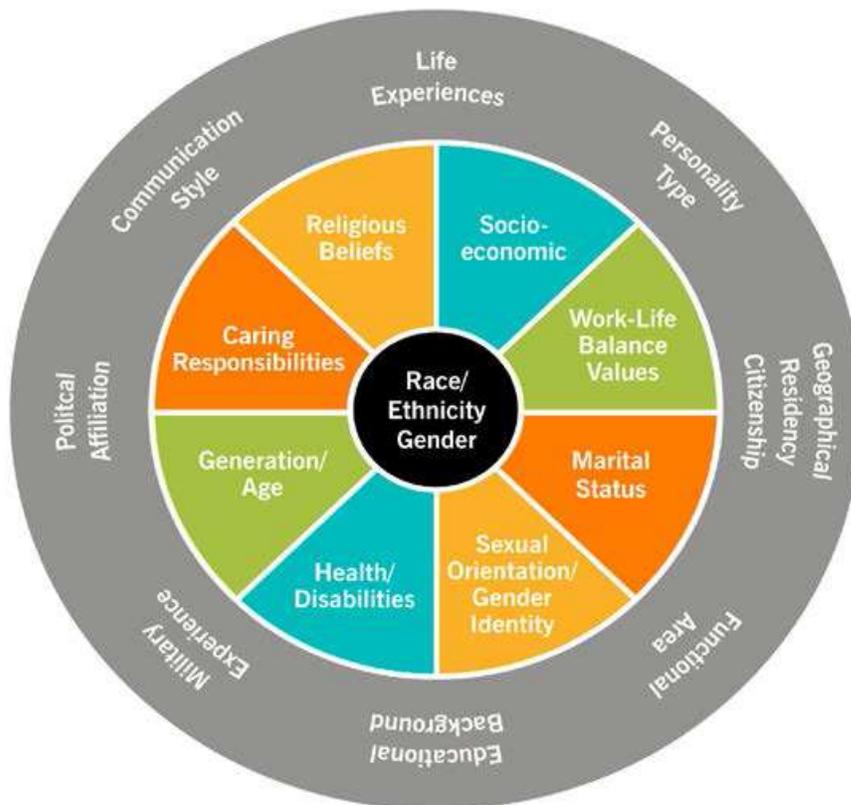
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

(Finalized – February 13, 2018)

General Statement of Commitment

West Michigan’s spirit, vitality, success and character depend on the increasingly diverse mix of people who live and work in and who visit our community. Instruments of Hope (IOH) recognizes that the future strength of our organization and our community rests firmly on its commitment to value, respect, and embrace the richness of a diverse population. IOH also recognizes the variety of motives, including faith perspectives, which animate an ongoing struggle for justice and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. IOH seeks to enhance the quality of life for all residents and visitors in the Grand Rapids metropolitan area as this dynamic community continues to grow and change. IOH’s ability to achieve this goal and to foster a commitment to organizational excellence can best be pursued with intentional diversity among its governing body, volunteers, grantees, donors, vendors, friends and associates.

Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (continued)

IOH believes diversity encompasses, but is not limited to, ethnicity, race, color, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, immigration status, economic circumstances, physical and mental abilities and characteristics, faith tradition and philosophy (see, e.g. figure above; referred to below as “diversity characteristics”). IOH respects and celebrates all forms of diversity that contribute to a healthy, caring and thriving community. To this end, IOH is committed to changing in order to become a more welcoming partner to groups with diverse cultures, philosophies, worldviews and experiences.

Governance and Administration

IOH is committed to fostering an organization that respects and appreciates diversity in its many forms. Consistent with its governing legal structure:

1. The IOH Board of Directors will seek to engage community representatives in decision-making and advisory roles who will bring diversity and varying points of view and life experiences to the Board;
2. The IOH Board will hold itself and the President accountable for recruiting volunteers that reflect the broad diversity of the community and will provide all board and committee members with opportunities to develop fully their work-related as well as personal skills and talents;
3. The IOH Board will respect the observation of religious holidays and make reasonable accommodations for all board and committee members of all faith traditions to observe religious practice;
4. The IOH Board will work with the President to develop meaningful metrics and performance measures by which to assess progress in implementing this Policy.

Community Partners

Instruments of Hope values organizations within our community that share a commitment to promoting the diversity, equity and inclusion of all people – newcomers and long-time residents. IOH will:

1. Seek partners in philanthropy, not-for-profit organizations, government, corporations and the private sector that incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion into their missions and into their daily practice;
2. Actively encourage diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices among organizations with which IOH works, including in all affinity groups of which the IOH is a member or in which IOH Board members participate; and,
3. Collaborate with donors of varying means and interests to promote a healthy, caring community committed to diversity, equity and inclusion.

IOH believes that organizations that are more diverse and inclusive are stronger and more likely to succeed in achieving their missions.

Consistent with its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, IOH affirms:

To submit IOH board-approved diversity, equity and inclusion policies and a description of the ways in which the organization is continuously and intentionally enhancing its inclusive practices;

To submit key IOH board demographic information about composition of the board, volunteers and constituencies served unless precluded by individual privacy concerns;

That no person is excluded from services based on the diversity characteristics described above; and,

That no person is excluded from governance, either as board members, committee members or volunteer participation based on the diversity characteristics described above.

IOH will strongly encourage *all* organizations to which it provides resources or support to embrace diversity, equity and inclusion as defined in this Policy. IOH certainly appreciates that faith-based organizations have played and continue to play important roles in delivering programs and services and in advancing the situation of disadvantaged groups and individuals. Some of these organizations require doctrinal alignment by staff, volunteers or those in governance and leadership positions, which includes views less inclusive than articulated in this Policy. While IOH will consider working with such organizations, applicants will be evaluated based on the vibrancy of ongoing deliberations about these issues and on their ability to identify distinctive ways in which specific programs for which funding is sought implement IOH's mission and goals and advance the situation of disadvantaged groups and individuals.

Organizations that serve a specifically defined population at need or charitable class of persons are not considered non-inclusive or discriminatory.

IOH will periodically evaluate the diversity, equity and inclusion practices of grantees and will report on the results to the Board of Directors.

Communications & Perceptions

IOH will actively promote awareness of its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, including featuring it prominently on its web site and in other communications. IOH will regularly evaluate perceptions of its diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.

Continuous Learning and Improvement.

Instruments of Hope is committed to rigorous review of and continuous improvement in its diversity, equity and inclusion practices. IOH will actively seek to learn from others and share what it learns. IOH Board and Committee members will seek out learning opportunities about best practices in enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion. The Board of Directors will review progress in implementing this Policy, evaluate new learning and the practices of peer organizations, and will update this Policy as needed to incorporate best practices and continuously serve as a community leader in this important field.