



OMAHA SYMPHONY

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Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access

Omaha Symphony’s Strategic Vision:

Be an adaptable, innovative, and valuable resource for our community.

Foster Inclusion

This work is being led by a cohort representing all facets of the Omaha Symphony – musicians, staff, board, and governing members – known as the IDEA Committee.

Statement of Intent

The Omaha Symphony’s mission is to enrich people’s lives through the experience of live orchestral music. We recognize that we must continue to evolve in order to represent the people we serve. We are focused on creating a welcoming space, nurturing connections to ensure the Omaha community experiences and participates in music in a way that serves, reflects, uplifts and entertains. Through equitable, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive work within our organization, we are committed to review our history with rigor and honesty to learn and build a better, more just future.

IDEA Imperatives

The Omaha Symphony intends to be anti-racist and anti-oppressive by systematically addressing the barriers for full participation from musicians, staff, governance, and the community. We intend our approach to be proactive in creating an inclusive environment.

We are living out these values in the following imperatives for the 2024-25 Season

In Our Administration/Governance	In Our Programs	In Our Orchestra	In Our Community
Enlist consultants to expand on anti-bias training in addition to HR compliance best-practices	All Classical programs to have at least one composer of a historically excluded identity (BIPOC, female, and/or LGBTQ+)	We intend for the negotiation of musician’s Collectively Bargained Agreement to include a review for bias	Proactively engage Audio descriptions for 3 concerts, and ASL interpretation for 5 concerts
Distribute a glossary of shared definitions and synopses of previous training sessions	Collaborate with Forte partners on at least one subscription concert	Continue the conversation on tenure policies with titled chairs	Pilot a ticket program for classical series significantly reduced tickets for individuals at or below the poverty line

Reflection of past imperatives, by season

- Green indicates imperative was considered successful by the committee, either because it was a one-time task, or because that work has become an Omaha Symphony best practice.
- Yellow indicates imperative is an ongoing conversation or a larger initiative requiring continued research, development, and feedback. Yellow imperatives have been carried over to the 2024/25 season, in addition to new goals.
- Red indicates that imperative was tabled.

2023-24 Season Imperatives

In Our Administration/Governance	In Our Programs	In Our Orchestra	In Our Community
Adopt marketing plans that consider the heritage and language of various populations in the community	Continue to maintain 24% of classical pieces by living composers	Continuing a regular conversation by including an IDEA segment in the orchestra newsletter	Spanish translations included in our digital program book
Engage with Forte partners in our IDEA work	Highlight one larger work by a historically excluded composer on each classical series	Enlist consultants to build on the anti-bias training	ASL interpreters at Family and many Forte concerts
Collaborate with consortium IDEA committees			

2022-23 Season Imperatives

In Our Administration/Governance	In Our Programs	In Our Orchestra	In Our Community
Engage in a comprehensive equity audit Evaluate handbooks and recruiting processes to address potential biases	Establish metrics for growth for featuring composers and artists of historically excluded identities	Implement NAAS audition guidelines, and participate in national data collection for a more equitable road to the audition	Invest in community programming to ensure long-range planning with new and existing partners
Enlist consultants to facilitate anti-bias conversations	Generate a rubric by which all programming is evaluated to ensure alignment with the IDEA statement	Continue using more gender-inclusive language and making permanent changes to address dress code and locker room spaces	Address accessibility barriers to engaging in programming (such as patron guides in English and Spanish for neurodiverse and ESL audiences, recorded descriptions for the visually impaired, and financial barriers like ticket price.)
Implement a more holistic approach to onboarding to address community connection beyond the workplace			