Children's Institute of Cultural Appreciation and Understanding (CICAU)

Non-Discrimination and Inclusion Policy

Policy Statement

The Children's Institute of Cultural Appreciation and Understanding (CICAU) is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment in all aspects of its operations, governance, and programming. As an organization dedicated to promoting and strengthening cultural diversity through awareness, understanding, and acceptance, CICAU recognizes that diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences strengthens our organization and enhances our ability to serve children, families, and communities.

CICAU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, physical ability, socioeconomic status, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all aspects of CICAU's activities and operations, including:

- **Governance and Leadership:** CICAU encourages diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in its Board of Directors, executive leadership, and committees.
- **Employment and Volunteer Engagement:** Recruitment, selection, treatment, and opportunities for employees and volunteers are based on relevant qualifications, skills, and organizational needs, without discrimination.
- **Programs and Services:** CICAU provides inclusive and welcoming educational opportunities for children and families, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or circumstances.
- **Partnerships and Community Engagement:** CICAU seeks to collaborate with individuals and organizations that share a commitment to respect, cultural appreciation, and inclusion.

Commitment to Diversity and Cultural Understanding

CICAU recognizes that individuals bring valuable perspectives shaped by their family histories, cultural backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences. These perspectives are essential to developing meaningful cultural education programs and ensuring that our work reflects the diverse communities we serve.

Our founders and leadership bring personal and professional experiences shaped by different cultural, racial, and immigrant backgrounds. These experiences inform CICAU's commitment to helping children develop an understanding of cultural differences, appreciate diverse traditions, and recognize the shared experiences that connect us.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are guiding principles for the Board of Directors, executive leadership, and all organizational committees. Each is responsible for incorporating these principles into its respective areas of responsibility, including organizational governance, staffing, outreach, partnerships, and program development.

Transparency and Public Accountability

CICAU believes that transparency and accountability are essential to building trust with the communities we serve, our partners, supporters, and the public. In keeping with this commitment, CICAU makes this Non-Discrimination and Inclusion Policy publicly available on its website. This policy formalizes the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and communicates the standards that guide our organizational practices and interactions.

CICAU is committed to ensuring that its stated values are reflected not only in its public communications but also in its decisions, programs, partnerships, and day-to-day operations. The organization welcomes diverse perspectives and encourages open communication as part of its ongoing effort to remain accountable to its mission and the communities it serves.

Implementation and Accountability

CICAU will strive to ensure that its policies, practices, and programs reflect its commitment to fairness, respect, and inclusion. The organization will encourage open communication, welcome diverse viewpoints, and work to minimize bias in organizational decision-making and program development.

All Board members, officers, employees, and volunteers are expected to uphold this policy and contribute to an environment in which individuals feel respected, valued, and welcome.

Reporting Concerns and Protection Against Retaliation

CICAU prohibits retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith or participates in its review. Concerns may be brought to the attention of CICAU leadership or, where a concern involves leadership, directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors. Concerns will be reviewed promptly and handled as confidentially as possible.

Policy Review

The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing this policy and reviewing it periodically to ensure that it continues to reflect CICAU’s mission, organizational values, and applicable legal requirements.

CICAU believes that respect for diversity is fundamental to building an inclusive organization and a stronger community. We are committed to modeling the cultural appreciation, understanding, and acceptance that we seek to instill in the children and families we serve.

Rev. Adopted by the Board of Directors: November 2, 2026