



manetti shrem
museum

Anti-Racism Action Plan

Executive Summary • 2020-2021

jan shrem and maria **manetti shrem museum** of art

In June 2020, the Manetti Shrem Museum made a Shared Commitment, signed by every member of our team, to ensure that diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion are central to the museum's mission and operations. "Along with our UC Davis community and the nation," we wrote, "we continue to mourn the deaths of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, and protest the ongoing violence against Black people. At the same time, we are grappling with how each of us can best serve as an ally to our community, and what actionable form that takes for the Manetti Shrem Museum." At that moment, Vice Chancellor Renetta Garrison Tull charged our campus community to "Reflect. Learn. Plan. Act." And Executive Director for Academic Advising Enrichment Kayton C. Carter asked us to "look beyond the moment" to achieve lasting change.





The Anti-Racism Action Plan is a working document that outlines an ongoing process to confront systemic racism and create lasting change at our museum as we aspire to become a model for university art museums across the nation. This Action Plan is the process by which the museum is identifying the questions that will empower change. Over time, the plan evolves from questions to a high-level outline and timeline that tracks many nuanced and complex projects — what we are calling “specific actions” — that range from collection assessment to staff training. We proceed from a belief that every aspect of our organization must be assessed while our staff and leadership at all levels deepen our understanding of, and ability to locate, the mechanisms of systemic racism at work in our museum.

[Click to read the complete plan.](#)

DEAI Mission Statement of the Manetti Shrem Museum

We make an ongoing commitment to confront systemic racism in the Manetti Shrem Museum’s culture and practices by understanding the fraught history of museums and breaking down barriers to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.

This mission statement drives the process of internal interrogation prompted by a long-overdue reckoning with the racism and injustice inherent in the museum field and our culture at large.

Institutional Assessment

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AND YOU
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A set of commitments to anti-racism must begin with an honest assessment of an institution's own history and present practices. MSM staff are in a continuing process of conducting analyses of key museum functions to determine further actions and next steps based on the outcomes of this assessment. It is our intention to analyze more than just the outcomes and instead interrogate our decision-making processes with the aim of identifying processes, policies and procedures that require change.



Exhibitions and Collections

In 2020–2021, the curatorial team conducted comprehensive assessments of the museum’s exhibition history and development process and the diversity of artists represented in our collections. Outcomes of the studies were shared with MSM’s Leadership Ecosystem, and findings from the assessments led to immediate and ongoing change.

Exhibitions

- The 20/21 assessment includes MSM’s full history of 33 exhibitions and extends through the 21/22 academic year. Key findings are informing ongoing planning and have resulted in immediate and ongoing changes. See [Exhibitions Assessment Executive Summary](#).

Collections

- The assessment includes the artists/makers of the 5,000-plus objects in UC Davis’ Fine Arts Collection (FAC). Findings from the assessment are being applied to ongoing collecting strategies.



Long-term success requires an integrated and sustained approach to creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Our work began by developing a shared understanding of the scope of necessary change and continues as an ongoing process to develop new practices.

Museum Culture



Leadership

High-level decisions about strategic direction require input from the museum's Leadership Ecosystem. To ensure that DEAI initiatives are central to the museum's ongoing work, all levels of the museum's Leadership Ecosystem share responsibility for monitoring staff advancement of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, in addition to assessing how leadership will become more diverse, equitable and inclusive.





Operations

As an organization nested within the larger university, the museum benefits from resources provided at the university level, including an Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that sets policies and strategies; university diversity officers who are available for consultation and guidance; discrimination and harassment reporting policies and procedures; and recruiters and other specialists to oversee human resources strategies. We are committed to working with university resources to advance our DEAL mission.



As part of our commitment to broaden access, reduce barriers and increase participation, we recognize the critical role of external communications and commit to ensuring that all communications materials authentically reflect the museum's welcoming environment through both visuals and language.

Communications

Program



Museum staff are advancing our ongoing work to present a program that addresses complex narratives, cross-cultural perspectives, and fosters a more diverse and expanded canon of art history. The goal is to make the pursuit of new narratives and different interpretations intrinsic to all MSM program development. Crucial to this endeavor is amplifying the work of people of color who are curators, scholars, external collaborators and artists.



Visitor Services & Visitor Experience

Centering on the museum's promise to "welcome open minds with open arms," we are committed to creating a space where all visitors know they belong. We recognize that this calls on us to understand and value both individual differences and common ground. With the pandemic closure in 2020-21, Visitor Services and Visitor Experience action steps are scheduled to begin in 2021-22.



Fundraising

Funding is key to the success of almost every specific action identified in the Anti-Racism Action Plan, and will be considered in the development of all DEAI proposals, in addition to specific fundraising actions.

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