

## **Board Policy for Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging**

This policy furthers the LANL Foundation’s Mission to inspire excellence in education and learning in Northern New Mexico. Its purpose is to make operational the Foundation’s Commitments and Values with respect to diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging. Specifically, this policy addresses the Board’s formal roles and responsibilities as well as its leadership and influence of the Foundation, its partners, and the communities it serves.

### **Section I: Board Policy Context and Rationale**

#### **A. Context**

Diversity requires inclusion to create a success-oriented, cooperative, and caring community that draws intellectual strength and produces innovative solutions from the synergy of its people. Evidence shows that diverse and inclusive organizations perform better—with improved innovation, collaboration, decision-making, and financial performance. Research in education shows that diversity and inclusion in schools is associated with better cognitive, academic, and inter-personal outcomes.

Equity brings about a just society when all belong as their unique selves, all are free to express themselves, and underrepresented voices are elevated. Individuals, communities, and identities exist within a spectrum of advantage and disadvantage, and what may be an advantage in one context may be a liability in another. In alignment with our mission, we believe that equity is achieved when conditions are designed and fostered to redress historical inequities, and to facilitate the equal probability of success of all—now and in the future. We recognize that success may be uniquely defined in each case, and that initial deprivations and privileges are often the context for the myriad definitions of success.

#### **B. Rationale**

New Mexico is not a melting pot but rather a state with a rich and complex history of intersecting cultures. We come together not only by ways of being, but also ways of knowing. We respect individual rights to self-identification, as well as the importance of being a member of a cultural group. Markers of difference are not always fixed—they can be fluid and often invisible—and include everything that makes us unique regardless of permanence within a given identity<sup>1</sup>. We unequivocally hold that no one group is intrinsically superior to another. We support and work to address the struggles faced by

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<sup>1</sup> The LANL Foundation recognizes broad identity markers that include but are not limited to: cognitive skills and personality, race, color and other racialized physical traits, age, religion, religious status, cultural background, ethnicity, nationality or geography, displacement or refugee status, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, ideologies, class, physical abilities and qualities, language, educational background, income, marital status, parental status, lived experience, occupation, family background, family composition, veteran status, and many others. These are not to be confused with federal protections by law that include race, color, religion or creed, national origin or ancestry, sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), age, physical or mental disability, or veteran status.

marginalized communities and individuals under systems of oppression and bias, while recognizing individual, collective, and structural privileges across systems and communities.

The LANL Foundation Board finds diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging to be imperative to our mission, and see them as necessary to a just society. Fostering them is concurrent with our work toward social change through education. As a foundation, we enact this policy to be intentional, rather than reactive, to affirm, rather than look the other way, and to give our long-cherished values policy-level legitimacy. This policy intends to proactively cultivate diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging for the benefit of the Foundation, as well as the schools and communities it serves, through the actions and decisions of the Board of Directors.

## **Section II: Policy Statement**

The LANL Foundation Board accepts the following principles and commitments:

1. In alignment with our mission and vision, we provide the tools needed to instill the core values of diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging in all our work. Within the Foundation's systems, structure and operations, we address barriers of access, voice, opportunity, and achievement. We begin with the intention not to become barriers ourselves.
2. In our decisions and actions, we strive, ambitiously and unapologetically, to oppose forces that move us away from diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging and to act in a way that empowers collaboration, understanding, compassion, solidarity, and generosity.
3. We seek to identify privilege in the contexts where we operate, and to make decisions and act in ways to redistribute and share the power and influence of this privilege.
4. Equity drives our values and actions. When doing our work, we weigh the relative advantages and disadvantages, deprivations, and gifts of our foundation and of our constituents, both current and historical.
5. With the acknowledgement that present adversities in communities are often the result of a multigenerational and multidimensional process of historical oppression, we will address adversities, affirm histories, and promote or demand equitable practices, both within our organization and as far as our influence reaches. We integrate the perspectives from the peoples most impacted by the work we do, in addition to expertise and research.
6. We commit to the promise that we all will be stronger and freer when the last of voices is lifted up.

## **Section III: Actions**

Concrete actions are necessary to ensure that the above commitments materialize into tangible change. At minimum, the board shall:

1. Regularly review Board Bylaws to ensure they align with and do not contradict the intent and commitments of this diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging policy.

2. Desist from or challenge behavior, language, attitude, or expression that are exclusionary, oppressive, discriminatory, inequitable, or abusive to any individual or group.
3. Ensure all activities are conducted in a way that promotes collaboration, understanding, compassion, solidarity, and generosity, while not discouraging dissent, disagreement, questioning, opposition and calculated risk-taking.
4. Engage in periodic revision of strategy and overarching guiding documents—such as mission, goals, strategic plan, and bylaws—to align with the Foundation’s commitments to diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging, and with consideration to the social, economic, and cultural priorities of the time.
5. When monitoring and approving those initiatives, policies, programs, and decisions under the purview of the Board, ensure they foster diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging, and align with the intent and commitments set out in this policy.
6. Ensure that all nominations and elections to the Directors of the Board be made with consideration of diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging—especially as it reflects the composition of the communities served, attends to both diversity and quality of professional experience and qualifications, and seeks to amplify underrepresented perspectives, identities, and experiences.
7. Guarantee that the influence, contributions, and voice of every board member be heard and welcomed—even in dissent and disagreement—especially when members express concerns indicating weaknesses in diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging.
8. Encourage cultural humility, personal reflection and growth; seek guidance and listen to expertise in areas where we can continue learning.
9. Cultivate a sense of belonging within our organization, board, and our greater region of service.