

Introduction

Chorus America’s new Strategic Plan took shape during wave after wave of challenges to the choral field and to society: the pandemic’s existential threat to singing together, a momentous re-examination of racism, and a politically polarized United States and world. Through it all, our need for singing together to build understanding and hope has never been more apparent, and choruses’ innovation and resilience point to a bright future. Our new Strategic Plan builds on lessons learned about remaining flexible in the face of rapid change and ensuring the strength and relevance of the choral field.

This plan reaffirms and advances our commitment to centering access, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) in all that we do. Historically, Chorus America has been grounded in standards that centered Western European musical traditions, and our membership has been made up of majority White and White-led choruses. Chorus America’s journey in becoming more inclusive advanced with our 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, which included specific goals focused on ADEI and the establishment of the ADEI Board Committee. In describing our focus for ADEI work during the period covered by this Strategic Plan, we are using the term “marginalized because of race and ethnicity.”

This new plan deepens our commitment to meaningful, measurable action steps that ensure representation of and service to the vibrant diversity of the choral field, especially to those marginalized because of race and ethnicity. Chorus America is choosing, during the period covered by this Strategic Plan, to focus its

ADEI efforts primarily—but not exclusively—on those marginalized because of race and ethnicity because racism is so pervasive in society. However, we recognize the intersectionality of racism with other marginalized identities such as gender, sexual orientation, disability status, socioeconomic level, and age. We believe that focusing our work in this way will help us to make significant and measurable change over the three-year period of this plan, and that the resulting changes and heightened awareness will position Chorus America to be more inclusive overall.

This plan is a living document, which will be reviewed often to keep us accountable to our commitments and goals in a fast-moving world. We are also mindful that language evolves, particularly terms that relate to race and identity. Our sincere intent is to be respectful with our language, and we are open to revisions that match that intent.

We believe passionately in the transformative power of listening, learning, and singing together. Chorus America members, and society at large, are calling us to play our part in leading this transformation. Our goal in creating the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan is to answer that call and rise to this moment.

