

MTR Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Guidelines

Updated: 1.30.2021

Note: This is a living document meant to update as we further develop our practices and receive feedback and constructive criticism from creative/production teams, casts, audiences, and the rest of the MTR Family.

SHOW & CREATIVE TEAM SELECTION POLICY

1. The MTR Board strives to select and produce shows and projects that reflect our progress towards a more equitable and inclusive theatrical landscape. We hope to promote diverse stories, messages, and ideas and reject theatre that propagates hateful themes or discrimination such as racism, colorism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, and religious discrimination.
 - a. If minor elements of the show's content/pitch fall under these issues (i.e. one character, a few lines), a discussion should be had with the applicant about the handling of said content before making a decision on the selection of the show.
2. The selected Director will work with their Producers, DEI Representative, and Production Manager to assemble an inclusive, anti-racist creative team that contains a broad representation of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and ability, recognizing the value that these perspectives bring to the realization of a show's story and the development of an equitable rehearsal environment.
3. The directing and stage management team will meet with the board and DEI team to thoroughly go through these guidelines.

CASTING POLICY

1. MTR has an open casting policy. Any person that identifies with any race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, etc., can audition for any role within any production. No aspect of a person's identity will be discriminated against or considered negatively when casting.
2. Gender non-conforming/nonbinary actors are encouraged to audition for roles of any gender that they wish, regardless of pronouns. MTR will include proposed character pronouns in the character breakdown for auditions, knowing that they are subject to change based on casting.
3. MTR will honor the integrity of the show regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion topics or representation when casting. Inclusive and accurate casting is the standard for all productions that feature or include marginalized identities. The creative team **will prioritize casting actors with the lived experiences and identities relevant to portraying each character's story with integrity.**
 - a. Color-conscious casting is the standard, especially for shows in which race or ethnicity is integral to the storytelling. Roles that can be cast as any race/ethnicity should be noted as such in Character Breakdowns, so as not to assume a default of whiteness.

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4. To ensure an inclusive production environment, MTR will reach out to and maintain relationships with other student groups that value and promote diverse artistic representation.

AUDITION GUIDELINES

1. The audition room is an open and welcoming space, and MTR will not tolerate discrimination of any form.
2. MTR will have a DEI consultant in the audition and casting room to ensure equitable practices and values are carried out. They will also serve as consultants, as needed, for the casting team. They will help answer questions regarding MTR's DEI standards and to be present in case any issues arise. The DEI consultant will not have any artistic input or decision-making power in casting decisions.
3. The creative team will maintain an equal level of professionalism for each auditionee, regardless of any previous or current relationship.

REHEARSAL GUIDELINES

1. Every aspect of an individual's identity, including their pronouns, will be respected and honored through the rehearsal process.
2. In case of an instance where someone feels uncomfortable or when any of MTR's DEI values and standards are comprised, that person is strongly encouraged to confide in or report to the production's Stage Manager, Producer, or the MTR DEI Board Committee at uscmtrdei@gmail.com. If the situation includes the SM or Producer, or if the person prefers to go straight to MTR's DEI team, they should.
3. Leaders of the rehearsal room must respect the time of their team and cast by adhering to the Stage Manager's calls for breaks following Actors Equity Association guidelines.
 - a. Rehearsals must end with enough time for the Stage Management Team to reset the room, with help from the remainder of the Creative Team and Cast, before the scheduled end time for the day.

COVID GUIDELINES

1. There should be no unfair treatment or discrimination towards any member of the company due to COVID-19-related health issues.
2. Anyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should not be punished or feel uncomfortable for staying home or missing rehearsals.
3. Accommodations should be made for anyone who has a physical disability that requires assistance surrounding COVID-19 guidelines like the requirement to wear face masks.

CREATIVE TEAM GUIDELINES

1. Lighting/Projections:

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- a. All lighting and projection designers must be equipped with knowledge to light skin tones in a way that is equitable on stage or screen.
2. Scenic
 - a. Scenic designers will be cognizant of an actor's level of ability when creating designs. They will work to accommodate every actor on stage while honoring the directorial vision of the show.
3. Carpentry & Electrics
 - a. MTR will not tolerate any sexism in the workplace, especially regarding carpentry and electrics. Every technician or carpenter will have equal opportunities and expectations, will be treated equally, and given respect, regardless of gender.
4. Sound
 - a. Sound designers will do proper research for any music used with the production.
5. Costumes
 - a. Costume designers will do proper research and preparation to make sure they are not appropriating any culture with their garment, accessory, and hair/makeup choices.
 - b. Research will be done to the fullest extent if a costume does pertain to specific culture to prevent appropriating a culture at all cost.
 - c. When taking measurements during costume fittings, designers will ask for consent and respect the actor's comfort level and wishes.
6. Choreography
 - a. Choreographers should be well-versed in the language and terminology necessary to properly describe or choreograph a show's necessary dance styles, especially those originating from places other than the USA and Europe.
 - b. A choreographer or individual dancer's abilities and genre experience should never be assumed based on race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
 - c. Choreographers should not assume gender, gender roles, or abilities based on gender. Those chosen for demanding choreography, lifts, or partner dancing should not be chosen based solely off biological sex or gender.
7. Music Direction
 - a. When conducting music rehearsals, groups of singers should be referred to in gender-neutral terms, whether by their vocal part (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) or range ("Low Group & High Group"), rather than groupings such as "Men & Women."
 - b. If transposition of an overall role's vocal range is musically possible in relation to the rest of the score, an individual's vocal range should not be considered a detriment in regards to the gender identity of the role for which they are auditioning.