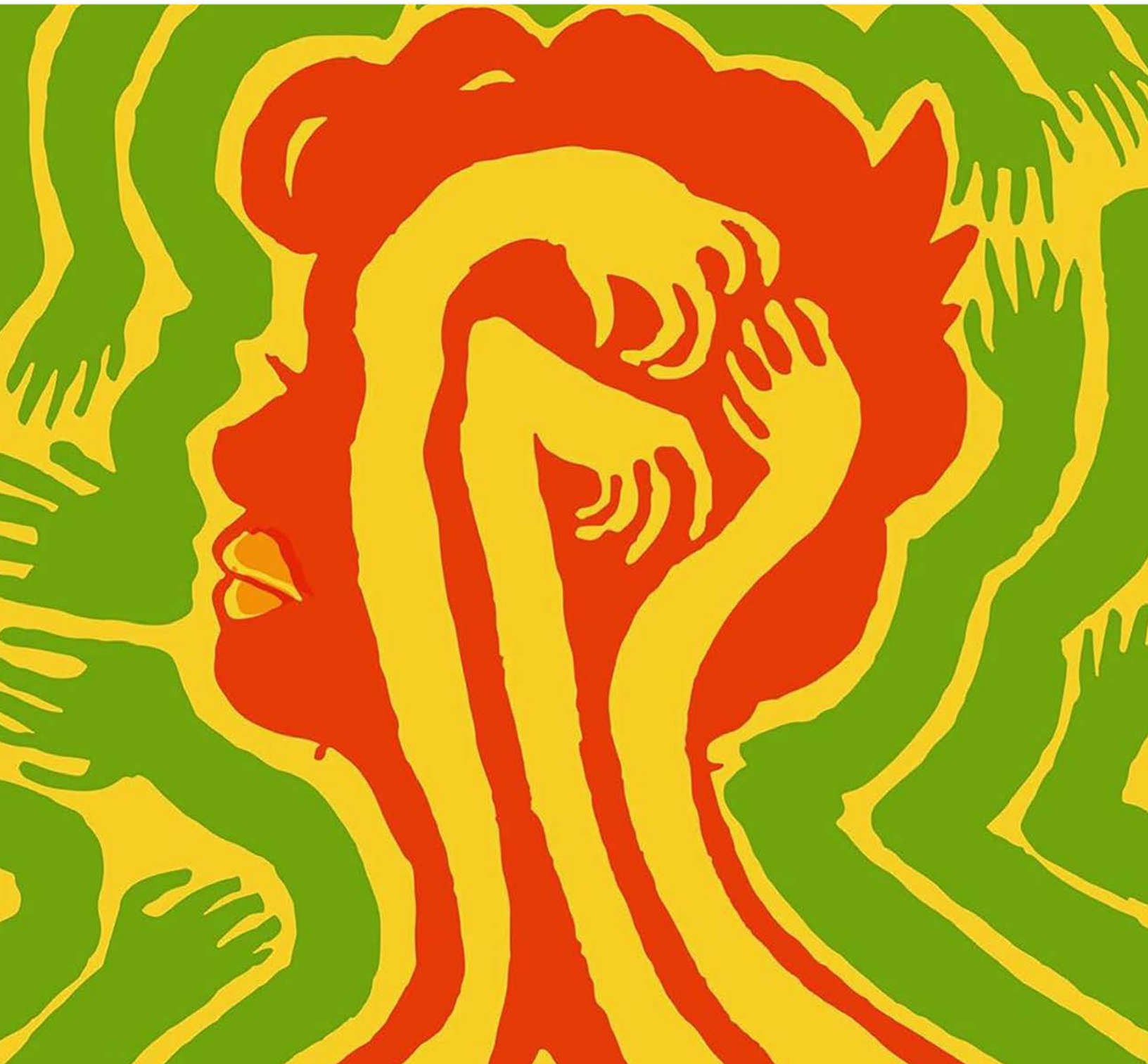


FINDING STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN

Equity and Inclusion Action Plan



CONTENTS

Purpose	1
Vision	3
History	4
Foundational Definitions	5
Action Plan	6
1. Strategic Planning and Accountability	
2. Leadership Development	
3. Recruitment and Retention	
4. Curriculum and Instruction	
5. Climate	
6. Intergroup Relations	
7. Achievement and Success	
8. External Relations	
Timeline	11
Future Outlook	12

Right: Grace Cotton '23 (Communication Design)
Cover photo: Diego Loyo '23 (Illustration)



Where passion finds purpose.



PURPOSE

This action plan is intended to provide, in detail, the steps MIAD will take to achieve the objectives set forth in the Five-Year Strategic Plan. To maintain a defined scope, this plan does not include all efforts underway or in development at the college.

This plan supports the following Strategic Objectives:

- **Recruiting – Seeking future artists and designers**
 - Provide scholarship and grant aid at appropriate levels to maintain affordability of, and access to, MIAD’s education
 - Diversify enrollment of new students demographically and geographically
- **Retaining – Promising our students a four-year professional journey**
 - Increase retention rates of various groups such as first-generation students, minority students and commuters among others with identified needs by fall 2022
- **Learning – Launching new and compelling curricular programming**
 - Build inclusivity and diversity in our curriculum and academic experiences.
- **Living – Building a life of purpose in the professions and the community**
 - Strengthen the college’s commitment to inclusivity by making visible, educating about and celebrating diversity.

MIAD MISSION

We ignite curious minds through art, design and service.

The Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD) is Wisconsin’s only independent, nonprofit, four-year college of visual art and design, offering a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Communication Design, Illustration, Product Design, Interior Architecture and Design, and New Studio Practice: Fine Arts.

There is a gritty energy to this place, and we thrive on it. It’s central to our journey as we work, create, tear down, start over, and triumph to become passionate professionals. We build off of one another, collaborate, and solve problems together. We connect in meaningful ways to the community and take inspiration from our environment to help make our neighborhood, city, state, country, and world a better place.

We believe in the power of art and design, not merely to reflect the world, but to change it.

INCLUSION, to find strength in diversity
is one of MIAD’s six Core Values.

Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized.

An inclusive system promotes and sustains a sense of belonging. It values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members.



VISION

Artists, designers, and other creative professionals interact with culture to understand, translate, and represent it to the larger community. Through this process, the creative industry inspires, challenges, and builds ways of thinking and unites communities in unprecedented ways.

As technology accelerates change and introduces new media, educational attainment rises worldwide, and declarations of self-identity become the new norm, previously ignored and marginalized voices are finding platforms and audiences, allowing for greater appreciation and critique of the world we inhabit. LGBTQ+, disabled, Black, and Indigenous people, and communities of color are creating new ways of expression and challenging long-held assumptions.

MIAD is a part of this changing world, and the disciplines studied here give voice to a collection of diverse, skilled, and empowered creative professionals ready to shape the world around them.

As Wisconsin’s only independent, nonprofit, four-year college of art and design, it is imperative that we support students, professionals, and the larger community with both intention and humility. This Action Plan seeks to make explicit our commitment to our students, employees, the creative professional community, and our Milwaukee neighbors.

HISTORY

As a Predominantly White Institution, MIAD has historically provided an unwelcoming and, at times, hostile campus environment for students and employees of marginalized racial, gender, and sexual identities. Recruitment efforts in the past five years have led to unprecedented enrollment growth, and a pronounced increase in the number of students of color. This change has exposed systemic flaws in the college’s operations and highlighted the unequal experience for these students.

This Plan is the result of efforts over the past three years by MIAD students and employees to address the needs of our dynamic, growing college and to serve our community better. A committee was formed in 2019 in response to student agitation, with the goal of addressing these needs. The committee issued several recommendations, including the creation of a position to oversee the college’s efforts toward inclusion and equity. A Director of Inclusivity was hired in fall 2019 and we issued a one-year action plan to identify the work to be completed in their first year.

The following key items were completed in the 2019-2020 academic year:

- Establish Resource Center for Equity and Inclusion
- Create IDEA Group
- Inclusion @ MIAD Website
- Bias incident reporting procedure and response protocol

The necessary COVID-19 pandemic response prevented other items in the one-year action plan from being implemented. Those items have been revised and addressed in this plan.

FOUNDATIONAL DEFINITIONS

ACCESS

The ways in which educational institutions strive to ensure students have equal and equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education and in which employees can perform their position requirements. This may include adding services or removing potential barriers to participation.

DIVERSITY

Recognizes the range of human differences, and that each individual is equally worthwhile. Not merely acknowledging the existence of differences, it celebrates these differences and recognizes the essential value of diversity in a system. Dimensions of diversity generally cover but are not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic class, physical or cognitive disability, religious or ethical values system, national origin, citizenship, political beliefs, and other ideologies.¹

EQUALITY

The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.

EQUITY

The equal distribution of a system's benefits and burdens regardless of its members' differences. In other words, equity would be a reality in which an individual or groups are no more or less likely to experience a system's benefits or burdens just because of their differences, creating an environment where everyone can succeed and thrive. In our not yet perfect world, a commitment to equity requires the will and action of a system to redistribute opportunities and power.¹

INCLUSION

Involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive system promotes and sustains a sense of belonging. It values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members. An inclusive system also recognizes that agreement might not always be the end result, but that dialogue and understanding are part of the larger process that allows for inclusivity to be achieved.¹

While we seek to include all persons willing to learn and teach the visual arts, those who cause harm or do not seek to uphold this commitment are not welcome in our community.

1. AICAD Statement of Principles on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Retrieved from <https://www.aicad.org/principles-on-dei/>.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is organized around eight Core Areas of college services and operations², which include:

- Strategic Planning and Accountability
- Leadership Development
- Recruitment and Retention
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Climate
- Intergroup Relations
- Achievement and Success, and
- External Relations

Key

- Recruiting
- Retaining
- Learning
- Living

1. Strategic Planning and Accountability

MIAD has implemented various initiatives to foster inclusion, though with no integrated leadership structure to plan and direct these efforts. Fostering a genuinely inclusive and equitable college, where all persons are respected and have full access to the benefits of a MIAD education, is an inherently complex, multifaceted, and dynamic endeavor. Centralized leadership, combined with a strong vision and collaboration across the college, form the structure for this work. While some progress has already been accomplished, the following actions will further support the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Departmental Action Plans

Each department will be required to develop a plan that supports the Strategic Plan. The Director of Inclusivity will guide this process, meeting with each area to identify goals, strategies, and timelines. Completion of departmental plans will be the responsibility of Senior Staff. ● ● ●

Instructor Development & Accountability

MIAD introduced a bias reporting process in spring 2020. In coordination with Human Resources and Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate will define the minimum standards and consequences for their colleagues. The Director

2. Worthington, R. L. (2012). Advancing scholarship for the diversity imperative in higher education: An editorial. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 5(1), 1-7. DOI: 10.1037/a0027184.

of Inclusivity will defer to this guidance when remediating reported bias incidents. ● ●

Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Designation

Recent enrollment of new students at MIAD has grown most significantly in the number of Hispanic or Latinx-identified persons. Colleges with a student population at least 25% Hispanic are eligible for federal designation as an HSI, and MIAD was recently named an “emerging” HSI, meaning a significant number of Hispanic and Latinx students already make up the MIAD community. In preparation, MIAD has joined a network of local colleges and will create an HSI Task Force, chaired by the Director of Inclusivity, to identify and implement high-impact practices to support this student population. ● ● ●

Nondiscrimination

The college’s nondiscrimination policies have been revised and condensed into one policy, inclusive of all categories protected by state and federal law. The student conduct code now clearly lists violation of the policy as grounds for judicial action. ● ●

Reporting

MIAD has several options for students and employees to report concerns or unwelcome interactions. To clarify processes and better serve the community, MIAD will engage the college through a targeted marketing campaign focused on increasing awareness of reporting tools and key personnel. ● ●

2. Leadership Development

Each of MIAD’s employees, regardless of responsibilities or titles, serves as a role model to our students. Ongoing opportunities for learning, reflection, and growth along

the various dimensions of human diversity and experience will be coordinated by the Director of Inclusivity. By investing in its employees, MIAD will invest in its students.

Annual Training for Senior Leadership

To best guide and implement the components of this plan across the college, MIAD’s senior leadership must stay abreast of emerging issues and trends related to equity and inclusion. To this end, the President, members of Senior Staff, and other key leaders will engage in annual training, coordinated by the Director of Inclusivity. ● ●

Faculty and Staff Development

MIAD employees play a crucial role in modeling appropriate language, behavior, and demeanor. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and Vice President for Enrollment Services, in coordination with the Director of Inclusivity, will be responsible for implementing development opportunities that emphasize mentorship and advising for intercultural competency, and the roles of equity and inclusion in learning. ● ● ●

Annual Development Day

The Director of Inclusivity, in coordination with Human Resources and Academic Affairs, will host an annual Development Day to engage the MIAD community in dialogues on the importance of equity and inclusion to art and design education. ● ●

3. Recruitment and Retention

MIAD has seen tremendous enrollment growth in recent years. As our student body continues to diversify, it is imperative to our future success that we implement culturally-informed support structures to advance students toward graduation and productive careers.

AICAD Postgraduate Teaching Fellowship

Recent changes in the racial and ethnic diversity of MIAD’s student body have not been reflected similarly in our faculty. To begin to remedy this, and in accordance with substantial research indicating students of all backgrounds achieve higher learning outcomes when exposed to diverse faculty, MIAD will participate in the Postgraduate Teaching Fellows Program, hosted by the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD). Designed to increase faculty racial diversity at associated colleges, the Program enables outstanding graduate alumni from historically underrepresented communities to build professional experience at the highest levels of art and design education. This program will bring exceptional candidates to MIAD for one- or two-year appointments. ● ● ●

Employee Intercultural Competency

Intercultural competency is an essential skill in all workplace environments, including MIAD. Evaluation of this ability will be woven into hiring, evaluation, and promotion practices. ● ●

Spanish Language Resources

Southeastern Wisconsin has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Hispanic and Latinx students in the past decade, including at MIAD. To better assist parents and families in understanding the college admissions processes and the services available to them and their students, key documents and web pages will be made available in Spanish. ● ● ●

4. Curriculum and Instruction

As an academic institution, and one with a specific focus on creative visual and written expression, we are both committed and equipped to shaping new bodies of knowledge and critically examining those that exist.

Students and faculty will continue to employ innovative, inclusive models of teaching, learning, and inquiry.

Academic Curriculum

Academic Affairs will be charged with overseeing the creation and implementation of new course offerings that explore the intersections of art and design practice with social expression. In coordination with an external consultant, we will create a framework to decolonize the curriculum and de-center whiteness in our teaching. ●

Required Equity and Inclusion Courses

Students will be required to complete one or more courses, as designated in the course catalog, that explore systematic discrimination or foster appreciation for human difference. This action step complements our efforts to decolonize the academic curriculum. ●

Inclusive Teaching Micro-Grants

Curricula that demonstrate decolonized pedagogies will be eligible for funding awarded annually, through a competitive application process overseen by Academic Affairs and the Director of Inclusivity. ●

Centralized Resources

MIAD will house in its Moodle LMS an online collection of resources and policies related to inclusive teaching strategies and pedagogies, available to all employees. ●

Identity Lecture Series

This series will engage a diverse set of artists, designers, and scholars who will discuss the intersections of their identities and their practice, overtly or covertly. The series will highlight the roles identity and representation play in art and design practice, and present aspirational role models for traditionally underrepresented students. This series will connect directly to the

First Year Experience curriculum and will be coordinated by the Director of Inclusivity and the Chair of First Year Experience.



5. Climate

Campus climate, sometimes referred to simply as “campus culture” or “environment,” refers to the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential. Though research supports the idea, it should not be surprising that students learn best when their environment is hospitable to their identities and needs. To inform our work, we will invite feedback from the college community regularly.

Campus Climate Surveys

Every two years, MIAD asks its students to complete a survey related to the campus environment and their experiences at the college. This data provides insights into demographic changes, opportunities for intervention, and an opportunity to evaluate the efficacy of our efforts. The next survey is scheduled for 2022. ● ● ●

Institutional Land Acknowledgment

A Land Acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. MIAD acknowledges that, in Milwaukee, we live and work on traditional Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, and Menominee homelands. The college will develop an acknowledgment to displayed permanently on campus and observed at institutional events. ●

6. Intergroup Relations

The changing demographics of our college have provided new opportunities to learn from each other, as well as new opportunities to misunderstand or invalidate one another. As a multigenerational, multicultural, identity-conscious community of humans, we will seek to dispel stereotypes and uninformed concepts, affirm the dignity of each person, and provide space to heal from biased actions.

Institutional Programming

Continuing our efforts to increase awareness, MIAD’s lectures, dialogues, and public events will emphasize equity and anti-oppression as integral values not only to the college, but to learning and making as well. Developmental workshops will be made available to foster expertise on a range of issues related to equity and inclusion. ●

Connections for College Employees

MIAD will encourage the formation of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to increase connection, affinity, and solidarity among the college’s employees. ERGs will be coordinated by the Director of Inclusivity with a Lead Member in each group to coordinate efforts and maintain communication with the Director. ● ● ●

Student Clubs and Organizations

Research indicates students involved on campus achieve higher grades, feel more connected to the college, and develop important skills like assertiveness and time management. MIAD will continue to encourage the establishment of new student organizations and engagement structures focused on cultural identity formation, solidarity, and peer support. ● ● ●

By the Numbers: 70% of students completed the 2020 Campus Climate Survey

7. Achievement and Success

MIAD is a close community and we will continue to identify ways to support students holistically. Where possible, we will alleviate obstacles to student success and highlight the members of our college who are doing exceptional work.

Hunger and Food Security

MIAD will create a Hunger and Food Security Task Force, comprising students and administrators, focused on identifying the strategies necessary to best serve its student populations. ●

Why? 46% of students in the 2020 Campus Climate Survey reported they had skipped a meal because of personal finances while enrolled at MIAD.

Financial Assistance

To further invest in our students, MIAD will continue to strategically grow the funds available for grants and scholarships to low-income and first-generation students. ● ●

Did You Know? MIAD is proud to be the #1 art and design college nationwide for helping low-income students attain upper-middle-class jobs (Money Magazine, “Best Colleges for Your Money 2019”).

Annual Recognition Awards

MIAD’s students and employees are exceptional contributors to the college and their respective creative practices. The college will recognize and thank those community members advancing equity through an annual awards process, organized by the Office of the President. ● ●

Resource Sharing and Reallocation

Student and family dollars are stretched farther now than at any time in the history of our nation, as tuition costs, inflation, and public

policy intersect. Led by the Vice President for Enrollment Management, MIAD will bolster initiatives already in existence and identify new opportunities to help students in need. ●

8. External Relations

Community, to positively contribute to the world around us is another of MIAD’s six Core Values. That means active engagement with our local Milwaukee community is central to our mission, which has led to the creation of many opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff to contribute to our hometown. MIAD played an important role in centering the Third Ward as Milwaukee’s official arts district and we continue to support the creative community through public events, collaboration with local schools, and service learning program.

Community Engagement Strategy

MIAD’s Senior Staff, led by the Vice President of Development and Communications, will work across the college to craft a comprehensive strategy for community engagement in conjunction with ongoing efforts toward equity and inclusion at MIAD. Coordinating efforts across service learning, pre-college programs, engagement with K-12 institutions and other colleges, galleries, businesses, and organizations will lead to greater efficiency and collaboration. ● ● ● ●

Community Donation Match Program

MIAD will contribute annually a total of \$10,000 to match dollar for dollar donations by students, faculty, staff and alumni to selected nonprofit organizations in the City of Milwaukee fighting racial injustice. The Director of Inclusivity will seek input each fall to select organizations to receive matching donations from MIAD for the following calendar year. ●

TIMELINE

Equity and Inclusion Implementation Committee
To oversee implementation of this plan and monitor progress toward our equity and inclusion goals, the Director of Inclusivity will chair a committee comprising persons directly involved with associated programs and departments.

Action Item	2020-2021 AY	2021-2022 AY	2022-2023 AY
Departmental Action Plans	Ongoing		
Instructor Development & Accountability	Ongoing		
HSI Designation	Ongoing		
Nondiscrimination	Recurring		
Reporting	Recurring		
Annual Training for Senior Leadership	Recurring		
Faculty and Staff Development		Recurring	
Annual Development Day		Recurring	
AICAD Postgraduate Teaching Fellowship	Recurring		
Employee Intercultural Competency		Ongoing	
Spanish Language Resources	Ongoing		
Academic Curriculum	Ongoing		
Required Equity and Inclusion Courses		Planning	
Inclusive Teaching Micro-Grants		Recurring	
Centralized Resources		Ongoing	
Identity Lecture Series	Recurring		
Campus Climate Surveys		Recurring	
Institutional Land Acknowledgment	Ongoing		
Institutional Programming	Recurring		
Connections for College Employees		Ongoing	
Student Clubs and Organizations	Ongoing		
Hunger and Food Security	Ongoing		
Resource Sharing and Reallocation		Ongoing	
Financial Assistance	Ongoing		
Annual Recognition Awards	Recurring		
Community Engagement Strategy	Ongoing		
Community Donation Match Program	Recurring		



FUTURE OUTLOOK

As MIAD gains greater recognition nationally as a leader in art and design education, our college's structures must reflect the diversity of our nation and manifest a dynamic culture of equity and inclusion. Teaching is central to our mission as an institution and so our pedagogies and curricula must evolve along with the college's needs and the growing discourse among the professional art and design fields to reconceptualize these domains.

Students at any college today must develop intercultural fluency and global awareness to serve their communities and remain competitive professionally. This is even more true for artists and designers, who hold the power to actively shape both built and digital worlds, and thus culture. Together, the MIAD community and its graduates can give voice to the otherwise abstract ideas of openness, justice, and equity as they make community and culture in the world.

As we move today through social and political fragmentation, deeply engraved inequalities, and heightened examination of institutions of all types, the MIAD community is putting action to words, making real our Core Value of *INCLUSION, to find strength in diversity*. We are standing together to affirm diversity, nondiscrimination, respect, and equity as a moral obligation to our students and ourselves, as these principles are foundational to the quality, relevance, and impact of a MIAD education. The college is well-equipped to carry out this work and to see ever more of its graduates create humane and just communities, affirming of the dignity of each and every person.



Where passion finds purpose.

Office of the President

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