

Anti-Racism Policy

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. The Association of South-Asian A Cappella, Inc. (“ASA”) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that oversees the South Asian a cappella community.
- B. All-American Awaaz (“A3”) is the national championship competition organized by ASA. For the purposes of this policy, A3 is considered as part of ASA.
- C. Bid Competitions (“Competitions”) are events hosted by student organizations at universities across the country. These bid competitions are selected on an annual basis by ASA.
- D. Organizational Leaders are defined as individuals who hold, or have held, leadership positions in their respective organizations, including but not limited to ASA, A3, Bid Competitions, A Cappella Teams, and any other organizations that exist within the community.
- E. Board Members are defined as all individuals currently or formerly part of a competition’s organizational board, not limited by their duration or capacity of membership. For ASA and A3, this list of individuals is kept on record by the Directors of ASA. For bid competitions, this list of individuals can be provided by the leaders of the respective bid competition, upon explicit request submitted in writing to ASA or the Bid Competition.
- F. Associated Individuals are defined as all board members, liaisons and volunteers of ASA and of bid competitions, and all members of all South Asian A Cappella teams.
- G. Affiliated Individuals are defined as any and all individuals that are members of or affiliated with:
 - 1. board members, liaisons, or volunteers of ASA, A3, or any bid competitions;
 - 2. any members of South Asian A Cappella groups/teams;
 - 3. any vendors, contractors or sponsors of any event that ASA supports;
 - 4. all audience members, whether physically in the event space or virtually on official, organizational-sponsored live streams;
 - 5. any venue or facility staff at an ASA-supported event; or
 - 6. any other individual that is directly or indirectly involved or included in the development or execution of an event that ASA supports.
- H. Community, for the purposes of this policy, is a general term used to describe the collective group of individuals that participate in the creation, support, performance, or viewership of music and art in the South Asian A cappella genre.

II. GLOSSARY

- A. Racism is the belief that humans may be divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called “races”; that there is a causal link between inherited physical traits and traits of personality, intellect, morality, and other cultural

and behavioral features; and that some races are innately superior to others. The term is also applied to political, economic, or legal institutions and systems that knowingly or unknowingly engage in or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of race or otherwise reinforce racial inequalities in wealth and income, education, health care, civil rights, and other areas.

refers to “prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race, based on the belief that one’s own race is superior” (Oxford Dictionaries)

- B. Race can be defined as not only background but also family, culture, history, beliefs, a sense of place and belonging with others who share those same or similar things.
- C. Racial Discrimination (also referred to as Direct Discrimination) refers to a person or group being treated less favorably, or not being given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation because of their race, skin color, descent, national or ethnic origin, or immigration status.
- D. Systemic Discrimination (also referred to as Indirect Discrimination) refers to the enactment of requirements, policies or practices, which are the same for everyone and appear to be neutral and fair, but actually disadvantage people who share a particular race, skin color, descent, national or ethnic origin, or immigration status.
- E. Harassment refers to unwelcome behavior that makes a person feel belittled, intimidated, offended or apprehensive and, taking into account all the circumstances, could reasonably have been anticipated to have this effect.
- F. Racial Vilification refers to public acts that incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons on the ground of their race.
- G. Offensive Behavior refers to public acts that are reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or group of people because of their race, skin color, descent, national or ethnic origin, or immigration status. These acts include communicating words, sounds, images or writing to the public, in a public place, or in the sight or hearing of people who are in a public place.
- H. Victimization refers to subjecting or threatening to subject a person to some form of detriment because they have:
 - 1. lodged, or are proposing to lodge, a complaint of discrimination or harassment;
 - 2. Provided information or documents to an internal investigation or an external agency;
 - 3. Reasonably asserted their rights, or supported someone else’s rights; or
 - 4. Made an allegation that a person has committed an act that could be considered a breach of this policy.

- I. Cultural Inclusiveness refers to an environment that is responsive to the needs of all individuals, acknowledges and respects diversity, and does not discriminate or treat people unfairly because of individual differences.

III. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this Policy is to raise awareness of and compliance with ASA's commitment to ensuring a community that is culturally inclusive and free from racial discrimination and harassment. Racism is best understood when acknowledging the context of power, oppression and privilege.
- B. This Policy applies to all board members, liaisons, volunteers, contractors, vendors, sponsors, customers, and clients of ASA.
- C. This Policy additionally applies to all members of bid competition boards and their liaisons, volunteers, contractors, vendors, sponsors, customers, and clients.

IV. PRINCIPLES

- A. ASA is committed to providing and supporting a community that:
 1. is inclusive of affiliated individuals from different races, which include not only their background, but also family, culture, history and beliefs;
 2. recognizes and embraces the value and benefits of cultural diversity; and
 3. promotes respect and fair and equitable treatment for all affiliated individuals.
- B. ASA will promote cultural awareness, cross-cultural competence, cultural inclusiveness and appropriate conduct for associated individuals.
- C. ASA will encourage all affiliated individuals to participate in activities that raise awareness or and promote cultural diversity and inclusiveness.
- D. ASA will not tolerate direct or indirect racial discrimination, harassment, and/or vilification under any circumstances from any associated or affiliated individuals.
- E. ASA will not tolerate victimization of any of the parties involved in a complaint. All efforts will be made to ensure that victimization does not occur in the complaints procedure.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. ASA has a responsibility to uphold the principles listed above, investigate complaints, and take appropriate action to ensure that the community is free from racial discrimination and harassment.
- B. Bid competitions are accountable for:
 1. ensuring that associated individuals are culturally inclusive;
 2. supporting and encouraging associated individuals to develop cross-cultural competence through personal activities in civil rights advocacy and racial justice;
 3. monitoring and ensuring that appropriate conduct and practices are modeled and observed at all times by their associated individuals;

4. taking appropriate action if they observe or receive a report of racial discrimination, harassment or vilification; and
5. reporting allegations of racial discrimination, harassment or vilification to authorities, including but not limited to the bid competition leaders, ASA, university student organization governing bodies, university law enforcement, or other university or local authorities or administration, as appropriate.

C. ASA is accountable for:

1. items 1, 2, 3, and 4 as listed above in Section V, subsection B; and
2. investigating allegations of racial discrimination, harassment or vilification, and making recommendations to resolve the matter.

D. All associated individuals have a responsibility to uphold and act in accordance with principles promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness, including identifying and bringing attention to acts of racism.

E. All associated individuals have a responsibility to comply with this policy.

VI. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

- A. Breaches of this Policy that are submitted as a complaint to ASA will be dealt with in accordance with ASA's Complaints Policy.
- B. The consequences for a proven breach will be determined at the discretion of ASA. Consequences range from, but are not limited to, monetary fines, probation, disqualification from competition, suspension from membership, or termination of contract.

VII. COMPLAINTS

- A. Any individual with a concern is encouraged to report it and seek assistance, in accordance with the procedures described in ASA's Complaints Policy.
- B. Complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, timely and confidential manner.
- C. Complaints may be submitted anonymously, but this will significantly limit the extent to which ASA will be able to provide recommendations, perform corrective actions or place sanctions on participation.

VIII. RETALIATION

- A. Retaliation against a person who reports a potential violation under this Policy, assists someone with a report of a violation, or participates in any manner in an investigation or in the resolution of a complaint made under this Policy is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- B. Retaliation includes but is not limited to threats, intimidation, reprisals and/or adverse actions related to an individual's membership, leadership, or participation in a community-related activity, event, or organization.
- C. ASA will take appropriate steps, within their jurisdiction, to assure that a person who in good faith reports, complains about, or participates in an investigation pursuant to this Policy will not be subjected to retaliation.
- D. Individuals who believe they are experiencing retaliation are strongly encouraged to file a complaint with ASA using the same procedure outlined in the ASA Complaints Policy.

IX. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A. ASA reserves the right to make changes to any part of this policy from time to time.
- B. We will notify the community about significant changes by making a post on our social media, by placing a prominent notice on our website, and/or by updating information on our policies page.
- C. ASA welcomes your questions or comments regarding this Anti-Racism Policy. You may contact us via email at legal@desiacappella.org.