



State Voices Core Values

Definitions and Expansions



EQUITY

At the core of State Voices' sustainable work culture is a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. We are dedicated to creating an environment where everyone, regardless of race, gender, age, religion, background, or sexual orientation, can thrive and contribute.

01

- ▶ **Making the Implicit Explicit:** We acknowledge privilege and are transparent about existing hierarchies. We actively engage in bi-annual pay equity analyses and foster a comprehensive understanding and demonstration of our values across all staff levels. Central to our ethos is the empowerment of Black women and significant representation of POC in leadership roles, as well as lifting up the TLGBQIA+ community, ensuring our practices and policies authentically reflect the communities we serve.
- ▶ **Working within the value of Equity:** This commitment extends to providing access to professional development through diverse channels such as cross-organization committees, state tables, conferences, grant proposals, and training programs. By supporting learning that is authentic, proactive, and equitable, we aim to drive change from a place of genuine understanding and solidarity, ensuring every staff member is equipped and empowered to contribute effectively.

GRACE (EMPATHY/COMPASSION)

Extending grace embodies the spirit of empathy and compassion that guides our organizational culture. It compels us to recognize the humanity in each person, encouraging us to approach every interaction with empathy and an open mind, free from assumptions. We grow in grace when we treat others with dignity, kindness, and courtesy.

02

- ▶ **Context:** While grace fosters an environment where understanding and kindness prevail, it also demands a balance that ensures operational effectiveness. In times of conflict and disagreement, grace is our beacon, helping us navigate challenges with compassion while maintaining the integrity of our relationships and the productivity of our work.
- ▶ **Working within the value of Grace:** We strive to create a supportive environment where every voice is heard and valued, ensuring that our commitment to grace enhances, rather than impedes, our ability to achieve our mission.



AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

We build our collective impact through authentic relationships. These relationships are characterized by transparency, mutual respect, active engagement, openness to feedback, and a genuine curiosity about the motivations and aspirations of our colleagues and partners.

03

- ▶ **Context:** Authenticity in our relationships means consistently communicating honestly and openly, ensuring all interactions are grounded in trust and respect. Transparency is not the right to know everything about everyone. Rather, it's each of us, providing the appropriate amount of real-time information, sharing our perspectives, and assuming the best intentions from the people responsible for the work. We recognize and appreciate the unique contributions of each individual, fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and understood. An authentic relationship is visible in our daily interactions—where questions are encouraged, different perspectives are valued, and everyone is committed to mutual growth and understanding. This dynamic not only enhances our work environment but also propels our mission forward through a foundation of strong, collaborative partnerships. This commitment ensures that we place 'relationship before task,' recognizing that effective collaboration isn't just about being liked, but about engaging respectfully and productively. We are dedicated to exploring the complexity of human interactions with curiosity and openness, ready to challenge our assumptions and strengthen our bonds, especially during challenging times.
- ▶ **Working within the value of Authentic Relationships:** We prioritize these relationships by coming together multiple times throughout the year, often in person, to share space and foster deeper connections. By embracing honest communication, principled conflict resolution, and unwavering support—where we don't undermine each other or speak negatively about one another—we cultivate a community based on mutual respect and understanding.



SUSTAINABLE WORK CULTURE

A sustainable work culture is an organizational environment that prioritizes accessibility, is pro-Black, pro-worker, pro-TLGBQIA, and fosters long-term employee engagement, productivity, and well-being while promoting the organization's growth and success. This type of culture actively invests in the development and satisfaction of its employees, views them as people with lives outside of work, and creates an inclusive, supportive environment conducive to innovation and growth.

04

- ▶ **Context:** A sustainable work culture must be equitable and intentional about creating policies and practices that foster long-term engagement, productivity, and well-being.
- ▶ **Working within our value of Sustainable Work Culture:** To build and sustain this culture, we implement several key initiatives: Wellness Wednesdays and monthly wellness days, Summer Fridays, paid summer and winter breaks, and sabbatical leave. Our health support architecture includes a robust Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that offer mental health support. These elements not only promote the company's growth and success but also ensure that the workplace is supportive and conducive to innovation and growth, recognizing our employees as whole individuals with lives outside of work.



INTEGRITY (TRANSPARENCY/TRUST)

Integrity means acting with agency and emotional intelligence to protect State Voices, our table partners, and your colleagues. It means responsibly and transparently sharing information to empower our colleagues, within the constraints of their roles, organizational expectations, and applicable laws.

05

- ▶ **Context:** This value compels us to discern the appropriate contexts and depths for information sharing, focusing on meaningful exchanges that build trust and facilitate impactful work.
- ▶ **Working within the value of integrity:** Our commitment to integrity means honoring our commitments and being accountable. We do what we say we will do, and if we can't, we communicate honestly and openly. We trust others to do what they say they will do, and give them the space to be trustworthy. This approach includes going back to close the loop and adjusting or renegotiating as necessary to align with evolving circumstances. Recognizing that everyone works different hours and has different needs, we emphasize clear, direct communication and making explicit agreements. This includes being clear about deadlines when collaborating with others. By upholding these standards, we ensure a culture where trust thrives and assumptions are always in favor of our collective mission.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability means owning one's contributions and outcomes, understanding the implications of not aligning with our shared values, and committing to personal and organizational growth rather than mere compliance or avoidance of consequences.

- ▶ **Context:** The gravity of our work in the fight for liberation demands a high standard of accountability. This encompasses not only fulfilling our defined roles but also wholeheartedly embracing the collective vision and mission of our organization with dedication and precision.
- ▶ **Working within our Values:** Our approach includes transparent actions, decisions, and financial practices, ensuring alignment among our partners and communities. We emphasize giving direct and timely feedback and advocate for proactive accountability that addresses issues before they escalate into crises. Additionally, we prioritize accountability not only to our mission and to one another but also to understanding our political environment and strategy. We strive to be continuous learners in political education, adapting our strategies to effectively navigate and influence the political landscape. Through continuous communication, evaluation, and feedback within a system-level framework, we commit to a cycle of improvement and responsibility that honors our collective commitment to impactful results.

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COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Collective impact is the culmination of our shared efforts, where the sum of our actions leads to significant, sustainable changes within the communities we serve and beyond.

- ▶ **Context:** At State Voices we believe in the power of collaboration across different departments, perspectives, and the movement ecosystem, acknowledging that no single entity can address complex social issues alone. By aligning our goals, harmonizing our strategies, and measuring our progress collectively, we strive to create a ripple effect of positive change, driven by a deep commitment to equity, justice, and the empowerment of underrepresented voices.
- ▶ **Working within the value of Collective Impact:** This value is demonstrated through engaging in cross-departmental work, creating workgroups, and working collaboratively. By aligning our goals, harmonizing our strategies, and measuring our progress collectively, we ensure that each contribution is respected and valued, recognizing that together we are more than the sum of our parts. Our approach fosters an environment where all staff members are open to both supporting and leading, driven by a deep commitment to equity, justice, and the empowerment of underrepresented voices, thereby creating a ripple effect of positive change.

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