



APPROVED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 4/20/2021

## **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **PREAMBLE**

As we celebrate and consider our 50 years as a preservation organization in 2021, Landmarks Illinois recognizes the need for our work to become more diverse, equitable, inclusive and accessible. We acknowledge it has not always been so in the past but it is our intention to make it so in the future. A task force made up of 34 people with a wide range of backgrounds and viewpoints met in the lead up to the anniversary to discuss how Landmarks Illinois can best meet the challenge we have set for ourselves. The events of 2020—the impacts of the pandemic, renewed calls for racial justice and the undermining of our democratic processes—have all given our discussions even more urgency. Preservation saves and celebrates the places people value, that tell extraordinary and difficult histories and that move our communities forward. Landmarks Illinois' work is not only to save places for people but, more importantly, *with* people. It is our hope that these Guiding Principles will ground all the work we do as we begin our second half-century as an organization.

**Together with our partners, through our mutual work, we will proactively implement these guiding principles:**

#### **1. Fight for and model justice, equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility.**

- Acknowledge the lives and land of Illinois' ancestral and current Native communities and their sovereignty.
- Respect people's identities, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living.
- Identify and eliminate barriers to engagement and provide fair and equitable access to resources and opportunities throughout the state.
- Create an environment where people feel welcomed and valued, that they belong, are treated with dignity and where diversity is the culture.
- Combat racism by identifying and challenging our own unconscious stereotypes and prejudices, intervening against acts and systems of discrimination and oppression, and ensuring the historic advantages that have privileged white people are no longer perpetuated in and through our work.

#### **2. Confront climate change and promote environmental justice.**

- Become more knowledgeable about preservation's role in confronting climate change and actively promote this message.
- Prioritize projects where people and communities are most negatively affected by climate change and the inequitable distribution of polluting industries and actions.

- Embrace new materials and technologies that reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of historic places.
3. **Build lasting and positive relationships through the investment of time and the free sharing of resources to support communities in their preservation efforts.**
    - Positive relationships are where we succeed at achieving our mutual goals.
    - Investment refers to freely sharing many kinds of tools, including knowledge, connections to other people, successful examples, encouragement and money.
    - Communities will decide for themselves what is important and what's needed to feel supported.
  4. **Identify, share and reinforce honest stories of people's intersection with place.**
    - With their permission, work with community members to find more information about the narratives and places they consider to be significant.
    - Engage in consensus building around these places and narratives and possible solutions.
    - Amplify community voices by sharing stories that may have gone untold. Recognize that the histories of many communities have been overlooked or intentionally excluded and that these histories may reveal difficult truths.
  5. **Be fully transparent and accountable.**
    - Begin with being accountable to our own organizational history.
    - Transparency means open-access publishing of our policies, practices and processes, including who is involved, how decisions are made that allocate resources, where those resources are going and with whom we will be working.
    - Being transparent ensures accountability to our Guiding Principles and helps identify where change is still needed.

## DEFINITIONS

**The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Task Force provides our definitions for use of the following terms:**

**Preservation** often means protecting a place, places or cultural heritage, but it can mean so much more, like combating climate change, keeping and adding supportive and affordable housing, helping a business survive and joining advocates fighting historic school closures.

**Justice** is the practice of being fair and reasonable and ensuring people receive the treatment or outcome they deserve based upon equity, ethics and the law.

**Equity** is fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures

and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in the distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

**Inclusion** is genuine, sincere, intentional, actionable and ongoing engagement with diverse people and communities. People’s identities, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living are respected. Inclusion creates an environment where people feel they are welcome, valued, and belong, and are treated with fairness and dignity. Inclusive organizations provide equitable access to resources and opportunities, including participation in decision-making. The people who have excluded others are responsible for inclusion, not those that have been excluded.

**Diversity** within a group means including people of various ages, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, cultural and religious backgrounds, people with disabilities, national origins and immigration status, sexual orientation, genders or gender identities, housing status, health statuses, lifestyles, experiences, interests and worldviews. Diversity is a group of people who are different from one another and who are working or being in the same place together.

**Accessibility** addresses the social and physical environment, as well as organizational policies and practices that support individuals living with disabilities in ways that are inclusive and provide equitable access to resources, opportunities, methods of communication and expression, and being in and moving through space. A culture of inclusion and respect removes barriers and welcomes people of all abilities with the understanding that equitable access is a fundamental human right.

## RESOURCES

The Guiding Principles refer to, but do not define, several other concepts and terms. Please consider consulting the following resources for more information on these concepts in particular:

### Racism

- “[Racism](#)” by Racial Equity Tools, ©2020.  
As of April 9, 2021, this website provides over 40 articles to choose from on interpersonal, cultural and institutional racism.  
Direct link: <https://www.raciaequitytools.org/resources/fundamentals/core-concepts/racism>

### White Privilege

- “[System of White Supremacy and White Privilege](#)” by Racial Equity Tools, ©2020.  
As of April 9, 2021, this website provides 75 articles to choose from on these topics.

Direct link: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/fundamentals/core-concepts/system-of-white-supremacy-and-white-privilege>

## Climate Change

- “[Overview: Weather, Global Warming and Climate Change](#)” by the Earth Science Communications Team at NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, at time of publication website last updated April 5, 2021.  
Direct link: <https://climate.nasa.gov/resources/global-warming-vs-climate-change/>
- “[Global Climate Change: What You Need to Know](#)” by Melissa Denchak, National Resources Defense Council, February 23, 2017.  
Direct link: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/global-climate-change-what-you-need-know>