INTRODUCTION

This Stewardship Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of serving on the Arts for LA (AFLA) Board of Directors, including mutually-agreed upon expectations based on our organizational values. It also serves as a Code of Conduct for Board members. Service on the Board is a form of Stewardship – defined as the responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care. Additionally, AFLA embraces the larger concept of Shared Stewardship, which reinforces the partnership that exists between the AFLA Board and Staff in how we govern both organizational sustainability and service to our communities. It challenges us to share authority, expertise, and responsibility with others to expand conditions that everyone needs to thrive, beginning with those people and groups who have the most to gain.

The Goals of the AFLA Stewardship Policy are to:

● Provide a Framework for Building a Board that reflects the diversity of Los Angeles County;

● Illustrate how the Board upholds AFLA’s Values in creating a people-centered culture of inclusion, belonging, and well-being (part one below); and

● Outline Board Members’ Responsibilities (part two).

This Stewardship Policy is a commitment to Equity as defined in the AFLA Equity Statement and it takes inspiration from the concept of Cultural Equity as described in LA’s Countywide Cultural Strategic Plan (see Appendix I).

By grounding Board service in AFLA’s shared beliefs, this Policy reinforces an organizational culture where all contributions by Board members are encouraged and valued equally. In return, AFLA asks that its Board members prioritize participation on AFLA’s Board through their commitment of time, resources, services, and knowledge. AFLA hopes that all its members find the Board a welcoming place to gather and that service to AFLA will be personally rewarding.

PART ONE: Board Stewardship Values and Beliefs

1. Stewards of Mission Fulfillment and Organizational Success

   We seek a Governing Board that embodies AFLA’s values and its theory of change.

   a) LEAD with a Board that:

      (i) Reflects the broad diversity of the LA arts region, including the voices of those who have historically been underrepresented in policymaking and decision-making spaces, as articulated in LA County’s definition of Cultural Equity; and
(ii) Prioritizes acting in compassionate solidarity with others to achieve fairness, justice, and sustainability in opportunities, access, representation, and outcomes so that all can thrive in the LA arts and culture community.

b) CONNECT through a Board that:
   (i) Helps ALFA network and convene arts, culture, social justice, and other allied organizations and movements, and connect them to each other, to funders, and to key decision makers; and
   (ii) Prioritizes those who have historically had less access to resources and opportunities by working with Staff to create more equitable resource distribution, diversify decision-making spaces, and build trust and awareness of AFLA within all arts communities.

c) LEARN together through a Board that:
   (i) Brings an understanding to its decision making of the challenges and priorities facing arts and culture organizations and artists;
   (ii) Values and exhibits knowledge of equity, belonging, collaborative decision making, and power sharing in support of AFLA’s mission and values; and
   (iii) Advocates for change in the arts and culture industry, which moves all groups toward universal policy goals while addressing the particular needs and potential contributions of individual constituencies.

2. Stewards of Financial Sustainability

   While one of the most direct ways Board members act as stewards is in providing funds for the organization, an overriding responsibility is to ensure the long-term health of the organization. Achieving financial sustainability requires Board members who personally contribute resources, assist in fundraising, procure resources from others, and lay the foundation for future financial growth. At AFLA, resource development is a collective endeavor, which includes the Board together raising an aggregate annual amount set through the budgeting process. It is expected that Board members will make a direct monetary contribution to the organization, based on what is personally meaningful to them and at levels consistent with their ability. All members will work collaboratively with Staff and Board to meet the required Board giving, recognizing that new and varied forms of resource development are critical to AFLA’s long-term financial health.

3. Stewards of a People-Centered Culture of Inclusion and Belonging

   AFLA embraces a culture that welcomes all people, values the perspectives of divergent views, and appreciates all forms of contributions by its Board members.

   a) People are recruited to AFLA’s Board for the stewardship that they bring, which includes by example: providing expertise or services, making connections to communities, contributing money, or networking with funders. All pathways to AFLA’s well-being are important—true inclusion and belonging can be fostered only if all contributions are equally valued.
   
   b) AFLA’s culture of belonging is centered in the act of giving meaningfully regardless of the amount of the gift.
   
   c) Varying perspectives are encouraged, heard, and have an impact on Board decision making.
d) Board members value ongoing personal learning, respecting the views of other Board and Staff members, developing relationships of trust, sharing power, and centering the well-being of AFLA Staff and volunteers.

PART TWO: Individual Stewardship Responsibilities

AFLA Board members make the following personal commitments upon joining the Board. For a list of Board roles (acting as a whole), see Appendix II.

1. **Mission Fulfillment and Organizational Success**
   a) Be knowledgeable about AFLA and its programs, including participation in AFLA events where possible (and inviting others)
   b) Uphold the Board’s fiduciary duties: (i) engage meaningfully, and exercise due care and good judgment, in Board work, meetings, committees, and trainings; (ii) act in the best interest of AFLA and its mission, and avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and (iii) comply with laws and AFLA’s governing documents and polices
   c) Serve on at least one AFLA Board Committee
   d) Keep meeting deliberations confidential and exercise good judgment and care in avoiding disclosure of sensitive and confidential AFLA information
   e) Be an ambassador for AFLA, advocate for its issues, and represent AFLA positively
   f) Participate in additional support activities as able:
      - provide expertise, advice, and services (as requested)
      - provide connections to organizations and people
      join in diverse community engagement and movement building to address fieldwide inequities; and build AFLA support among a wider community

2. **Financial Sustainability**
   a) Make a personally meaningful annual financial contribution towards the Board’s aggregate gift established in the annual budget
   b) Work with Staff to recruit and retain AFLA members
   c) Participate in additional fundraising and friendraising activities as able:
      - make in-kind gifts of products and services that replaces expenditures AFLA would otherwise make (e.g., event space, food & beverage donations, consulting)
      - leverage personal connections to assist AFLA fundraising efforts, including making introductions to individual, corporate, and foundation contacts who may be potential donors or sponsors
      - provide fundraising expertise or assistance with campaigns, social media, grant requests, and gift solicitations
      - assist with donor stewardship and community friendraising as appropriate
3. *Culture of Inclusion and Belonging*

a) Exhibit personal qualities of empathy, compassion, adaptability, professionalism, ethical behavior, and openness
b) Respect and listen to others, be courteous, and adhere to meeting agreements and agreed-upon collaborative strategies
c) Uphold AFLA values and expressed principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and access
d) Undertake ongoing personal learning about principles of equity and belonging, social/racial/economic justice, systemic inequities, and power dynamics
e) Be aware of one’s potential influence and privilege in relation to colleagues
f) Build respectful and trusted relationships on the Board and between Staff and Board, share leadership authority, respect Staff’s lanes of authority, work collaboratively with staff while recognizing the importance of established lines of communication through the CEO as appropriate
g) Support AFLA in sustaining a people-centered and healthy workplace culture, and avoid all discriminatory, harassing, abusive, or oppressive conduct

**COMMITMENT**

Each Board member is asked to acknowledge that they understand the expectations of AFLA Board service by signing this Policy.

AFLA hopes that each Board member will find rewarding ways to participate in AFLA’s work, and AFLA leadership commits to creating opportunities for service that will be meaningful. Accountability for living AFLA values and meeting Board responsibilities will be built into various governance structures mutually developed by the Board and Staff. Board members are encouraged to contact the CEO or the Board Chair with questions about this policy or with reports of behavior inconsistent with this policy.

AFLA welcomes individuals to the Board and looks forward to a fulfilling partnership in furtherance of AFLA’s mission.

Board Member Name: ________________________________

Signature:

_____________________________________________
In AFLA’s Equity Statement:

Equity is the 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 their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

In the Los Angeles Countywide Cultural Strategic Plan:

The Cultural Policy defines cultural equity as the values, policies, and practices that ensure all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of policy and the fair and equitable distribution of cultural resources. Cultural equity utilizes a strengths-based approach such that diverse forms of artistic and cultural expression are represented and supported, and existing cultural organizations, artists, communities, and artistic practices are valued.
APPENDIX II

AFLA Board Roles

In Partnership with Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission/Purpose Driven Organization</th>
<th>Sustainable Operations</th>
<th>People-Centered Culture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ Set &amp; Champion a Vision, Mission &amp; Values for AFLA</td>
<td>✓ Adopt Budgets that Prioritize Mission &amp; Values</td>
<td>☼ Cultivate a Culture of Inclusion, Belonging &amp; Well-being</td>
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<td>★ Center Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging &amp; Access in all Actions</td>
<td>✓ Help Ensure Adequate Resources to Sustain the Organization</td>
<td>☼ Recruit a Diverse &amp; Inclusive Board</td>
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<td>★ Undertake Strategic Planning that Prioritizes Perspectives of those most Impacted by AFLA’s Work</td>
<td>✓ Hire and Partner with the CEO to Establish &amp; Monitor Management of AFLA</td>
<td>☼ Govern through Equitable &amp; Collaborative Decision Making by Sharing Power &amp; Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Understand &amp; Support Legal Compliance</td>
<td>☼ Conduct Self Governance (Evaluations &amp; Succession Planning)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Ensure Implementation of Sound Financial Practices</td>
<td>☼ Adopt &amp; Adhere to Governance Policies/Documents that Embrace Practices of Equity &amp; Belonging</td>
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<td>✓ Manage Risk by Considering all Costs &amp; Inequities</td>
<td>☼ Support Creation of People-Centered HR Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Adopt Holistic Sustainability Practices that Value ALL Board Contributions Equally</td>
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