

PLAN FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS



Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

PGC is a nonprofit, public-access education center; an art gallery; a state-of-the-art glass studio; a community builder; and a hub for innovation and creativity. Anyone can take classes, explore the contemporary glass gallery, and watch the live hot glass demonstrations. We strive to make all of our programs fully accessible and equitable for all to participate.

Vision: PGC fuels a thriving glass art ecosystem of people, facilities and innovative programming that together shape our region's creative economy. From the casually curious to the master artist, PGC welcomes and nurtures everyone so they are amazed, inspired and transformed.

Scope & audience: We share our passion locally, nationally and internationally to make the glass art community more diverse, vibrant and accessible.

Guiding principles: Our guiding principles of creativity, collaboration, sustainability, diversity, and excellence, enable us to extend our region's proud glass legacy far into the future.

EMBRACING A CULTURE OF DIVERSITY

PGC benefits from a multiplicity of viewpoints that varied experiences can bring. We embrace and encourage our constituents' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our them unique.

The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees, board members, instructors, students, and audiences invest in our work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and achievement as well.

Goal 1: Make Pittsburgh Glass Center and its services accessible and affordable to every household and organization in Pittsburgh. Accessibility and access are priorities for PGC, both physically and financially. We believe that art is for everyone and artful and creative experiences should not be reserved for those with deep pockets or those who are non-disabled. Our staff strives to create a welcoming and inclusive environment and we are committed to creating opportunities for the underserved communities in our surrounding neighborhood and beyond.

We teach it. We create it. We promote it. We support those who make it.

We maintain a fully accessible facility and our staff strives to create a welcoming and inclusive environment. It is our goal to expand our ability to design programs for diverse groups of people while maintaining our focus on teaching students and visitors about glass art. PGC's outreach & accessibility coordinator's contact information is provided on our website and in printed course catalogs. Our outreach about our tours to the community includes and welcomes groups that face disability and we work with them to make accommodations for their visits.

In order to break down barriers and welcome all individuals and groups to participate in our programs regardless of their ability to pay for classes and activities, we offer tuition assistance in the form of scholarships and underwriting opportunities. These include:

- *Full scholarships for people of color and veterans*
- *Half scholarships for anyone*
- *Free tours, hands-on glass activities, and in-school residencies for schools that meet Provision 2 of the Nation School Lunch Act*
- *Subsidized tours and hands-on glass activities for schools in low-income districts with 50% or more economically disadvantaged students*

PGC welcomes the community into our facility for free events on an ongoing basis through our monthly Hot Jam open houses, which feature exciting hot glass demonstrations, and Family Fun Days, which coincide with MLK Day and include hands-on activities such as mosaic making. In an effort to be more inclusive and accommodating, we have provided an ASL interpreter at all of these events since 2015. We do not wish to deter anyone from experiencing glass because of a disability and thus seek to accommodate every special request that we can, even if we've never done it before.

Goal 2: Strengthen the organization by the inclusion of individuals that reflect the varied cultures of our community in staffing, board members, teaching artists, and vendors. PGC will seek out individuals with different and diverse voices to make sure those voices are heard in the decision-making process. In staffing by recruiting and hiring candidates of color. When job opportunities arise they will be posted in forums that engage diverse populations so that the candidate pool for consideration is broad and PGC will take an active role in recruiting candidates of color.

With staffing our diversity initiatives are applicable, but not limited, to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces:

- *Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees.*
- *Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives.*
- *Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs.*
- *Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for the diversity.*

All employees of PGC have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. We are all expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, after work, and in all other aspects of life including but not limited to social media.

PGC works to recruit new board members who are passionate about our organization, but also represent the neighborhoods and constituencies PGC serves, which is a very diverse population. It is PGC's goal to continue to add board members to the organization that represent diverse viewpoints and backgrounds.

PGC recognizes that there is a lack of representation of artists of color in the glass field across the country. To counteract this trend, we purposefully select artists who represent diverse voices and backgrounds to teach our intensive courses. Although most classes require a certain number of paying students to make it financially viable, we would rather fill a class with scholarship students rather than not run a class taught by an underrepresented artist.

PGC seeks to support MWDBE firms and individuals and gives them preference when selecting vendors.

Goal 3: Meet people where they are. Not everyone can come to our East End location. Others may not be comfortable walking through our doors because they aren't sure what we are or if they will be welcomed. We need to be able to meet people where they are and make accommodations to include people outside of our physical location. We do this by taking out mobile glassblowing unit, Hot Wheels, into the community at events such as Garfield Gator football games, Homestead First Fridays, Brookline Breezefest and OpenStreetsPGH. We also forge partnerships that can help us connect to people from diverse backgrounds who might not be familiar with glass art. Partnerships have included ACH Clear Pathways, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Brothers And Sisters Emerging, Casa San Jose, Hello Neighbor, Ward Home and others.

Goal 4: Reach and engage with more artists of color and continue to make the glass art landscape more racially diverse. In addition to selecting diverse artists to teach our intensives, we also seek to increase representation of artists of color in the glass field through three main strategies: teaching youth of color about glass; recruiting artists of color to our Technical Apprenticeship program; and highlighting racially diverse voices through our Artists Residencies & Exhibitions.



PGC offers many opportunities for youth to learn about glass including tours and hands-on activities, after school classes for middle and high school students, and in-school residencies for K-12 students. Full scholarships are available for students of color to take classes without a financial barrier, and underwriting opportunities are available for schools that serve low-income students. The goals of all PGC youth programming include engaging students in critical and design thinking skills and giving them a better understanding of vocational opportunities in the arts and STEM, including glass art.

Recruiting artists of color to PGC's Technical Apprentice program has been a priority since 2013 and efforts have resulted in an over 30% increase in a program that was previously 100% white. This program provides young glass artists with a unique training opportunity that prepares them to work in any glass studio across the country, often serving as a transitional bridge between school and the professional world for many.

Because there are few artists of color in the glass field, we prioritize providing them with residency opportunities and often introduce non-glass artists of color to the medium through our Idea Furnace Residency program. Successful examples of this include artists such as Sharif Bey, Shikeith, Alisha Wormsley, and Desmond Lewis. These residencies often are connected to exhibitions, which provide more public-facing opportunities for representation when visitors tour the gallery.

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