

## The NYCGMC Statement on Inclusion and Equity

The New York City Gay Men's Chorus is a LGBTQ+ musical community that expresses itself through song and other performing arts. This community values and respects the entire range of gender expression and gender identities as it welcomes all, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation or attraction. Striving to create an environment where inclusive excellence through the performing arts can occur and all its participants can fully express and celebrate themselves, NYCGMC is inclusive and equitable in its language and actions whereby,

- **All Members feel welcomed and have equal access to opportunities that empower them to thrive artistically and culturally**
  - All members can be all of who they are
  - All our voices are heard
  - We respect each other's gender identities and self-determined gender pronouns
  - We can explore our creativity and feel free to express ourselves
  - We support different comfort zones and risk-taking
- **All identities are included as a source of pride and power**
  - We mediate our conflicts and work toward peaceful resolution
  - We notice when someone is being excluded, and we reach out to them
  - When we say 'everybody', we mean 'every body': all sizes, looks, types, and abilities
- **All members are non-judgmental**
  - We can share and celebrate our cultures, our genders, our traditions, the experience of our age groups, our stories, and our desires
  - We can explore our gender and sexual identities
  - Differences are discussed, valued, and respected
- **All members respect each other's personal rights**
  - We use our 'power for' and not our 'power over'
  - We are empowered to be agents of change
  - We are upstanders not bystanders - bullying and micro-aggressions of all kinds are challenged
- **All members recognize that our LGBTQ+ community and its allies are ever-evolving and changing; thus we seek opportunities for learning**
  - We will create a community of learning where it's okay to ask questions to promote understanding and build better relationships
  - As receivers of questions, we seek to educate others through constructive feedback
  - We will push beyond our comfort zones, artistically and culturally, and remain open to varying styles of music and genres
  - We challenge ourselves and each other to point out assumptions when we see them
  - We give ourselves and each other room for growth and room to make mistakes and learn from them

**In summary, all members are to strive for the OSCARS:**

**O**penness: Seek opportunities to learn something new, especially about yourself. Safely challenge yourself and fellow singers to participate fully and step outside of comfort zones.

**S**ensitivity: Maturely express when you are offended or unsettled. Acknowledge when you offend someone else. Explanations are encouraged, but not owed.

**C**onfidentiality: What happens in a safe space, stays in a safe space. Protect the identities, words and thoughts of your fellow singers when away from the chorus.

**A**ttentiveness: Be fully present in the space. Do your best to eliminate distractions. Take care of yourself and look out for the well-being of your fellow members.

**R**espect: Honor the experiences, realities, identities and boundaries of your fellow members, as well as your own. Speak from your own experience using "I statements".

**a**ssumptions: Don't make them. Seek clarity before jumping to conclusions. Speak up when an assumption has been made. Be aware when you may be speaking from a place of privilege or lack of.