

## **Recommendations for Incorporating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations into MRFA Social and Professional Development Events**

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Prepared by: MRFA Diversity and Equity Committee

How do we work toward creating more inclusive and accessible MRFA social and professional development events?

The MRFA Diversity and Equity Committee recognizes the complexity of this question and the need for ongoing reflection and effort. This document is intended to be a working set of recommendations that are revised regularly.

### **Recommendations**

- All food served should be clearly labeled, noting the ingredients and, where applicable, cooking method/procedures. Vegetarian options (including main dishes/protein) should always be provided. Serving/plating should avoid cross contamination.
- Offer events (get cracking, PD, social events) at different times of day (revisit the default of hosting social events on Friday evenings).
- Provide alcoholic and non-alcoholic options (e.g., celebration of permanency, tenure and promotion - ask people whether they want bubbly included in their gift basket).
- At least four times a year, offer free childcare at social events (to enable more parents, particularly single parents, to attend).
- At family-oriented events that include children, avoid reinforcing the gender binary (avoid the language of “boys and girls” and use the more inclusive “children” or “everyone”).
- When advertising events for families, use inclusive language that welcomes different family/relationship structures (e.g., blended families, poly families, LGBTQ+ families, single parent families, extended family structures, etc.).
- Revisit the structure of the MRFA Spring PD days to ensure contract faculty can attend.
- Avoid cultural appropriation and denigration. A few (non exhaustive examples): using traditional regalia as costume or decoration; organizing stereotypically-themed parties or events where gender swapping is used for entertainment.
- Give proper credit (and fair remuneration) for both visible and invisible labour.
- Support small businesses when possible, particularly ones owned by those who are typically marginalized.
- Avoid events that are branded as secular but in reality are Christian-based.
- In order to increase access to the MRFA membership, offer a blend of in-person and online events.
- Set a date for events that won't conflict with religious or cultural observances or holidays.
- Offer a sign language interpreter for all major MRFA events. If there are speakers or speeches, use audio-enhancing equipment.

- Keep track of events, activities, and food offerings—review at year end to set targets for the following year.
- Ensure there are gender inclusive washrooms at all events.
- Ensure events are accessible for all persons with disabilities.
- Create a code of conduct for events, including the creation of marketing materials.<sup>i</sup> MRFA members should be held accountable when they break the code.
- Collect candid, anonymous, timely feedback about MRFA events, both from individuals who attended and those who did not (to better understand why they didn't attend).
- Track the frequency and nature of unwelcome, non-inclusive behaviour exhibited at MRFA events.

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<sup>i</sup> Example: <https://www.evolutionmeetings.org/safe-evolution.html>