

## Equity Charter Statement

We need to have the courage and create space to talk about equity and to live it. **Equity** means receiving what one needs to succeed, as we are not all afforded the same opportunities. We must consciously address the deeply entrenched practices, cultural norms, and beliefs that perpetuate inequities. Our sustained commitment to equity is critical to deepening our credibility, effectiveness, and strengthens our ability to reach millions of people cultivating new levels of cross-cultural connection and belonging, one conversation at a time.

**Cultural humility** is fundamental to all of our equity work. We are adopting the NIH definition of cultural humility – it is “a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another’s culture but starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs and cultural identities.” We apply this to all participants – staff, board, teachers, students and donors. We see everyone as teachers and learners, regardless of their position or title. We believe that when we enter interactions with humility, we can learn more and move equity forward as individuals and communities.

### The following are 5 other areas of equity that are critical to our purpose:



**Access** means we continually review and align our policies and practices to maximize the full participation of people regardless of their background or identity, given our resources, capacity and target audiences.

**Anti-racism** is to challenge racism and actively change the policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and actions. Our organization contributes to anti-racism by focusing on human connection. This involves efforts to shift beliefs, ideas and actions by creating spaces for learning, listening and talking about racism and history, personal experiences, biases, privilege and power. We can connect better with people across racial boundaries when we are anti-racist.

**Diversity** is the quantitative representation of differences in people across the organization. We will continually assess, prioritize based on our mission, and fill diversity gaps. We believe that diversity, when combined with inclusion, provides different perspectives that collectively strengthen us.

**Inclusion** means we strive to create an environment in which everyone in the Intercambio community feels valued, heard, respected, and encouraged to share their perspectives and experiences.

**Mutuality** means we approach learning as a two-way exchange and honor the knowledge and assets that students, teachers and everyone at Intercambio bring to the community and to each other. This focus on mutuality, along with accompanying tools and training, opens doors for all participants to share perspectives and experiences, overcome biases, shift power imbalances, and connect more deeply across cultures.

We recognize that we are doing great in some areas of equity and we have great opportunities for growth in others. While we strive to improve and learn in all of the areas above, we also want to recognize that we cannot and will not:

- solve all issues of equity because we do not have the capacity or the expertise.
- all be on the same page or share the same exact equity vision. Everyone has different perspectives, experiences and passions around equity. We can work toward alignment.
- take on activities that don’t relate to our purpose, or that make people feel unwelcome.
- try to persuade people of anything or shame them for their knowledge/perspectives.

We approach our work with a sense of fun and in the spirit of community.

We will be open to feedback from our community and when we make mistakes along the way, we will adapt and continue to learn.