



**HENRY STREET  
SETTLEMENT**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community Agreements**

As a team, the Henry Street DEI Committee has identified some common agreements to facilitate an open and respectful dialogue. Pledging to the following agreements is an opportunity for all of us to show up authentically and openly, and to create a safe and brave space where everyone feels welcome and heard.

In a safe and brave space, we acknowledge and respect all the identities we each hold. To do this, we must understand the power of language and its effects. A safe space is one of welcoming, where we seek out our similarities and respectfully hold space for our differences. A brave space goes one step further to be vulnerable, self-reflective, and challenge bigotry. We listen to understand and not just to respond. In courageous conversations, moments of tension may arise. The agreements below are intended to help us break patterns of mistrust and unlearn harmful behaviors. We must be willing to trust others when they say our words have hurt them.

We ask that while in space, we each check our personal biases at the door and enter with an open mind.

We would like to start with a land acknowledgement:

*Henry Street Settlement is situated on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta) in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. We pay respect to Lenape peoples, past, present, and future and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout the Lenape diaspora. We offer our care and gratitude to the land, water, and air of Lenapehoking, and are committed to resisting colonialism and imbalance with Mother Earth through the support of Indigenous-led programming and Indigenous artistic practices.*

### **Community Agreements**

## **1. Use “I” Statements**

- a. Using “I” statements allows us to claim our own emotions and our own experiences, rather than generalizing. Here are a few examples of how to rephrase a general statement from an “I” perspective:
  - i. “White people are so \_\_\_\_” vs. “As a white person, I can be \_\_\_\_ when I feel challenged.”
  - ii. “I learned you shouldn’t use that language” vs. “I am uncomfortable with the words you used because...” or “When I hear the word \_\_\_\_ I feel...”

## **2. One Mic + Honoring Time Agreements**

- a. To give the opportunity for positive, constructive discussion, a time keeper has been designated and each person will be given 2 minutes before we move to another voice. We ask that all participants respect the present speaker and room at all times. If you have more to say and time allows, you will be given the opportunity to share again.

## **3. Said Here, Stays Here + Learned Here, Leaves Here**

- a. To encourage vulnerable conversations, we ask that any personal information that is shared here, stays here. Do bring what you have learned from today to your conversations with friends, coworkers, and family.

## **4. Mindful Presence**

- a. Engagement and presence looks different for everyone. Do your best to actively listen and remain aware of your feelings and thoughts throughout this gathering. Limit technology and distractions to only those which further your learning.

## **5. Respect and Honor Silence and Self Care**

- a. Topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility can bring up a lot of emotions. We ask that we respect each other’s silence or the need to take a break for self care. [note any relevant content warnings for the event or discussion]

## **6. Embrace Teachable Moments**

- a. No one person is an expert. We all come into this space with varied lived experiences and education. Missteps are opportunities for reflection and redirection. We ask that you be willing to let others learn from you, and you to learn from them.

## **7. Embrace Discomfort**

- a. Conversations in this space will be uncomfortable at times. In these moments, we ask that you check in with your mind and body. How does this make you feel? Where are you feeling it? What is this bringing up for you? DEI team members are here to support you.

## **8. Step Up, Step Back**

- a. As we share space, ask yourself if this is a moment where I can step up and speak out on a topic that has affected my lived experience, or is this a moment where I can step back and listen to others.

## **9. Expect and Accept Non-Closure**

- a. We often want to solve problems and resolve conflict quickly, but this is lifelong work. Conversations in this space will feel unfinished and change will not happen immediately. Carry remaining questions and loose ends into future learning.

**10. Did we miss anything?**

- a. If there are any other agreements you think are missing, feel free to share them now.

If you are in agreement, please unmute yourself and say “Yes,” or type “Yes” in the chat if you are unable.

*Acknowledgements:*

*The development of these community agreements was led by the DEI Values Subcommittee in December 2022. Ideas and teachings were borrowed from [Just Lead Washington](#) and [MindOpen Learning](#).*