



Part  
1C

# Examples of Community Values Statements

## Acknowledgements

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Thank you to the groups and organizations whose values statements are included here as examples for creating your own. For permission to use any of these statements in other ways, please contact the organizations directly.

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Values can be stated simply, as one word or a short phrase. They also may need a bit of context or description—the “why” and possibly some of the “how” this value applies to this community.

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## Examples of values statements from CDSS Affiliates and similar music/song/dance organizations from across North America

*(listed from simpler to more detailed)*

**Note:** Many of these examples are a combination of value descriptions and mission statements or value descriptions and behavior expectations.

In this toolkit, we have separated these into discrete documents: Part 1 is the statement of values, Part 2 is code of conduct, and Part 3 is guidelines for courtesy and etiquette. Our code of conduct and courtesy and etiquette guidelines are more detailed. We have selected these examples for you to consider how to write your own values statement. You will notice that some are very concise, while others are longer and include elements of other components (code of conduct, etiquette). Each group will need to make local decisions about whether to write a statement focused on values alone, or to intertwine these various components.

### **John C. Campbell Folk School** (Brasstown, NC)

<https://www.folkschool.org/>

#### **Statement:**

- **Joy**—We bring originality, creativity and passion to all endeavors—we sing behind the plow.
- **Kindness**—We treat everyone with respect, humility and warmth.
- **Stewardship**—We honor the traditions and spirit of the Folk School as we guide its evolution and preserve it for the future.
- **Non-competitive**—We support and affirm each other in lifelong growth.

### **Young Tradition Vermont**

<https://youngtraditionvermont.org/>

#### **Statement** (as part of an annual impact report):

The mission of Young Tradition Vermont is to ensure that children, youth, and young adults have opportunities to be inspired by, learn about, and perform traditional music and dance, and to use that music and dance to serve communities in Vermont and places participants visit.

We are centered by core values: diversity, inclusion and equity; sustainability; affordability; high quality; and collaboration.

## ***Madison Contra Dance Co-Op (Madison, WI)***

<https://www.madisoncontra.org/values-and-guidelines>

### **Statement:**

The Madison Contra Dance Co-op welcomes people of all ages, genders, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, religious affiliations, abilities, and financial means to join us in carrying on the tradition of contra dancing to live music in Madison. We strive to cultivate a lively community where every dancer can find joy, respect, and safety. As such, we encourage dancers to practice good communication, be mindful of their contact with their fellow dancers, and dance with whoever is coming at them in a way that increases the joy of all involved. We are all here to have a fun time and create positive energy together, and we welcome all to join us in sustaining this wonderful dancing tradition!

## ***Queen City Contrás (Burlington, VT)***

<https://queencitycontras.com/about-qcc>

### **Statement:**

#### **Our Mission & Community Values:**

Queen City Contrás is a Burlington, Vermont-based non-profit that provides fun, high-quality contra dancing with live music and calling to sustain a longstanding New England tradition. We are members of the Country Song & Dance Society (CDSS). The following values are shared by the QCC Organizing Committee:

- Contra dancing is a fun, social, and healthy activity that is open to individuals and families of all ages.
- The QCC dance is welcoming to beginners and is attractive to more experienced dancers.
- Contra dancing builds and maintains community among dancers and performers.

## **Asheville English Country Dance/Old Farmer's Ball (Asheville, NC)**

<https://oldfarmersball.com/english-country-dance/>

### **Statement:**

#### **Old Farmer's Ball Values**

- **Welcoming** – A safe and inviting space for dancers, musicians, and callers.
- **Community** – We value respect, inclusiveness, diversity, consent, and multigenerational interaction.
- **Ownership** – Volunteer investment in the organization.
- **Joy/Smiles** – Presence in the moment.
- **Development** – Artistic growth and skill of callers, musicians, and dancers.

#### **Board Values**

- Transparency
- Leadership
- Activism
- Ownership
- Integrity

## **Portland Intown Contra Dance (Portland, ME)**

<https://portlandintowncontradance.com/>

### **Statement:**

Portland Intown Contra Dance is a dynamic, growing community of people from Portland, ME and elsewhere who really love to dance and really like spending time with each other. We're creative, zesty, welcoming, loving, respectful, and delightful. We're tons of volunteers, a handful of core organizers, and a whole network of people we impact by spreading our joy.

We take our values seriously and have fun with just about everything else. Here's what we're up to:

- Our contra dance strives to be welcoming to all people.
- We create a safe and respectful space together, encouraging healthy self-expression and high quality communication.
- We cherish our local dance community and act in ways that nourish it.
- As members of the broader Maine and national contra dance communities, we honor our roles in preserving and evolving contra traditions.
- And we have fun. Lots and lots of fun.

More found at <https://portlandintowncontradance.com/picd>



## ***BIDA (Boston Intergenerational Dance Advocates) (Boston, MA)***

<https://www.bidadance.org/about>

### **Statement:**

BIDA is a Boston-area group dedicated to promoting involvement in traditional dance and connecting generations by:

- Encouraging dance musicians and callers
- Promoting intergenerational dancing
- Fostering growth in the traditional dance community
- Providing opportunities and resources for dance organizing
- Providing financially and logistically accessible events
- Providing educational and mentoring opportunities
- Building community through social events

BIDA was formed in the fall of 2008 in an effort to fill a niche not served by other dance groups in the area. While Boston had and still has a rich and vibrant traditional dance scene, there was not as much intergenerational interaction as there could be in many of the Boston dance communities. BIDA's founders hoped to create an organization which would strengthen community ties and provide opportunities for dancers, musicians, callers, and dance organizers to share knowledge and energy between generations.

Note: This is a combination of mission, programming, and values.

## ***Downtown Amherst Contra Dance (Amherst, MA)***

### **Statement:**

We aim to have participants fulfill our values at our events:

- **Inclusion:** We include attendees of all genders, races, sexual orientations, bodies, abilities, ages, and backgrounds. We actively work to offer events that create inclusive spaces and that do not present barriers to participation.
- **Safety:** We strive to create an environment where attendees can feel safe to express themselves and to have fun. Dancing should be done with consciousness of physical safety of self and other attendees.
- **Respect:** We respect each other as people. We believe that all attendees have something valuable to offer. We trust that our attendees will show this respect.

- **Fun:** We want to have fun! We love contra dancing as an art form, social experience, and recreational activity. We want to share that love with others, and we want to connect everyone with the joy of contra dancing.
- **Supporting new attendees:** We want the Downtown Amherst Contra Dance to be a place where new attendees can discover and experience contra dancing. We offer lessons, dances that are easy to learn, and we encourage experienced dancers to help new attendees learn.
- **Supporting students:** We aim to introduce students to contra dancing. We aim to foster connections between students and the broader community of local dancers. We aim to support local student contra dance groups.
- **Supporting local performers:** We recognize the amazing music being created by local folk musicians and wish to provide opportunities for growth of local musicians and callers.

## **Arden Contra Dance** (Arden, DE)

<https://ardenclub.org/folk-gild/>

### **Statement:**

Our Arden Contra Dance Community is:

**Inclusive:** We ask a variety of people to dance; we leave space for others to ask us and do not book ahead; we respect that anyone can dance any role and refrain from gendered role comments; we share our pronouns as we are comfortable and use other's pronouns appropriately, and ask when unsure; we accommodate the individual needs of all dancers; we avoid wearing fragrances.

**Welcoming:** We dance with whoever is coming at us, we respect personal boundaries and comfort; we give ourselves and each other grace when we mess up, and we learn from those mistakes; we are kind and respectful to all.

**Safe:** We prioritize consent and communication and ask our partners about extra flourishes; we do not shove or yell at people if we think they are in the wrong place; we speak up or ask for help when something is uncomfortable or unsafe; we understand that anyone can say no at any time without explanation; we know that a lead into a flourish is an invitation and cannot be forceful; we stay aware of our partner, hands four, set, and the entire hall while dancing.

If you have concerns about how we are living up to these agreements and you don't feel comfortable addressing them yourself, please speak to an organizer, leave a feedback comment, or email us at [ardencontra@gmail.com](mailto:ardencontra@gmail.com).

\* Thanks to the Hands Across community of CFOOTMAD for this document.

Note: This example combines a list of values with clear statements about how they should guide behavior and what to do when they don't—a combination of values, code of conduct, and etiquette guidelines.

## **Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts**

<https://fiddlewesternmass.com/>

### **Statement:**

The Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts is an amateur orchestra made up mostly of fiddle players but also players of other instruments.

- Not for profit
- Professionally facilitated and conducted
- Focus on learning
- Focus on achieving a cohesive sound and cohesive spirit
- Strive to play without sheet music at our concerts with the caveat that “by ear” is not suitable for everyone for a variety of reasons
- All members respect and help cultivate the FOWM culture
- Inclusiveness – We welcome, respect, and show kindness and friendliness to anyone who joins FOWM, regardless of their musical skill and background, gender, sexual orientation, age, race or ethnicity, culture, geographic location, etc.
- Supportiveness – We help each other grow musically by playing together and through respectful, positive, open conversation and problem solving. All of us, from beginners to professional musicians, are learners.
- Open-mindedness – We are open to playing and trying different kinds of music and participating in different orchestral roles as presented to us by our Director.
- Sharing – We welcome appropriate ways to share with the community, such as by putting on an end-of-season concert, playing at community events, and allowing visitors to observe our practice sessions.

## **Syracuse Country Dancers**

<https://syracusecountrydancers.org/>

### **Statement:**

#### **Who We Are**

Hello! Welcome to our dance community! The Syracuse Country Dancers is a group of diverse people who are brought together by our love of dance, music, and community. We strive to be welcoming to all and encourage people of all ages and experience levels to join us for our dance events.

We teach and promote safe and enjoyable dancing, and we ask that our dancers be respectful of each other, the caller, and the band. Some ways we do that are by asking each other to dance, clapping for the band, listening to the caller, and asking about and respecting each others' dancing preferences (e.g. Would you like to twirl? How fast do you like to swing?).

Syracuse Country Dancers' events are alcohol and drug-free, and we aspire for our dances to be open and comfortable to everyone. Please be aware of and respect others' personal boundaries and personal space. We do not tolerate harassment or discrimination in any form.

If you have any concerns, please let us (any of the board members) know! We are always eager to improve our events in any ways that we can.

Happy Dancing!

Note: This is another combined statement of values and behavior guidelines.

## **LCFD (Lavender Country and Folk Dancers)**

<https://www.lcfd.org/code-of-conduct.html>

### **Statement:**

#### **Values and Conduct**

As an explicitly LGBTQIA+ dance community, we hold the following values and expect this corresponding conduct:

#### **Value: Community Mindedness**

#### **Conduct:**

- Be inclusive and dance with people regardless of gender, age, gender identity, race, health status, national origin, relationship status, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, and experience levels, etc.



- Avoid assuming anyone's gender, pronouns, or identity. Refer to people in non-gendered ways until you can determine the language and pronouns individuals want used for and about them.
- Be respectful to fellow dancers, callers, volunteers, dance organizers, etc. Recognize that our dance events take a great deal of effort from many individuals, and consider pitching in to help.
- Ask if people want feedback before giving it (except relating to others not hurting you).
- Change partners each dance and try to avoid booking ahead.
- Dance with the whole line and hall, not just your partner.

### **Value: Consent and Communication**

#### **Conduct:**

- Acknowledge that consent is situational and can be revoked at any time.
- Realize that hugging or other intimate behavior is never obligated. Physical touch requires enthusiastic consent.
- Recognize that eye contact is a part of our dance culture but is optional for all.
- Communicate with partners about role preference, injuries, sensitivities, twirls, flirting, etc.
- Understand that if you have asked someone to dance and they decline, you are encouraged not to ask that same person to dance again during the same dance session.
- Ask anyone to dance and when asked, politely accept or refuse. No one is obligated to dance with anyone else, and declining to dance with one person does not preclude dancing that dance with someone else.

### **Value: Physical Safety**

#### **Conduct:**

- Dance to avoid injuring others, for example by using open hand holds, holding your own weight, stopping when someone asks to stop or indicates that they are in pain.
- Offer flourishes, but only complete them if the other dancer accepts the flourish. Dancers who are unsure of how to accept or decline flourishes, or how to interpret others' responses, are encouraged to ask an organizer for advice or seek verbal consent from other dancers before flourishing.
- Be responsible for your own body and clothing on the dance floor and avoid bumping or stepping on other dancers. Take special care when the hall is crowded, and be observant of others who may have special physical needs or limitations.
- Be conscious of scent sensitivities. LCFD events and weekends are fragrance-free, and you may be asked to leave an event if your perfume, scented deodorant, scented shampoo, etc. poses a health risk.

*Note:* This is a more detailed combination of a values statement with code of conduct/behavioral guidelines.

## **Ashland Country Dancers** (branch of *The Heather and The Rose Country Dancers*) (Ashland, OR)

<http://www.heatherandrose.org/about.shtml>

### **Statement:**

*Note:* Not an official statement of core values; however, our website is pretty clear about what we value and how our dance works:

The Heather and The Rose Country Dancers (H&R) is a statewide network of dance groups in Oregon which teach both English and Scottish Country Dance and use global / positional terminology for teaching. The H&R started around 1981 with informal meetings of volunteer teachers from around the state who had a similar philosophy informed by the teaching of Carl Wittman (1943-1986). H&R was incorporated in 1982 and got its 501(c)(3) status in 1986. The Eugene group had its first Harvest Ball in 1978 and the Ashland group's first Spring Ball was 1981. H&R has presented weekend dance camps since 1981.

Our philosophy is based upon community and inclusiveness. The emphasis is the whole of the dance community and the whole of the dance. We promote community and inclusiveness by teaching with global/positional terminology, by not using gender identity to determine who dances on what side or with whom, and by forming sets as individuals rather than as couples. At our dances you get to dance with everyone from any position.

Global terminology uses teaching language that is global and geography-based and the teaching/calling does not refer to gender roles in any way. Rather, we use language that refers to people's positions within the dance. This promotes community spirit by being inclusive—not discriminating and removing barriers. It has the added benefit of simplicity and clarity, usually requiring fewer words when teaching.

The way we teach supports the way we dance. We don't worry about who is on what side or dancing with whom. When you come to our dances, you will find everyone dancing with everyone else on either side of the dance, regardless of gender identity or expression. We feel this builds a stronger community—you get to know and dance with more people and everyone has an equal chance to dance. It is also more welcoming to LGBTQ+ folks.

Added benefits include dancers learning the whole dance rather than just one side of it (they become better dancers by learning all aspects of the dance, knowing the whole pattern).

Forming sets as individuals rather than couples adds to the feeling of inclusiveness. Everyone in the room is a potential dance partner. Rather than dancers having to find a partner for the next dance, they simply stay on the floor or come to the floor as individuals, sure that someone will come to stand

opposite them. This manner of forming sets does not preclude dancing with a particular person on occasion, though couples are encouraged to come in at the bottom rather than leave holes in a longways.

When forming sets, we call for the number of additional dancers needed rather than calling for couples. Forming sets as individuals removes another barrier to joining the dance, reducing the competitiveness and scrambling for a partner (as well as the anxiety of asking or waiting to be asked) and enhancing accessibility and the sense of community.

*Note:* This example combines a statement of what is valued with detailed description of how that value is practiced.

## **Bay Area Country Dance Society (BACDS)**

[https://www.bacds.org/organization/board/policies/social\\_contract/](https://www.bacds.org/organization/board/policies/social_contract/)

### **Social Contract:**

The Bay Area Country Dance Society (BACDS) is an association of people who gather for social dancing. As a community, we wish to state the policy of the group and its expectation of acceptable behavior.

We wish to cultivate an atmosphere of fun and good will. Dancers expect our dance events to be a safe place, free from harmful influences. This is why we have maintained a policy of sober dancing in a smoke-free environment. Also, some of our dancers are hypersensitive or allergic to highly scented products such as perfume, after-shave, cologne, etc. Please do not wear these types of scented products to a dance. Personal hygiene is very important during this activity. A clean person and clean clothing are expected of everyone. Shoes should be appropriate & not damage the floor.

Furthermore, dance etiquette and our group policy about personal conduct requires dancers to act respectfully and peacefully toward all others they encounter at the dance.

Women and men both may ask for partners. While we hope that everyone is open to dance with a variety of other dancers, each dancer may decline a request to dance. We hope that is done tactfully and kindly. And we hope that the asker can let it go at that.

Because country dancing is a contact activity, we expect everyone to consider both the safety of others and the limits of reasonable personal space.

We reserve the right to expel from the dance anyone who does not choose to act within the limits of good behavior. Any warning received about unacceptable behavior needs to be taken seriously. Rough or inappropriate touching is not acceptable, nor is foul or abusive language, or the appearance of inebriety.

If we feel it necessary to expel a person, it will be at the discretion of the BACDS Board whether or not to allow them to return.

It is our fervent hope that all dancers will feel welcome and safe. We wish for everyone to have a good time and practice good behavior.

Adults are responsible for any children they bring to the dance.

(Adapted by permission from a document produced by the Chico Country Dance Society.)

*Note:* This is identified as a social contract, not a statement of values, but values are embedded along with behavior expectations.

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## **Examples of values statements from music/song/dance/arts organizations that are not CDSS affiliates or are substantively different from our groups**

### ***Threshold Choir International***

<https://thresholdchoir.org/our-values/>

We are committed to these values when we serve our clients. We recognize the privilege of being invited into our clients' lives at a significant threshold and honor that privilege by maintaining these values at every level of the Threshold Choir organization:

- We value honesty, sincerity, care, and respect in all our interactions.
- We value each person's own life path, choices, and experiences.
- We value the transformative power of love and the healing power of presence.
- We value the importance of compassion and kindness.
- We value the benefit of listening with more than just our ears.
- We value caring for ourselves while being of service to others.
- We value diversity with respect to spiritual paths, cultures, and abilities without respect to age, race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or physical ability.
- We value the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of all people.
- We value the sanctity of all life.
- We value the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination.

We know that we are giving something extremely precious when we sing at the bedside of someone on the threshold. We are aligning our integrity, our gratitude, and our deep generosity with our voices and dancing in the balance

- of humility and confidence,
- of service and self-healing,
- of one singer's voice blended with others,
- of following the breath of our "traveler" with the blessing of our own breath,
- of the stranger bringing grace to an intimate moment.

We are making kindness audible.

## **Village Harmony**

<https://www.villageharmony.org/>

Village Harmony, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in central Vermont with activities around the world welcoming singers of all colors, creeds, ethnicities, nationalities, gender orientations & socio-economic backgrounds. Our focus is on deep exploration of harmony singing styles from traditional cultures throughout the world. We view this as an important aspect of building bridges between different cultures and communities.

*Note:* This is a mission statement and values statement, combined.

## **Folk Alliance**

<https://folk.org/about/>

### **Mission:**

Folk Alliance International's mission is to serve, strengthen, and engage the global folk music community through preservation, presentation, and promotion.

FAI defines folk broadly as "the music of the people" (reflective of any community they are from), and programs a diverse array of subgenres including, but not limited to Appalachian, Americana, Blues, Bluegrass, Celtic, Cajun, Global Roots, Hip-Hop, Old-Time, Singer-Songwriter, Spoken Word, Traditional, Zydeco, and various fusions.

**Vision:**

- Advocate for the folk music community
- Thoughtful, intentional growth
- Be a respected organization within the music industry
- Continue to produce high profile, meaningful events

**Values:**

FAI values diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, strives to ensure gender parity in all its programming, celebrates multiple languages and cultures, and actively welcomes participation from marginalized, disenfranchised, and underrepresented communities.

We believe that greater diversity throughout the organization allows Folk Alliance International to:

Build a more creative and compassionate community. Folk music has historically been inclusionary at all levels and by nature brings community together. It has often been a part of movements for social and political change.

Spur awareness of other cultures and perspectives. We value sharing knowledge and conducting ourselves in a respectful manner. Interaction with a broader membership base introduces us to traditions from different countries and regions, along with perspectives of sub-communities within Folk Alliance International. Openness to and acceptance of these varied interests and perspectives will lead to greater inclusion and participation.

Provide enhanced opportunities for the organization and members. These additional viewpoints and communities will support our intrinsic value by fostering international and multi-cultural understanding, allowing FAI to make a greater impact in the music community and the world at large.

We also believe that bringing greater diversity to the organization will challenge our assumptions while revealing our similarities. It will have indefinable, intangible, and unpredictable effects. The costs of international expansion are worthwhile and of value.

*Notes:*

DH: This one most directly addresses questions of cultural diversity.

DS: This is an interesting example because it contains a clear statement of values, plus extensive justification for the particular value of diversity. The justifications in turn contain additional values, but they are implied rather than explicit, as in the Threshold Choir example, above.

## National Folk Organization

<https://nfo-usa.com/>

We invite you to become part of our NFO family—dance professionals and practitioners, from across the nation, who share a love for folk dance and all things connected—the people, the cultural arts and traditions, and the music. Ours is a simple passion for supporting and advancing folk dance and associated events in our local communities across the United States. We love dancing—and we love the people who do it.

Note: This is a mission and vision statement combined.

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## Examples from well-respected national non-profit organizations (non-music/song/dance)

*(listed in alphabetical order)*

### American Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org/about-us/careers/culture.html>

No matter what our role within the organization, Red Cross employees work toward a common goal: supporting our mission. We strive to follow key values—known as the “Five Cs”—that guide our actions, every day.

- **Compassionate:** We are dedicated to improving the lives of those we serve and to treating each other with care and respect.
- **Collaborative:** We work together as One Red Cross family, in partnership with other organizations, and always embrace diversity and inclusiveness.
- **Creative:** We seek new ideas, are open to change and always look for better ways to serve those in need.
- **Credible:** We act with integrity, are transparent guardians of the public trust and honor our promises.
- **Committed:** We hold ourselves accountable for defining and meeting clear objectives, delivering on our mission and carefully stewarding our donor funds.

For additional, more detailed values, see

<https://www.redcross.org/about-us/who-we-are/mission-and-values.html>

## Care

<https://www.care.org/about-us/mission-vision/>

### Our Values

- **Transformation**

We believe in urgent action, innovation, and the necessity of transformation—within the world and our own organization.

- **Integrity**

We are accountable to the people and partners we humbly serve, transparently sharing our [results](#), [stories](#), and lessons.

- **Diversity**

We know that by embracing differences, actively including a variety of voices, and joining together we can solve the world's most complex problems.

- **Excellence**

We challenge ourselves to the highest level of learning and performance, tapping the best of the human spirit to create impact.

- **Equality**

We believe in the equal value of every human being and the importance of respecting and honoring each individual; we know that change happens through people.

- **Our Core Values Commitment**

This [Core Values Commitment](#) describes who we are, what we do, and how we do it. It reflects our Core Values of **Transformation, Integrity, Diversity, Excellence, and Equality**, which serve as a foundation for all that we do.

## Outward Bound

<https://www.outwardbound.org/about-outward-bound/philosophy/values/>

We teach to and work by these values:

- **Compassion**

Demonstrating concern and acting with a spirit of respect and generosity in service to others

- **Integrity**

Acting with honesty, being accountable for your decisions and actions.

- **Excellence**

Being your best self, pursuing craftsmanship in your actions, and living a healthy and balanced life.



- **Inclusion and Diversity**

Valuing and working to create communities representative of our society that support and respect differences.

## ***ALDEA: Advancing Local Development through Empowerment and Action***

Excerpt from <https://aldeaguatemala.org/who-we-are/>

### **Our Principles and Basic Values...**

- **Partnership with Communities**

Working in partnership with Mayan communities in the Guatemalan highlands toward their own goals is an important pillar of ALDEA–ABPD’s work.

- **Community Empowerment and Mobilization**

The mobilization and empowerment of the entire community is an important aspect of all ALDEA–ABPD’s programs and approaches.

- **Strategic Alliances**

An essential part of the approach is for ALDEA–ABPD and the communities and their local development committees (known by their Spanish acronym COCODES) to form strategic alliances with a range of actors including municipalities, national governmental entities, and other NGOs working in the area that can complement our work.

- **Evidence-Based Interventions**

ALDEA–ABPD’s work is evidence-based, drawing on documented national and international research about what works best. This also means that we will periodically document and evaluate our work.

- **Sustainable Development**

ALDEA–ABPD strives to ensure that development activities are sustainable and cost-effective.

- **Learning and Knowledge**

ALDEA and ABPD are learning organizations. We will develop and test innovative approaches with our partner communities and continually engage in evaluation processes to determine what works. We will phase in new ideas, taking into consideration the conditions in each community, and basing our support on what is happening on the ground.

## America's Charities

<https://www.charities.org/>

### Core Values

The success of America's Charities is derived from an engaged board of directors and a dedicated staff. Together, our work is guided by these core values:

- **Culture of Collaboration and Excellence:**

By passionately working together with all stakeholders, we challenge each other to achieve the highest levels of professional excellence.

- **Dedication to Diversity and Integrity:**

Embracing diversity and delivering the utmost value to our stakeholders, we believe integrity is the foundation of our individual and collective actions that drives an organization of which we are proud.

- **Commitment to Engagement and Connectivity:**

With an innovative and empowering spirit, we engage all stakeholders, and the greater society at large, through solutions and ideas that shape social responsibility trends and advance sustainable, effective philanthropy.

## USO

Many USO locals have similar core values; this one is from central Virginia:

<https://hrcv.uso.org/about/core-values>

### USOHRCV Core Values

The USOHRCV core values are recognized as the foundation of our culture, our brand and our operating principles. All USOHRCV employees and volunteers, as ambassadors of our mission, are expected to conduct themselves by these eight core values every day. Those values encompass: Mission First, Do the Right Thing, Respect, Excellence, Collaboration, Accountability, Gratitude, and Innovation.

**Mission First:** The troops' needs and interests are our top priority. Our decisions are based on what is best for the troops and their families, and we strive to inspire support for our service men and women. We act in the best interest of sustained achievement of the USOHRCV mission.

**Do the Right Thing:** Our actions and intentions reflect and reinforce the highest moral and ethical standards even if they involve risk or conflict. We demonstrate the courage to present and hear the truth in an appropriate manner and take personal responsibility to ensure our troops and their families receive the support they deserve.

**Respect:** We recognize and credit the contributions of others and are sensitive to their motivations and feelings. We treat people with dignity and show patience, tolerance, and concern for all. We act with humility and are mindful of the demands we make on others, and strive to be responsive to their requests.

**Excellence:** Excellence is our goal in everything we do. We strive to exceed expectations and continuously improve processes, programs and services. We set the standard for other organizations and lead by example.

**Collaboration:** We build strong, mutually beneficial relationships. We involve others in our plans and decisions, maintain a positive and inclusive work environment and make optimum use of the inputs of others. We provide candid, constructive feedback in the interest of improving operations, programs and services. We encourage, recognize and celebrate the success of all people and organizations that provide quality support to troops and their families.

**Accountability:** We honor our commitments and are good stewards of USOHRCV resources. We take responsibility for our actions, admit mistakes and build trust by being honest, responsive and consistent. We work with a sense of urgency to fulfill the USOHRCV mission.

**Gratitude:** We maintain a spirit of thankfulness and appreciation toward those we support and those who provide support. We embrace and encourage a spirit of volunteerism.

**Innovation:** Our agile and adaptable work environment allows us to find better ways to perform work and provide services and support. We are flexible and proactive and always encourage original thinking.

## **The Sierra Club**

<https://www.sierraclub.org/>

To explore, enjoy and protect the planet. To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives.

## Additional national non-profit resources

- **Examples of Nonprofit Organization Core Values** (Updated August 11, 2020)  
<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-nonprofit-organization-core-values-62283.html>  
This is a summary article affirming the utility of having a statement of values
- **Board Source: Vision, Mission, Core Values**  
<https://boardsource.org/about/vision-mission-core-values/>  
This site contains examples of mission, vision and values statements of Board Source as an organization, plus it's a good resource for non-profits on how to manage your board and your organization.
- **NonProfit Next: Mission, Vision, Values**  
[https://www.nonprofitnext.org/sites/default/files/resource\\_library/mission\\_vision\\_values\\_statements\\_rf.pdf](https://www.nonprofitnext.org/sites/default/files/resource_library/mission_vision_values_statements_rf.pdf)  
Additional overview of mission, vision and values statements, with national examples
- **Forbes: The Three Core Values Every Nonprofit Leader Needs To Excel**  
(Respect, Responsibility, Resiliency)  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2017/12/04/the-three-core-values-every-nonprofit-leader-needs-to-excel>

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## Additional ideas for music/dance/song values

- Promoting intergenerational activities that involve traditional singing, dancing, and music making
- Ensuring safety for participants
- Inclusivity: we welcome participation regardless of ability, skill, race, color, sexual identity, ...
- Participation in singing, dancing, making music
- Making everyone feel comfortable singing/dancing/making music, even when people are watching (as opposed to “dance as if no one is watching”). No shaming, no judging; just affirming.
- Presenting an affordable recreational activity
- Balance between preserving tradition and nurturing a living art form, supporting innovation
- Providing educational opportunities in traditional music/song/dance
- Building community—more than just having fun together, more than just a transactional activity; building a network for mutual support at our activities and beyond them
- We value fairness and due process for all when addressing conflicts or issues
- We value justice in the spirit of growth and healing, rather than punishment
  - *Note:* the last two values on this list support complaint procedures, which are a separate toolkit piece

Not all music, dance and song groups will align with all of the values listed above. On the contrary, there may be groups whose vision is intentionally exclusionary. For example, if a group formed to provide a challenge-dance opportunity, then some level of dance-skill might be one of the values, and total inclusion might not be.

Similarly, perhaps a community band is formed to provide an alternative to an existing one, for more advanced players who really want to play in a tight, disciplined band, as opposed to an anything-goes environment of an open band that emphasizes being welcoming to absolutely everyone. The advanced band might define a certain skill threshold as a value, or might define those qualities of discipline or “tightness” as values. Those values would then support choices regarding who is welcomed and who is referred to other opportunities that are a better match. A dance event whose mission is techno or alt- or fusion-contra might have creativity or continuing evolution of the living art form as values, and not adherence to tradition.

**Values Glossary—summarized from all of the above**

Here are examples of words for values that you might consider including. As you consider them, think about how you would put them into action. How will you embody your values? What would it look like if a value is “broken”?

For example, inclusivity is a value you might consider. What aspects of inclusivity are important to your community: gender, economic, abilities, age, body type, in-group, sensory differences, etc.?

In your community discussions, look at **why** these aspects of inclusivity matter to you, and **how** you will demonstrate the value in practical ways. The statement of the why and how might not be included in the values statement, but they do need to be discussed in the decision process.

<i>Affordable</i>	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Sharing</i>	<i>Transparency</i>
<i>Community</i>	<i>Fun</i>	<i>Social</i>	<i>Integrity</i>
<i>Fellowship</i>	<i>Inclusive</i>	<i>Stewardship</i>	<i>Compassion</i>
<i>Belonging</i>	<i>Joy</i>	<i>Supportive</i>	<i>Fairness</i>
<i>Consent-based</i>	<i>Kindness</i>	<i>Sustainable</i>	<i>Justice</i>
<i>Creativity</i>	<i>Respectful</i>	<i>Tradition/Preservation</i>	<i>Camaraderie</i>
<i>Diversity</i>	<i>Safety</i>	<i>Welcoming</i>	