



Mentorship Program for Opera Leaders of Color

2021 Guidelines and Application Procedures

OPERA America
National Opera Center
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Goals

OPERA America reaffirms its pledge to be an agent for change in the determined and sustained effort to eradicate racism and ensure equity and justice throughout the opera field. Many of opera's inherited practices and prejudices have excluded those who are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) from participating in the art form. The Mentorship Program for Opera Leaders of Color was developed in acknowledgment that Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, South Asian, Arab, Middle Eastern, North African, and Native American administrators face many systemic barriers that have limited their professional advancement, regardless of their leadership potential, level of experience, or current title.

Navigating the opera landscape and pathways to arts leadership can be complex. The Mentorship Program for Opera Leaders of Color provides support for administrators who are at the threshold of making their next leadership step by pairing them with more seasoned leaders in the opera field who can serve as coaches and advocates.

About

The Mentorship Program for Opera Leaders of Color provides a unique opportunity for motivated participants to cultivate long-term professional skills and relationships. This program is best suited for people currently or recently employed at OPERA America organizational members who are responsible for managing programs and/or staff. Program participants will be paired with established leaders in their areas of interest for a yearlong program designed to identify barriers and achievement gaps and then establish and begin to implement an action plan for professional growth and a long-term career trajectory. OPERA America will provide support for three mentorship teams, as well as needed resources for effective professional development during the yearlong program for which the teams are engaged.

Since this program is based on the quality of the interpersonal relationships and bonds that are developed, OPERA America will engage mentors who are committed to achieving racial justice and promoting BIPOC professionals in the field. Program administrators will remain in touch with the mentees and mentors on an individual basis to assure that the relationships remain positive and productive.

Application Process

Application available online: March 10, 2021

Application deadline: April 28, 2021

Selected mentees notified: May 2021

Participants will commit to a full year of participation in a mentorship partnership with prominent leaders from the opera field. Mentees will be matched with a mentor based on their expressed needs and interests.

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must have current or recent employment experience at an OPERA America organizational member and seek mentorship to achieve the next level in their career development.
- Mentees must be available to participate in mentorship activities between June 2021 and May 2022.

Required Materials

1. Resume
2. Two references
3. Six essay questions

Apply: All mentee applications must be [submitted online](#).

Program Details

Participants will be selected based on their leadership potential, motivation to participate, and eagerness to learn and make the most of the opportunity. This mentee-driven program enables participants to describe their ideal mentor with regard to race, gender, leadership experience, and other qualities to allow for the most appropriate match. OPERA America will provide support for the mentorship teams with additional resources for mentoring sessions and professional development through the entirety of the one-year program. All program participants commit to working together for a full calendar year, including attending OPERA America's annual conference.

Selection Process

All applications will be screened for eligibility. Ineligible applicants will be contacted by the program administrator. A panel comprised of members of the Racial Justice Opera Network (RJON) will review all eligible applications and select candidates to advance. A second round of review will include an interview with one or more members of the RJON. OPERA America staff will facilitate the panel and selection process. Final selections will be made by the full evaluation panel. All applicants will be informed of their status at each stage of the selection process.

Requirements

The application must be completed in full, including answering all application questions and providing three references with full contact information. These references may be any combination of employment, professional, academic, or character/personal references.

Contact Information

Please direct questions about this program to Sarah Carter, director of learning and leadership, at SCarter@operaamerica.org.