Our Definition of “Diversity”

VCFA recognizes diversity as the many ways in which people differ, both as individuals and as members of intersecting groups, and we strive to honor a broad and inclusive definition of diversity within our community.

Diversity of identity may include race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability, socioeconomic status, and geographic region. Forms of diversity may also include perspectives and values that arise from different cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations.

Alumnx

Vermont College of Fine Arts values diversity, inclusivity, and respect for all. In keeping with these principles, VCFA has adopted the term alumnx to refer to our graduates. This non-binary, gender-neutral term embraces the full spectrum of gender identities within our community and reflects the college’s ongoing work to ensure a welcoming, safe, and collaborative environment.

The term alumnus in its Latin origins is inclusive of male and female, such terminology adheres to an outdated, limited concept of gender. As an institution that believes in the vitality of words, we are committed to moving beyond the default, the traditional, the assumed. We are committed to the practice of pushing back against binary systems which inherently oppress and dismiss anyone who does not see themselves within two distinct categories.

We see you. We value you.

With this change, we recognize the importance of language and its ability to empower those who have come through our VCFA programs. Each one of our graduates is a vibrant individual and part of a collective that upholds equity and celebrates difference. In our mission to be “a global community of artists continuously redefining what it means to be an arts college,” we openly embrace opportunities for change that embody our belief that “the arts are central to the human experience and have the ability not only to reflect reality but also to create it.”

We welcome you to share your thoughts with us at alumnx@vcfa.edu.

Beyond VCFA: The Young Writers Network

Founded by alumnx of VCFA’s Writing for Children & Young Adults Program, the VCFA Young Writers Network connects the college’s passionate—and growing—alumni community to the children least likely to be able to meet and learn from professional authors. Our goal is to raise a diverse next generation of writers by creating a mentoring network that inspires young writers to discover their voice, develop their craft, and explore future careers in writing.

We work with existing nonprofits in communities where VCFA authors live, connecting our talented authors with youth populations underserved by existing creative writing resources and underrepresented in children’s literature as a whole.

We currently focus our work in the northern New England states—Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts—where we offer intensive school- and community-based residencies in collaboration with our nonprofit partners. These programs (available for grades K-12) offer children an opportunity to explore their own stories through engaging, authentic activities that increase their confidence, motivation, and skill as writers.

To learn more, visit youngwriters.vcfa.edu.

Diversity & Inclusion Committee

With representation across VCFA programs and departments, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee works to bring greater equity and inclusion to all levels of the institution and to review planning, policies, and procedures related to staff, faculty, students, and alumni, as well as the on-campus experience of all who visit the college and VCFA’s role in the community at large.

Our main focus areas in the coming year include:

- Education & Training
- Communications & Reporting
- Inclusive Language
- Recruitment & Retention of Diverse Faculty
- Campus Planning

To learn more about the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, contact diversity@vcfa.edu.

We see you. We value you.