

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE
CHORAL ORGANIZATION

20 November—20 December 2020

Member Survey

Full Results & Report

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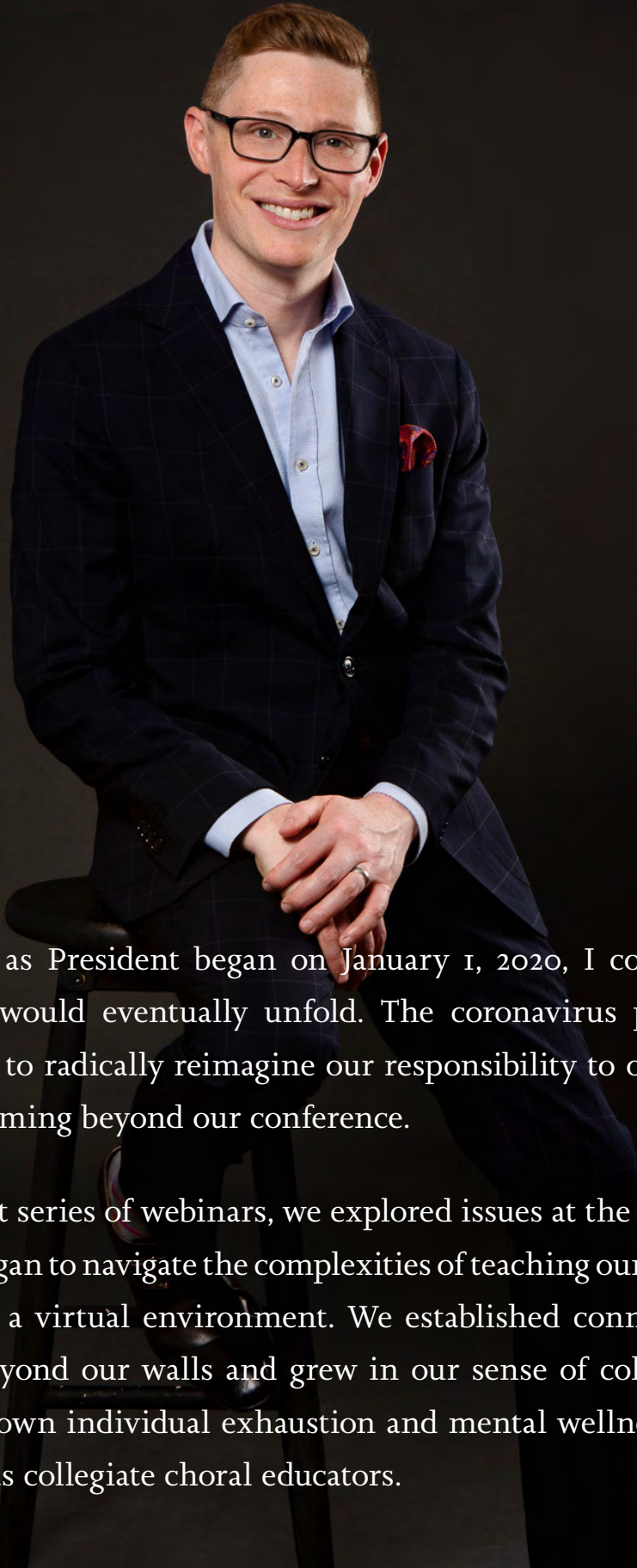
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Introduction



When my term as President began on January 1, 2020, I could not have in any way predicted what would eventually unfold. The coronavirus pandemic led the NCCO Executive Board to radically reimagine our responsibility to our members, as we began to offer programming beyond our conference.

Through our first series of webinars, we explored issues at the forefront of our members' minds as they began to navigate the complexities of teaching our students and reimagining our curricula in a virtual environment. We established connections with professional organizations beyond our walls and grew in our sense of collective purpose, all while monitoring our own individual exhaustion and mental wellness so we could fulfill our responsibilities as collegiate choral educators.

And then the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis led to a racial reckoning in our country long overdue, a reckoning which made its way to our organization too, as we began to question our own inherited biases, practices, and policies.

In collaboration with the Reverend Dr. Jamie Washington, the National Collegiate Choral Organization hosted its first-ever virtual gathering of the National and Executive Boards—a gathering that was unprecedented not just because it was being held in a non-conference year or because it was fully online, but also because its theme was singular: *Building Capacity for an Anti-Racist Organization*. On August 13, 2020, the NCCO Officers and a quorum of the National Board spent over three hours together in discussion, conversation, and dialogue to consider how we could do better.

From that gathering, we received invaluable feedback from key stakeholders in our organization and our profession. I know that I did a lot of listening myself, as we heard the stories of our colleagues, peers, and friends.

It became clear that we needed to establish a set of guiding principles for the organization, and in order to do so, we also had to reach out to our membership at large for their input. This survey and ensuing report are the results of that work, the countless reflections, insights, and opinions offered by a significant number of our members.

I hope this document will be a guiding light for our organization for many years to come as we consider once again where to focus our efforts, how to budget limited time and resources in our priorities, and how to end the systemic biases that have plagued our teaching and our artistry.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'D. DiOrio', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Dominick DiOrio, President
The National Collegiate Choral Organization

Summary

1 **Our NCCO membership is deeply engaged and interested in the organization's future.**

The survey response rates are statistically very significant and decidedly robust for a membership survey, showing strong engagement from our membership base: 133 of our 435 active members (30.6%) contributed responses, including 128 of 349 (36.6%) regular members. The student response was less robust, with only 5 of 86 (5.8%) active student members responding.

In addition, many of the qualitative responses were answered at length by a significant portion of the respondents, with nearly half of the survey responders (86 of 182) making it all the way to the end. The survey was no small ask, as it required approximately 20 minutes to complete.

2 **Our NCCO has much work to do to become more inclusive and to diversify its membership.**

While the survey responses highlighted a broad and robust range of geographical and age-based respondents, the demographic data clearly show work to be done in reaching out to potential members who represent a broad range of gender, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. The need for more efforts highlighting diversity and inclusivity were born out in qualitative responses in the later parts of the survey and in the rankings of potential guiding principles.

3 **Survey respondents overwhelmingly see our NCCO membership fees as fine as they are or even as a bargain.**

167 out of 182 (91.8%) survey respondents rated the NCCO membership fees as either reasonable as they are (76, 41.8%) or a bargain (91, 50%). NCCO continues to offer the lowest membership fees of any professional choral organization.

4 Survey respondents also encouraged us to **consider the cost of conferences as a major barrier to equity and access.**

Many respondents encouraged leadership to pursue more cost saving options for hotels, travel, and conference fees, especially in light of the prevailing trend in higher education of ever-lower available funds for conference travel and attendance.

5 The major benefit members receive from NCCO conferences is the **development of community and peer networks with colleagues.**

Just over half of all respondents listed the relationships built with their peers as the major benefit they receive for attending NCCO conferences.

6 The **membership is divided about the best way to offer our next national conference.**

There were a broad range of responses to this question with much uncertainty abounding about the viability of an in-person conference in November of 2021, with growing fatigue over virtual programming and a potential hybrid or virtual conference, and with their ability to attend a conference even if one is offered. There is no clear optimal path based on member responses.





- 7 To improve future conferences, there is a clear preference among the membership about a need to diversify conference programming and repertoire, to redefine our understanding of excellence as it relates to performance, and to be more inclusive in our outreach to attendees.**

Areas of diversity and inclusion also rose to the top in the qualitative responses to the questions in the section about becoming a more anti-racist NCCO. Doing so would also help to address the perceptions of elitism, Eurocentrism, and “cliqueishness” that arose in a significant minority of responses.

- 8 Guiding principles of advocacy, education/pedagogy, and community rose to the top above issues of excellence, performance, research, and composition.**

In addition, there were a clear number of responses stating that diversity, equity, inclusivity, and access (DEIA) should not be ranked with the others, but instead that they were foundational to centering these other guiding principles in our work; for example: you can't have true community without a commitment to DEIA.

9 The overwhelming majority of respondents voiced strong support for continuing efforts in support of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and access.

A number of national board member respondents in particular suggested offering training for members akin to the summit with the Rev. Dr. Jamie Washington that was offered for the board in August 2020. Many others suggested that DEIA programming become an essential part of our next conference's offerings.

10 When asked what they hoped NCCO would look like in five years, the greatest number of respondents envisioned that NCCO would be seen as an open and inclusive community.

Respondents also listed a strong preference for an NCCO that would be more relevant, more impactful, and whose strong reputation would be a guiding light for the profession at large. A future NCCO would also include a greater diversity of repertoire/programming offerings, performing ensembles, research topics, and pedagogical approaches.



At the date of this survey analysis—January 7, 2021—the National Collegiate Choral Organization has 435 active members:

- 349 regular members (80.23%)
- 86 student members (19.77%)

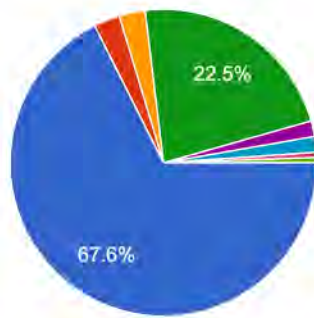


We had 182 responses to this survey, broken down as follows:

- 123 regular members (67.6%)
- 5 student members (2.7%)
- 5 honorary life members (also classified as regular members) (2.7%)
- 41 lapsed members (22.5%)
- 3 non-members (never members) (1.6%)
- 5 other (2.7%)

MEMBERSHIP: Are you currently a member of NCCO?

182 responses



- Yes, a regular member.
- Yes, a student member.
- Yes, an honorary life member.
- No, I am not a current member of NCCO (my membership has lapsed).
- No, I am not a current member of NCCO (I have never been a member).
- Not sure.
- Company has membership
- Company member?

These response rates are statistically **very significant and decidedly robust** for a membership survey, showing strong engagement from our membership base: 133 of our 435 active members (30.6%) contributed responses, including 128 of our 349 (36.6%) of our regular members. The student response was less robust, with only 5 of 86 (5.8%) active student members responding.

& Membership Demographics & Membership

Of these respondents, they represent a broad cross-section of the **five geographical regions** that the NCCO serves:

- 46 from the Midwestern region (25.3%)
- 45 from the Western region (24.7%)
- 35 from the Eastern region (19.2%)
- 30 from the Central region (16.5%)
- 25 from the Southern region (13.7%)
- 1 from outside the US and Canada (.5%)

In which NCCO region do you currently live?

182 responses



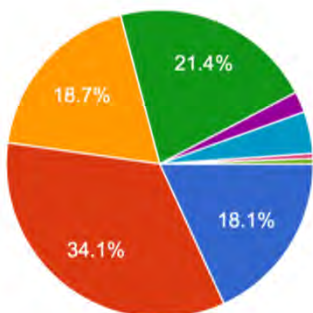
- Central: AR, KS, NE, ND, OK, SD, TX, LA, MO
- Eastern: CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV
- Midwestern: IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, OH, WI
- Southern: MS, AL, FL, GA, KY, NC, SC, TN
- Western: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY, Canada
- I live outside of the United States or C...

Respondents also represented a diverse breadth of **dates in which they initially joined** the NCCO:

- 33 founding members (18.1%)
- 62 first joining between 2006–2010 (34.1%)
- 34 first joining between 2011–2015 (18.7%)
- 39 first joining between 2016–2020 (21.4%)
- 4 never members (2.2%)
- 10 other (5.3%)

For how long have you been a member of NCCO?

182 responses



- I am a founding member (2005/2006)
- I first joined between 2006-2010
- I first joined between 2011-2015
- I first joined between 2016-2020
- I have never been a member of NCCO.
- Not sure.
- I think I was a founding member previously
- Joined in 2006, lapsed, renewed in 2020

Demographics & Membership

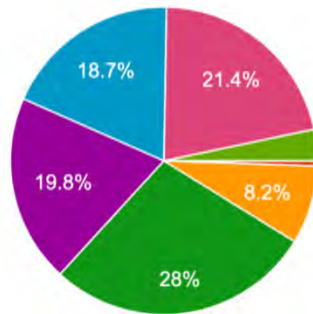
Demographically, respondents also showed a broad cross-section of **ages**, highlighting the generational diversity of the organization, with perhaps a bit more work to be done to attract the very youngest members of the profession (only 8.7% of respondents were 35 or younger):

- 1 between the ages of 18–25 (5%)
- 15 between the ages of 26–35 (8.2%)
- 51 between the ages of 36–45 (28%)
- 36 between the ages of 46–55 (19.8%)

- 34 between the ages of 56–65 (18.7%)
- 39 at the age of 66 or older (21.4%)
- 6 prefer not to say (3.3%)

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: What is your age?

182 responses



- 17 years or younger
- 18-25 years old
- 26-35 years old
- 36-45 years old
- 46-55 years old
- 56-65 years old
- 66 years or older
- Prefer not to say



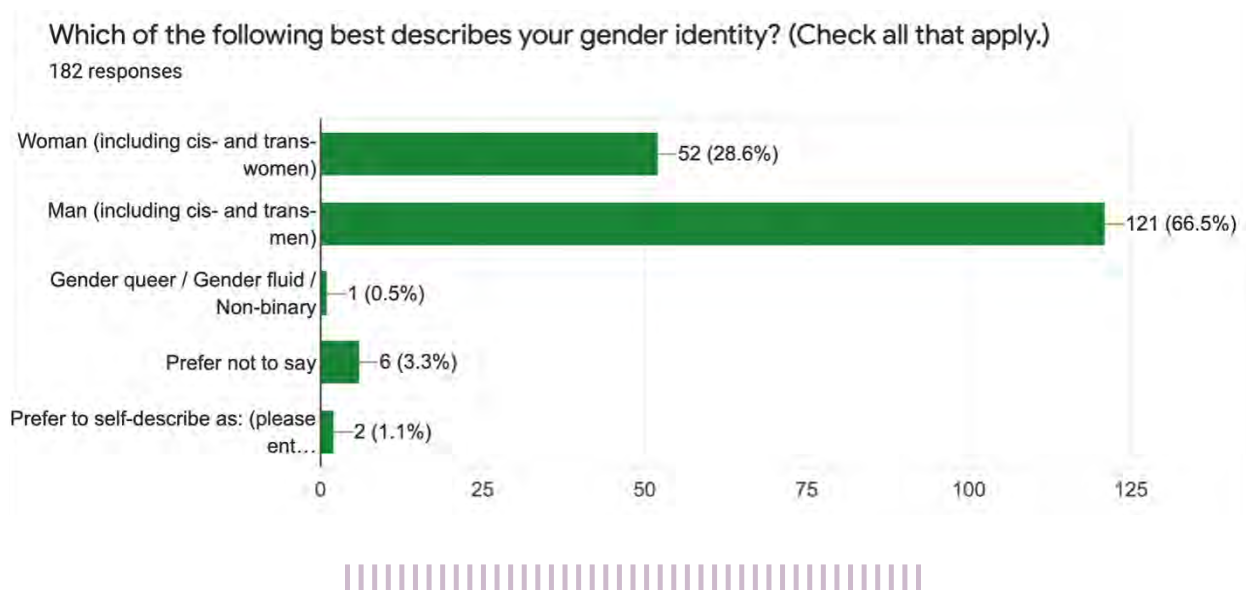
& Membership Demographics & Membership

With regard to **gender identity**, there is a starker contrast:

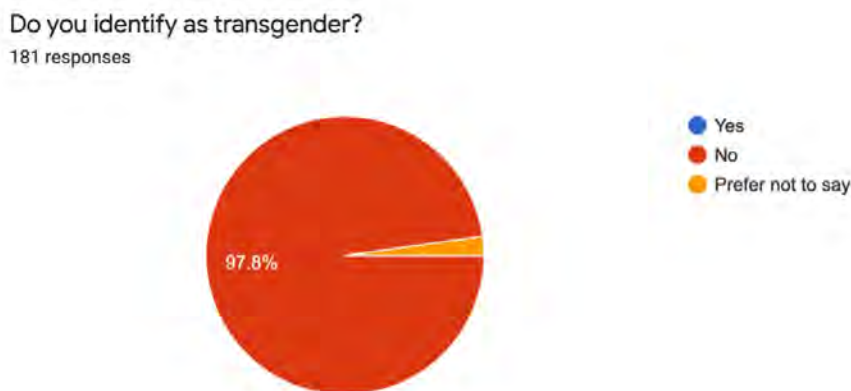
- 121 identify as male (66.5%)
- 52 identify as female (28.6%)
- 1 identifies as gender queer/gender fluid/non-binary (.5%)
- 6 prefer not to say (3.3%)
- 2 prefer to self-describe

A selection of additional written responses included the following:

- ▷ I identify as a gay man
- ▷ Male
- ▷ I'm a cis gay man.
- ▷ Māhū



None of the survey respondents identified as transgender, with 177 saying they do not identify as transgender (97.8%) and 4 preferring not to respond (2.2%).



Demographics & Membership

The demographic data also made abundantly clear the work NCCO still has to do to attract individuals of **diverse races and ethnicities**, as the overwhelming number of respondents identified as white:

- 159 describe themselves as White or Caucasian (87.4%)
- 7 describe themselves as Black or African American (3.8%)
- 4 describe themselves as Hispanic or Latino (2.2%)
- 4 describe themselves as Multiracial or Biracial (2.2%)
- 3 describe themselves as Asian or Pacific Islander (1.6%)
- 2 describe themselves as Native American or Alaskan Native (1.1%)
- 1 describe themselves as a race/ethnicity not listed here (.5%)
- 7 prefer not to say (3.8%)

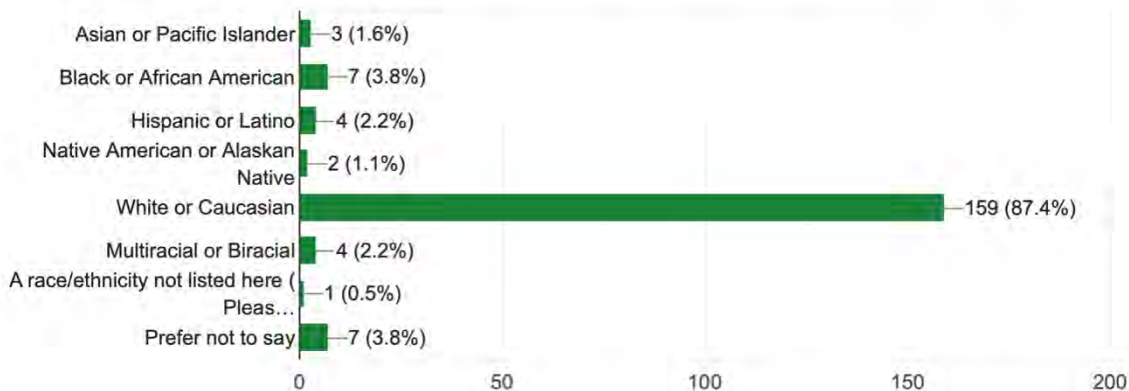


Additional written responses included: Jewish

- ▷ Swedish and German heritage
- ▷ Irish, Italian, Danish, Swedish
- ▷ Canadian
- ▷ African Origin
- ▷ I'm ¾ Ashkenazi Jew and ¼ Hungarian Gypsy
- ▷ Native Hawaiian

Which of the following best describes you? (Check all that apply.)

182 responses



& Membership Demographics & Membership

With regard to **employment status**, the responses also show a clear majority of respondents as currently employed full-time in higher education:

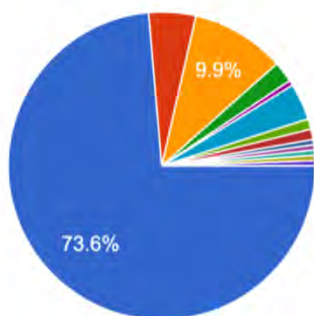
- 134 currently employed in higher education, full-time (73.6%)
- 18 previously employed in higher education, now retired (9.9%)
- 9 currently employed in higher education, part-time (4.9%)
- 7 never employed in higher education (3.8%)

- 4 previously employed in higher education, now in another field (2.2%)
- 2 current students (graduate) (1.1%)
- 2 prefer not to say (1.1%)
- 1 previously employed in higher education, now unemployed (.5%)
- 5 other

Notably, we did not have any responses from current undergraduate students, which also mirrors the lack of response rates from students in general, and is in line with the lack of representation in the 18-25 age range.

Please describe your employment status in higher education.

182 responses



- Currently employed in higher education, full-time
- Currently employed in higher education, part-time
- Previously employed in higher education, now retired
- Previously employed in higher education, now in another field
- Previously employed in higher education, now unemployed
- Previously employed in higher education, now prefer not to say
- Never employed in higher education
- Current student (undergraduate)
- Current student (graduate)

1/2



Demographics & Membership

In answer to the question, “If you are or have been a member, **why did you choose to join NCCO?**”, we had 153 total responses.

- /// 41 respondents (26.8%) mentioned NCCO’s specific **focus on university/college choral music**, with statements like:
 - ▷ It is the only professional organization that focuses exclusively on collegiate choral music.
 - ▷ An organization which addresses collegiate issues.
 - ▷ Interest in the collegiate context
 - ▷ Speaks directly and only to those of us who teach in higher ed. Everything is relevant
 - ▷ Focused on the needs of collegiate choral conductors;
 - ▷ Emphasis on college education
 - ▷ Focus on issues specific to higher ed choral programs.
 - ▷ It’s nice to have an organization specifically for higher ed choral music.
 - ▷ The organization really caters to my needs as a collegiate choral conductor.
 - ▷ Pursuit of choral topics that relate to higher education
 - ▷ Specific focus on college/university-level work, professional development and networking
 - ▷ It specifically serves the needs and imagination of collegiate choral directors.
 - ▷ I was excited to participate in an organization that focused on college choirs.
 - ▷ Exclusive focus on music for collegiate choirs
 - ▷ Focus of pedagogy, repertoire and varied issues centered in collegiate choral music
 - ▷ Concentration of college choirs.
- /// 34 respondents (22.2%) mentioned **opportunities for networking and community**
 - ▷ Thought it would connect me with like-minded educators around the country.
 - ▷ I am a DCA at a college, maintaining connection to other conductors in the same field is important to me.
 - ▷ To network and learn from colleagues specific to the college and university environment.
 - ▷ To be better involved with collegiate choral music in the US/North America.
 - ▷ Colleagues in Higher Education
 - ▷ To network among higher education choral professionals
 - ▷ Networking, resources, conference opportunities
 - ▷ As a composer of challenging choral music, I think of it as my ideal community.
 - ▷ To connect with colleagues, to continue learning and growing, to share best practices.
 - ▷ Needed collegiate colleagues!!
- /// 18 respondents (11.8%) specifically mentioned it as an **alternative to other organizations**
 - ▷ Disillusioned by other organizations
 - ▷ Topics are much more pertinent to my current situation than other service organizations.
 - ▷ Chosen for the specialization of post-secondary interests and performances in our field (as a healthy and vibrant complement to other organizations such as ACDA etc.)
 - ▷ Looking for an alternative to ACDA that features collegiate issues and performances
 - ▷ I greatly appreciate the focus of the group on higher education. I am still an ACDA member and enjoy it, but it is far less focused by design.
 - ▷ Its emphasis on real scholarship, good quality choral music (unlike ACDA), and educating the next generation of singers, scholars and conductors
- /// 15 respondents (9.8%) mentioned it being **important, preferred, or connected to mission**
 - ▷ It is my preferred organization, gives me by far the best support and development of any service organization.
 - ▷ It made sense, given my employment, and of course I really like the people that run the thing.
 - ▷ The idea of a smaller, more integrated professional organization appealed to me.
 - ▷ I believed strongly in the need for NCCO. I made certain that my school was a founding member, but I forgot to join at that time and joined right after.

▷ I love the organization.

▷ Believe in the mission

⚡ 15 respondents (9.8%) also directly referenced our **conferences and programming**

▷ Conferences were so much better. Real in-depth sessions and nice long breaks to meet with others.

▷ I attended the first conference in San Antonio and was impressed with the size and the high quality of the performances and interest sessions.

▷ The conferences are extremely helpful to me.

▷ I've always loved the smaller atmosphere and performances.

▷ Interested in attending the conference

▷ The conferences are well run and feature excellently adjudicated performances and presentations.

▷ Conference attendance (first time joining), and continuing to be a member due to collegiate-specific topics, advocacy, curriculum development, programming, and scholarship.

In addition, 11 respondents referenced opportunities for **performance/research/scholarship**, 10 respondents mentioned **referrals from colleagues/mentors**, 8 respondents mentioned **professional development**, 6 specifically mentioned **quality of offerings**, 6 respondents mentioned **peer pressure/professional expectation**, and a handful of respondents each referred to **diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives**, NCCO's **COVID-19 response**, **being asked to join the National Board**, and **genuine curiosity**.



In answer to the question, “**What does NCCO provide for you uniquely that you do not receive from other membership or service organizations in our field?**”, we had 146 total responses.

⚡ 48 respondents (32.8%) again mentioned NCCO's **focus on higher education choral music**

▷ Other organizations (ACDA, etc.) do a nice job!
But, NCCO is focused for me and I didn't have to sift through information for things that interested me in NCCO.

▷ Narrowed focus on collegiate age

▷ Focus on interests of collegiate choral musicians

▷ A focus on higher education.

▷ Conferences and information that applies specifically to higher ed choral music teaching.

▷ Immersion in artistic/professional issues unique to higher education

▷ Contacts, information, resources most specific to choral music in higher education.

▷ It has more relevant discussions/resources to the college level than ACDA

▷ More topical information regarding the collegiate choral profession.

Demographics & Membership

23 respondents (15.8%) highlighted the **quality of repertoire, resources, performances, presentations, and publications**

- ▷ Interesting sessions and a higher level of repertoire performed at conferences.
- ▷ High quality choral performances of interesting and occasionally ground-breaking repertoire
- ▷ A chance to hear interesting programs and to interact with peers
- ▷ A community more interested in exploring challenging music.
- ▷ Materials and techniques that add to my knowledge base.
- ▷ Deep content
- ▷ In the past, scholarly articles and performances
- ▷ Higher quality performances of good repertoire
- ▷ More sessions devoted to my specialty
- ▷ High quality adult choruses of every kind
- ▷ Conference presentations are of a high quality

17 respondents (11.6%) again mentioned **opportunities for networking and community**

- ▷ Opportunities to exchange ideas with college and university peers
- ▷ I enjoy networking at conferences.
- ▷ The ability to easily network with colleagues in higher education
- ▷ A smaller community to connect with
- ▷ Education and collegiate friends
- ▷ Access to scholarly and artistic dialogue at a high level
- ▷ Connection with colleagues in higher ed
- ▷ Sense of intimacy from being a smaller organization

14 respondents (9.6%) referenced the **conference in particular**

- ▷ Conferences solely dedicated to collegiate choral affairs.
- ▷ NCCO conference
- ▷ Targeted, focused conferences and another option for research/scholarly activity
- ▷ Smaller conferences with the chance to really get to know colleagues
- ▷ More interesting conferences than ACDA.
- ▷ Resources and conferences that are tailored specifically to college/university choral faculty
- ▷ NCCO provides collegiality through shared conference experiences that is unique to the choral organizations I belong to.

A bit alarmingly, 12 respondents (8.2%) **could not identify any unique contributions that NCCO makes to the profession**, or were not sure

- ▷ I have not been able to figure this out yet
- ▷ I haven't been a member for a few years so I can't really say.
- ▷ Nothing
- ▷ To be honest, I was not able to discern any advantage at the time.



& Membership Demographics & Membership

- ▷ Because I can't attend conferences, unfortunately very little, although I'm aware it benefits my colleagues.
- ▷ I don't know that it does, which is probably why my membership has lapsed.
- ▷ That's an excellent question. I am not sure I know yet.
- ▷ Not sure.
- ▷ I'm not quite sure how it's different from something like ACDA. I know it's supposed to serve conductor's in higher education.

Other answers included eight respondents who mentioned the **opportunity for performance and presentation**, three respondents who specifically mentioned **advocacy**, three who commented on the **opportunity for serving the field**, and additional responses related to **diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives, support in the tenure and promotion process**, and more.

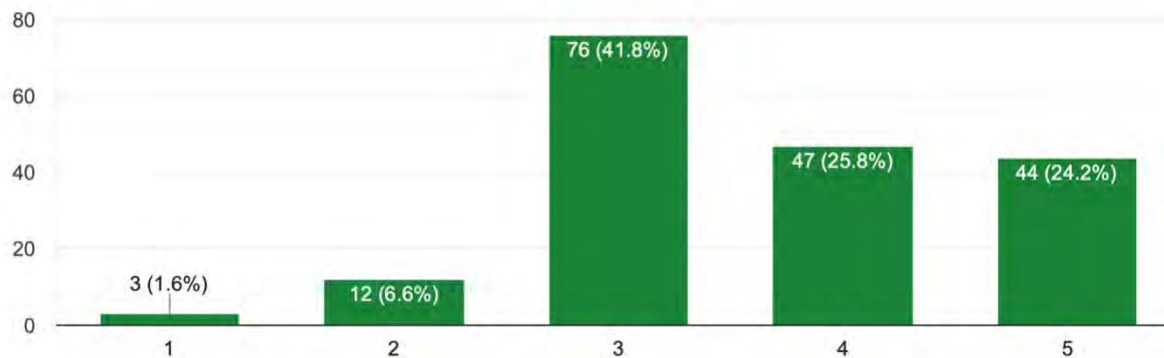


We also inquired about the current level of NCCO's **membership fees**, which are currently \$100 for two years (\$50 per year) for regular members; and \$50 for two years (\$25 per year) for student members.

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "too expensive" and 5 being "a bargain"), a majority of the 182 respondents **clearly believed that our fees are acceptable as they are or even a bargain:**

- 76 respondents (41.8%) chose a score of 3, right in the center
- 91 respondents (50%) chose a score of 4 or 5, indicating they think the membership fees are a deal or a bargain
- Only 15 respondents (8.2%) chose a score of 1 or 2, indicating that the fees are too expensive.

NCCO's membership fees are currently \$100 for two years (\$50 per year) for regular members; and \$50 for two years (\$25 per year) for student ...ers. In my opinion, the NCCO membership fees are:
182 responses





In answer to the question, “**What could we do to ensure that you continue to renew your membership in the National Collegiate Choral Organization?**”, we had 129 total responses.

17 respondents (13.2%) offered the simple solution of **sending reminders as well as other communication-related suggestions**

- ▷ Remind me when it's due.
- ▷ Send me an email to let me know it has expired. I didn't realize it had.
- ▷ Reminders when my membership lapses!
- ▷ Remind me when my registration is due.
- ▷ Keep in touch with a monthly newsletter email
- ▷ Reminders! :-)
- ▷ Keep nagging me with emails! :)
- ▷ Gentle reminders, simple (at-the-moment) payment options.
- ▷ Send reminder to renew when membership lapses
- ▷ Remind me when “retired” membership is due, and the cost.
- ▷ Continue to improve communication.

16 respondents (12.4%) specifically referenced a **focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives** as being a primary reason for them to renew

- ▷ Provide for research in anti-colonizing choral practice.
- ▷ Keep addressing topics of interest and concern in our field in a timely and continuous manner.
- ▷ I think the organization is too narrowly focused on the larger institutions of higher learning and promoting one type of literature to be performed as evidenced by their requirements when submitting applications to perform at the biennial conferences.
- ▷ Relevancy. Create value in all types of collegiate singing, not just the “best”
- ▷ I would enjoy if interest sessions at conferences were more diverse topically. Occasionally, I have felt a little “echo-chamber” at our events. I love that we seem to have a broad diversity of performing ensembles from around the nation. Thanks for that!
- ▷ Continue what you are doing, as well as educating us to look at truly understand all people. We need to better understand each others backgrounds, challenges and beliefs.
- ▷ Make sure choirs from all levels and types of colleges and universities are represented at conference performances. Continue the excellent work toward racial and ethnic equity
- ▷ Move the needle toward equity in ways that ACDA, for example, is not.
- ▷ I will always be a member of NCCO and I believe others will continue to join if the Guiding Principles from the Anti-Racism Summit are pursued purposefully.
- ▷ Provide inclusive, relevant content
- ▷ I work at a Community College. 2-year schools don't really fit any existing choral resource org. mold. I would like to see NCCO devote some attention to 2-year schools.

Demographics & Membership

14 respondents (10.9%) offered general suggestions to “**keep doing what you’re doing**”

- ▷ Keep it up
- ▷ Keep doing what you’re doing.
- ▷ Nothing new, really.
- ▷ Keep doing what you’re doing with the energy and human resources available to you.
- ▷ I like what you are currently doing!
- ▷ Keep doing what you are doing! Bravi!!
- ▷ Continue what you are currently doing.
- ▷ I’m satisfied with what you are currently doing.

An additional 12 respondents (9.3%) had **specific suggestions of current initiatives to continue**

- ▷ Continue to focus on artistry and education issues specific to collegiate singers, while addressing the issues of our time.
- ▷ Continue providing professional development for choral conductors.
- ▷ Continue to provide content/events that cater to advanced choral professionals.
- ▷ Continue to perform the canon of repertoire, do an occasional major work.
- ▷ Continue to offer unique and relevant resources.
- ▷ Continue to provide webinars or online resources
- ▷ Continue the thoughtful initiatives
- ▷ Continue your attention to scholarship and the most advanced and innovative directions in the choral art
- ▷ Continue to provide leadership for specifically collegiate choral directors
- ▷ Continue offering a convention.
- ▷ Keep up the good work and the commitment to moving the profession forward to meet the needs of college/university conductors and their students.
- ▷ Continue what you have been doing while also being mindful of any new needs that may be helpful to your constituency

9 respondents (7.0%) suggested focusing on **new modalities for engagement**

- ▷ Consider virtual alternatives for special sessions.
- ▷ Continue to look for ways to engage the membership outside of the conference.
- ▷ Offer useful methods to reach your members like banner ads/text in broadcast emails, or other creative ways where you know members are looking at what you offer. I doubt that the web site traffic is high, or expansive across your membership.
- ▷ Help me figure out how to engage practically with the organization
- ▷ Provide support services.
- ▷ Could there be a compelling event in the off-years from the conference?
- ▷ Be more proactive with innovative topics, conversations, support in the field, etc.
- ▷ Improve the website. Solicit and post more material and performances
- ▷ Engage more frequently than the national conference, which seems to be the prompt for paying dues.

9 respondents (7.0%) offered **general notes of affirmation for renewal**

- ▷ No need — I think it’s important and will.
- ▷ Nothing. I’m in.
- ▷ I will renew
- ▷ As long as I am able, I will be a member.
- ▷ You can count on me to remain a member. I am increasingly disillusioned with ACDA at the state, regional, and national levels (yes, all of them), and NCCO is the professional organization from which I gain the most benefit and which I enjoy the most.

8 respondents (6.2%) suggested **tackling issues of cost, affordability, and access**

- ▷ Cut the skyrocketing cost of travel and hotel.
- ▷ My membership has lapsed because I am only teaching as an Adjunct at the college level right now. Without institutional support, I wasn’t able to attend the last two conferences and so my membership has lapsed.
- ▷ Keep membership fees the same.
- ▷ Reduce membership fees

Demographics & Membership

- ▷ Lower retired rate for membership and conferences
- ▷ Offer a category for retired/semi-retired individuals
- ▷ Reduce the price of conference attendance.
- ▷ Keeping it as affordable as possible, honestly. My institution requires memberships in pro-

fessional groups but won't cover the costs for any of them. In addition, I teach a lot of applied voice in addition to my conducting which means that in addition to ACDA and NCCO, I am also expected to be a member of NATS and at times MTNA and NafME.

In addition, 6 respondents mentioned focusing on **musical quality and excellence**, 6 respondents were **not sure**, 4 respondents specifically mentioned **conference as paramount**, and a few mentioned **creating additional ways for student involvement**.

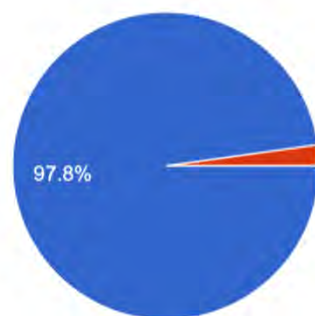


Finally, we also inquired about the perception of NCCO's relationship to ACDA.

Of 182 total respondents, 178 correctly identified that NCCO is an independent organization that serves collegiate choral professionals (97.8%), while 4 respondents had the false assumption that we were a subsidiary organization of ACDA (2.2%).

Please select the option below you believe to be most true:

182 responses



- NCCO is an independent organization that serves collegiate choral professionals.
- NCCO is a subsidiary organization of ACDA, the American Choral Directors Association.

Perhaps we should do our small part to **prevent the spread of this conspiracy theory** before it becomes a part of the viral misinformation ecosystem!



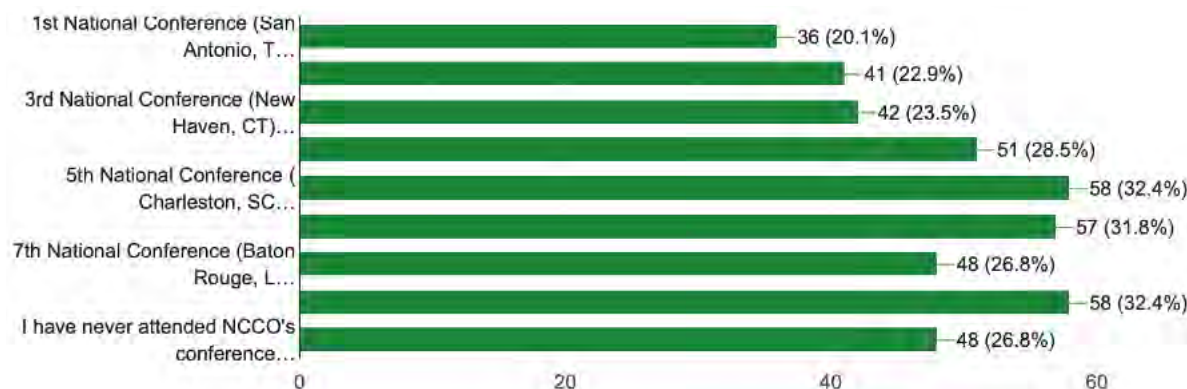


We wanted to understand more about **conference attendance and programming**, and to do so, we first had to ascertain how many of our survey respondents had attended our conferences. As you can see from the data below, the 179 total respondents have **broad representation across our previous eight conferences**.



Of the 179 total respondents, **131 respondents have attended at least one of our conferences (73.2%)** and 48 have never attended our conferences (26.8%). Here is the specific breakdown:

- 1st Nat'l Conf. (San Antonio, '06) – 36 attended (20.1%)
- 2nd Nat'l Conf. (Cincinnati, '07) – 41 attended (22.9%)
- 3rd Nat'l Conf. (New Haven, '09) – 42 attended (23.5%)
- 4th Nat'l Conf. (Fort Collins, '11) – 51 attended (28.5%)
- 5th Nat'l Conf. (Charleston, '13) – 58 attended (32.4%)
- 6th Nat'l Conf. (Portland, '15) – 57 attended (31.8%)
- 7th Nat'l Conf. (Baton Rouge, '17) – 48 attended (26.8%)
- 8th Nat'l Conf. (College Park, '19) – 58 attended (32.4%)



In answer to the question, “**What benefits do you receive or have you received by attending our conferences?**”, we had 121 total responses.

/// Over half (61 respondents, 50.4%) referenced the importance of **networking, connecting with peers, building relationships, and community**

- ▷ Getting a chance to visit with other collegiate conductors.
- ▷ Meeting new people
- ▷ Speaking with colleagues in our profession
- ▷ Networking
- ▷ Chances to meet composers
- ▷ Seeing old friends
- ▷ New contacts, good info, shared time with valued colleagues
- ▷ They are great opportunities to renew friendships
- ▷ The time to connect with colleagues
- ▷ Direct interaction with peers.
- ▷ The opportunity to meet and collaborate with other women in the field of choral music in higher education
- ▷ I value the shared conference experiences with my colleagues above all.
- ▷ Seeing colleagues I trust and admire.

/// Over a quarter (35 respondents, 28.9%) mentioned the **quality of conference programming, including concerts, interest sessions and clinicians**

- ▷ Great performances, great repertoire, great clinics-lectures.
- ▷ Interest sessions were amazing!
- ▷ Love hearing the concerts
- ▷ Excellent concerts, some excellent presentations
- ▷ Choral performances
- ▷ Outstanding concerts, seeing new venues, interest sessions geared toward the collegiate conductor
- ▷ I enjoy conferences as a chance to “clean my ears” and to experience new ideas, pedagogy, and performances.
- ▷ Exposure to unique and high quality compositions and the highest quality of performance artistry
- ▷ Excellent performances and interest sessions.
- ▷ Exposure to top tier performances, repertoire, and conducting.

/// Another quarter (33 respondents, 27.3%) articulated the **importance of learning new repertoire, gaining resources, and learning about current trends**

- ▷ Excellent resources
- ▷ Getting repertoire ideas
- ▷ Creative stimulation, knowledge for field
- ▷ Repertoire, sessions more directly related to my daily work than other conferences, ideas from mixers and conversations
- ▷ Repertoire, programming, scheduling, structuring, curriculum ideas.
- ▷ Some great sessions, such as those focusing on specific types of repertoire.
- ▷ Opportunity to hear stimulating music and thinking
- ▷ New literature to perform, new techniques to deploy.

/// 10 respondents (8.3%) specifically mentioned **inspiration** as a defining feature of our conferences

- ▷ Inspiration
- ▷ Inspiration, support from friends and colleagues,
- ▷ Being fed musically
- ▷ I thought the conferences were amazing. I shook hands with conductors and composers I had only studied or heard about.
- ▷ Very inspiring
- ▷ More than words can say.
- ▷ Collegiality, emotional/spiritual renewal
- ▷ Inspiration. Excellent performances and interest sessions.

In addition, 7 respondents **lamented that they could not attend conferences**, 6 respondents commented specifically on the details of **time of year, location, and size**, and another 6 respondents referenced the specific **opportunity to perform or present**.

Our Past Conferences



In answer to the question, “**In your perception, could you please describe the average NCCO conference attendee?**”, we had 113 total responses.

35 respondents (31.0%) gave **matter-of-face definitions** to the question, even sometimes expressing confusion at the question itself

- ▷ Mostly college and university faculty and some graduate students
- ▷ College/University Choral director.
- ▷ Collegiate-minded student or disciple of higher education
- ▷ This might be unfair, but “collegiate choir director” seems pretty accurate...it seems to skew older (50s – 60s), but my sample size of attended events is small.
- ▷ collegiate...
- ▷ A collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ Higher education employee
- ▷ Collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ College professor
- ▷ ? A college/university choral conductor.
- ▷ Collegiate choral musicians.
- ▷ ? College choral directors.

16 respondents (14.2%) gave **positive descriptive responses**

- ▷ A person involved in academia, very interested in furthering their knowledge of the choral world.
- ▷ Educated, attentive listener.
- ▷ College/university choir directors who take their work and their profession seriously
- ▷ Not average! Committed and serious representatives of a broad spectrum from the collegiate choral scene.
- ▷ Person interested in the furtherance of the choral art
- ▷ Someone actively involved in their own position, whether it be as a conductor, scholar, or composer
- ▷ Dedicated, kind, intelligent, musical
- ▷ Colleagues who are interested in delving deeply into any given subject, whether it be systemic racism, conducting techniques, serving more than just white choirs, hearing Bach and Brahms. I think we can do both.
- ▷ Fantastic

14 respondents (12.4%) gave more **negative descriptive responses**, generally referencing **elitism and narrow-mindedness**

- ▷ Snobby
- ▷ Interested in older, complex repertoire and elite choirs
- ▷ Northeastern, small private school choral directors
- ▷ Tenure-track collegiate choral professors.
- ▷ Conductors leading conducting graduate programs.
- ▷ They tend to gear more on the young professional side, and those employed by tier 1 institutions rather than the diversity of collegiate institutions in the US.
- ▷ Collegiate professors primarily from large collegiate institutions
- ▷ Collegiate Choral elites; small group of cliquish conductors

11 respondents (9.7%) specifically noted a **perception of majority white male attendees**

- ▷ White, male, mid-career or later, at a well-funded institution with a well-funded program
- ▷ White and male
- ▷ White college professor, mostly men
- ▷ Middle-aged white man with an academic job
- ▷ White, male, older collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ Lots of white males....
- ▷ A white male in his 40s :). Seriously though, I look around and really wonder why there are so few women and people of color. It’s probably a normal indicator of our field but it seems so stark at the conference! Are we sure that the conference is representative of themembership? That’s something I would like to know, just to be sure that there aren’t specific hurdles that are preventing our membership from attending (cost, time of year, etc.)?

- ▷ White, male, from affluent schools with large, competitive programs
 - ▷ The average NCCO attendee is a white male and this needs to be changed.
 - ▷ It's an increasingly diverse membership, but the old white guys certainly do still act as though they're the core group and the ones in charge. :)
 - ▷ Privileged, white, male
- 11 respondents (9.7%) commented on the perception of a **younger generation of attendees**
- ▷ Young-ish, excellent musician, hungry, tomorrow's choral leaders
 - ▷ The up and comers. More on the edges of philosophy spirituality and life style
 - ▷ Young collegiate conductor and/or graduate student in choral music
 - ▷ Predominately the younger Collegiate Choral directors. 30–50
 - ▷ They tend to gear more on the young professional side, and those employed by tier 1 institutions

7 respondents (6.2%) gave more inclusive **definitions of the average attendee**

- ▷ Generally 30ish to 80ish American collegiate choral director/conductors of various gender and ethnic identities
- ▷ Mostly collegiate choral directors, many students, retired conductors, composers, and exhibitors
- ▷ Tricky question: they come in categories, right? There is no monolithic, average attendee. You have the graduate students, eager and cerebral and analytical. You have the early and mid-career collegiate folks who are building portfolios, networking and looking for a niche, and then you have the late career or retired folks who attend for a wide variety of reasons, whether social or musical or educational. They all strike me as having different needs.
- ▷ All different and that's a good thing.
- ▷ 35–55 year old white male and female college/university professors and a good dose of students and sponsors.
- ▷ Choral directors from all levels of colleges/universities who have aged well beyond their years due to overwork.
- ▷ A college or university instructor/professor. It is a wonderful cross section of incredibly accomplished conductors and younger professionals in the field.

An additional 10 respondents had no opinion, were not sure, or preferred not to answer.



In answer to the question, “**What could we do to improve our conferences?**”, we had 95 total responses.

21 respondents (22.1%) referenced the importance of **diversity, inclusivity, and access in their responses, specifically related to representation and attendance**

- ▷ Because most meals are on one's own, it could be good for those involved in leadership to reach out directly to newer members to invite them to join a group informally.
- ▷ Become even more welcoming. Occasionally I sense a bit a scholar aloofness. A defensiveness about the profession
- ▷ Share the governance of NCCO by diversifying the members chosen to serve on conference

Our Past Conferences

selection committees and this will lead to improved conference activities for all.

- ▷ Reaching out to a great variety of college/university choral colleagues, building more mentorship and sharing opportunities (especially in small groups).
- ▷ Increase representation from treble voice choirs and from high-quality second and third tier choirs. While excellent performances by the top choirs in the country are inspiring and enjoyable, hearing more examples of high-quality non-major choirs and unauditioned choirs would be invaluable.
- ▷ Increase attendance. Not sure why still lots of people don't attend.
- ▷ Make them less elitist and more representative of the wider variety of choral issues that are faced at all levels of collegiate choral instruction.
- ▷ More diversity, more performances or workshops with learning choirs, not just the most highly qualified, demonstration repertoire accessible for more levels of chorus
- ▷ Performing groups are too lofty for most of us to replicate in our choirs
- ▷ I don't see many conductors like me (working at a purely undergraduate university or community

college) at the conferences. Interest sessions (and performances) rarely seem designed for us.

- ▷ Broaden the types of institutions invited to perform and the repertoire considered for performance.
- ▷ Include choirs as performers who don't come from large university programs with schools of music or performance degrees
- ▷ Be deliberately more inclusive
- ▷ Diversity.
- ▷ Keep them small, keep the cost down as much as possible, and consider ways to offer assistance to members who have little funding for travel at their institutions. small liberal arts colleges are struggling. It's often the case that I have to choose between ACDA and NCCO because I can't afford both.
- ▷ Continued work in BIPOC/LGBTQIA+ representation in sessions, visibility and outreach with HBCU and Tribal Colleges, sessions and community building activities for Two-Year and SLAC/LAC colleagues, opportunities for BIPOC mentorship for untenured, junior, and graduate students in navigating academia as a choral scholar
- ▷ Lower registration fees (my college provides only \$600 a year for professional development).

18 respondents (18.9%) had generally **positive responses without specific suggestions**

- ▷ It was amazing!
- ▷ Just keep doing what you're doing. The new officers help bring new perspectives.
- ▷ I have certainly enjoyed the many conferences I've attended. The two conferences that I missed were because of financial reasons and because I wasn't working at a college or university that could help pay for the conference.
- ▷ I have enjoyed each of the conferences I have attended. One thing I like about NCCO is that the presenters aren't trying to reinvent the wheel or "instruct" the others. In my experience, it has been a nice exchange of ideas.
- ▷ I loved the first conference, the size, the performances and sessions. They were all excellent.
- ▷ Can't think of a thing
- ▷ No comment. I really thought the ones I attended were great.
- ▷ The one I attended was fine
- ▷ Nothing comes to mind.
- ▷ Not sure - I really enjoyed the two that I attended.
- ▷ The Charleston conference was excellent. Performance venues were well chosen, convenient, and set in an interesting city. Interest sessions featured clinicians from whom we could learn a great deal.
- ▷ I like them fine.
- ▷ I've only been to one conference and I thoroughly enjoyed it

10 respondents (10.5%) specifically mentioned **diversifying repertoire and interest sessions**

- ▷ Continue to focus on diversification of repertoire by prioritizing composers from underrepresented populations.
- ▷ Make sure that a wide range of repertoire is valued, not just conventional contemporary Euro-

pean/American music; have more opportunities for composers to exhibit/share their work

- ▷ Broaden the types of institutions invited to perform and the repertoire considered for performance.
- ▷ Diversify interest session topics
- ▷ Continue to diversify offerings.
- ▷ I beg you, please discourage “impressive” canonical repertoire in performance. I love Schoenberg and Poulenc as much as anyone else, but I don’t come to NCCO to hear *Friede auf Erden* or *Figure Humaine*. I already know those pieces (and there’s

10 respondents (10.5%) offered specific **ideas for programming and direction**

- ▷ I would like to continue to see excellence in the choral field, but I would also like to see examples of excellence in educating the average choral singer, or the below-average choral singer.
- ▷ Keeping abreast of issues contemporary and historic.
- ▷ Q and A with experienced conductors and young ones
- ▷ I loved the topics presented in New Haven on Baroque performance practice, and Helmuth Rilling’s sessions (in Colorado, I think). I am not

no way my choir could pull them off, anyway.) Would rather hear new rep and more creative programming.

- ▷ A good mix of sessions and topics are presented. It’s important for NCCO to respond to what is current and timely in our field, as you have been doing.
- ▷ I enjoyed the concerts but the repertoire did not speak to the average college choir
- ▷ The conferences appear from the outside to be another reward for those following the status quo in collegiate choral music.

as interested in highly specialized, narrow-focused sessions.

- ▷ More concert performances
- ▷ Q/A or lecture by the conductors of accepted choirs.
- ▷ Promote ingenuity; welcome it! Make innovation a clearly projected value.
- ▷ More and longer interest sessions
- ▷ Discontinue all panel presentations! Discourage performances of a single composer’s music.
- ▷ I don’t know but perhaps more dialogue with college voice teachers.

8 respondents (8.4%) referenced the **calendar and time of year** in their responses

- ▷ Move them one week earlier or later...they hit exactly at my own personal major work weekend, which has kept me from attendance in recent years
- ▷ I personally think conference should be slightly longer.
- ▷ Maybe one day longer with a little more unscheduled time
- ▷ Possibly consider moving the conference to the January or February.
- ▷ Scheduling: consider the travel necessary when conferences are held on either coast (difficult to miss so many teaching days). Preference is to use

Sunday as a full travel day: even though many collegiate conductors have church jobs, NCCO’s conferences are aimed at collegiate conductors.

- ▷ The one I attended was great. It’s just at a bad time of the year for me in relation to my work schedule.
- ▷ Have them at a different time or at least rotate so that the same people are not excluded year after year
- ▷ For me personally, change the date. Early November is always our choral/orchestral major work concert at my school, and for a variety of reasons, I’m not able to change this date.

In addition, 5 respondents had concerns about **declining quality of sessions and performances**, 4 respondents had specific concerns about **logistics and venues**, 4 respondents wanted to see a focus on **canonical/historical repertoire**, and 3 respondents mentioned the **college focus as staying primary**, in addition to other responses.

Our Next Conference

Most pressingly, we have to make a decision soon about how to offer our next NCCO national conference. To do so, we asked specific questions about respondents **number one preference for how to offer the next conference.**



There was no outright majority, or even a clear preference for any one single answer among our 179 respondents:

- Offer an entirely in-person conference in Nov 2021 – 44 (24.6%)
- Postpone the Nov 2021 conference and offer in-person at a later date – 42 (23.5%)
- Offer a hybrid conference in Nov 2021 – 32 (17.9%)
- Offer an entirely virtual conference in Nov 2021 – 24 (13.4%)
- Do not offer a conference in Nov 2021 and wait till Nov 2023 – 8 (4.5%)
- Postpone the Nov 2021 conference and offer virtual at a later date – 3 (1.7%)

Given the choice, would you prefer that we:

179 responses



What is more obvious from this is that the top three choices all have an in-person component. There seems to be less appetite for an entirely virtual conference or a virtual conference at a later date.

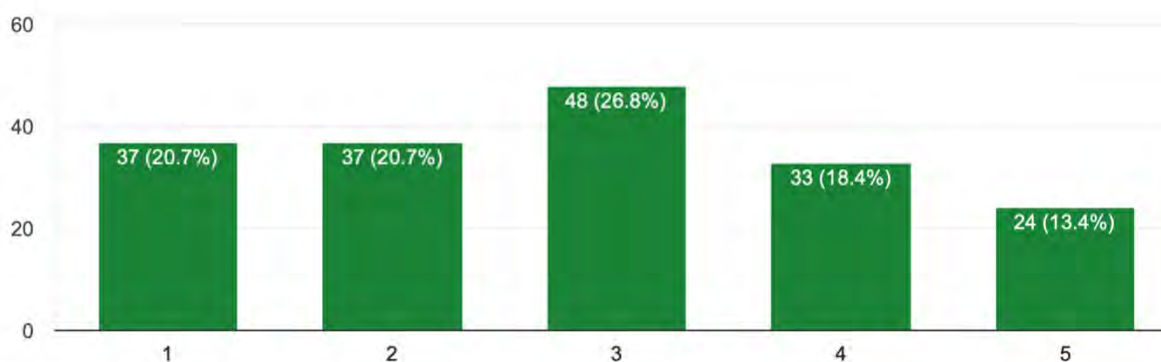
In addition, there were also 26 write-in responses that widely varied in recommendations from very specific ideas to very general uncertainty about how to proceed in light of the pandemic.

Our Next Conference

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all likely” and 5 is “extremely likely,” **how likely would you be to attend an entirely in-person conference** in November 2021?

As we consider our current climate, how likely would you be to attend an entirely in-person conference in November 2021?

179 responses



Even though there seems to be a general preference for in-person conferences over virtual conferences, when asked specifically about an in-person conference in November 2021, the responses were decidedly more negative.

- || A plurality of 74 respondents (41.4%) are not at all or **not likely to attend an in-person conference** in November 2021
- || Only 57 respondents (31.8%) are **extremely or likely to attend an in-person conference** in November 2021.
- || 48 respondents (28.6%) **did not express an opinion** in either direction.

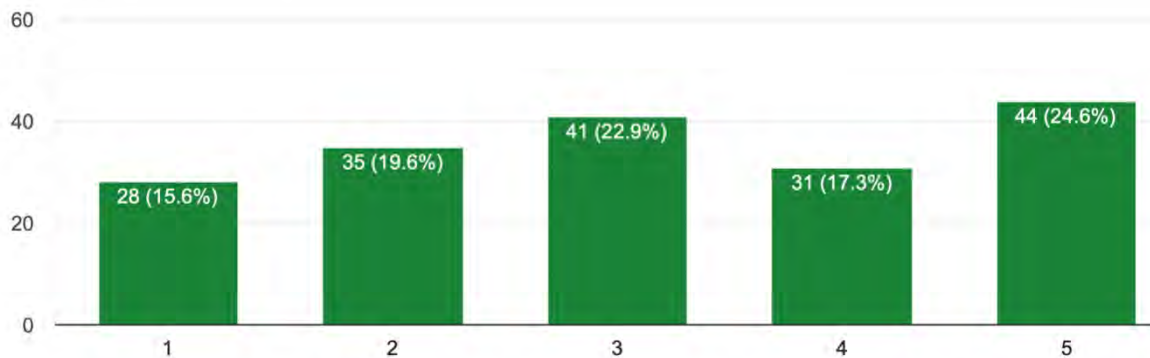


Our Next Conference

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all likely” and 5 is “extremely likely,” **how likely would you be to attend an entirely virtual conference** in November 2021?

As we consider our current climate, how likely would you be to attend an entirely virtual conference in November 2021?

179 responses



Also surprisingly, while there was **no clear preference for a virtual conference** in general in the first question above, when confronted with the likelihood of attending a virtual conference in November 2021, respondents were a bit more willing to entertain the idea:

- ▬ A plurality of 75 respondents (41.9%) are **extremely or likely to attend a virtual conference** in November 2021.
- ▬ 63 respondents (35.2%) are not at all or **not likely to attend a virtual conference** in November 2021.
- ▬ 41 respondents (22.9%) **did not express an opinion** in either direction.

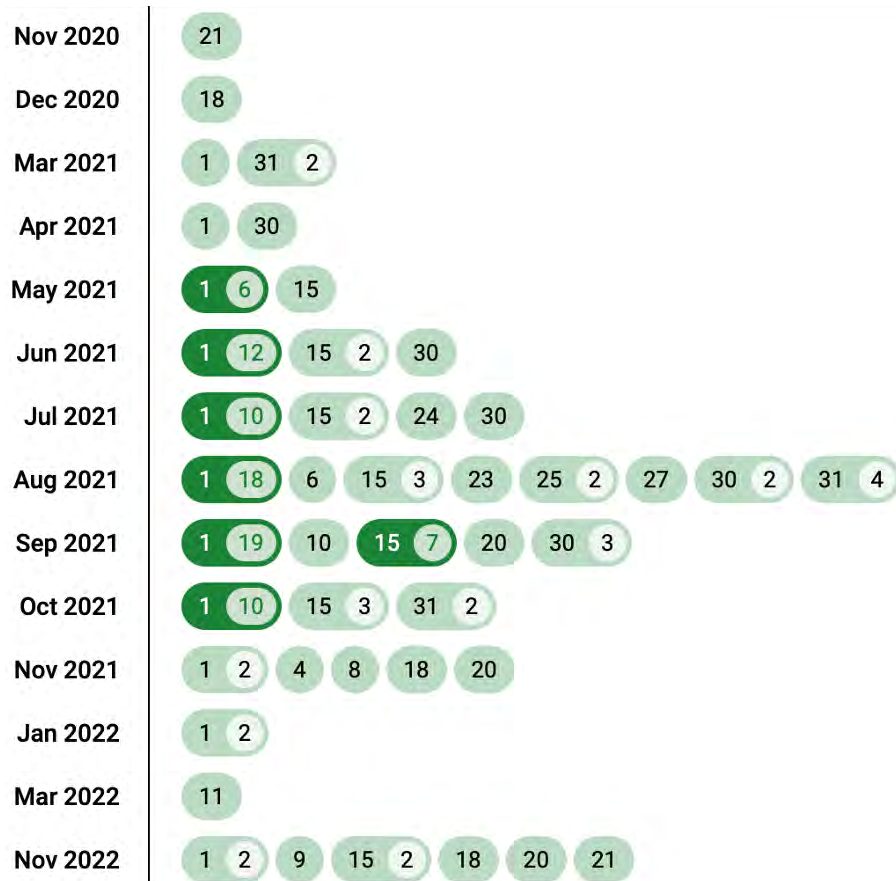


Our Next Conference

Further, when asked by which date respondents would be willing to commit to conference attendance for November 2021, the majority of respondents—107 (73.7%)—**would feel comfortable committing to conference attendance between May and October 2021**, with a significant minority of 11 respondents (7.5%) not wishing to commit to a conference until 2022 or later.



By what date would you feel comfortable committing to conference attendance for November 2021? Please consider travel funding, university travel funding waivers, concert scheduling, etc. as you write your response. (145 responses)





Part 3 → Guiding Principles

Respondents were asked to prioritize eleven distinct principles to help guide the work of the National Collegiate Choral Organization. In alphabetical order, those principles are:

Access » NCCO is available to individuals with any and all abilities.

Advocacy » NCCO serves as a voice for the choral field and choral music in higher education.

Community » NCCO actively works to foster an ecosystem of connected individuals.

Composition » NCCO works to actively foster the creation of new choral music.

Diversity » NCCO respects and values the unique perspectives and experiences of all members.

Education/Pedagogy » NCCO exists to serve the needs of choral educators and students.

Equity » NCCO ensures that all members have the opportunity to fully participate in its activities.

Excellence » NCCO strives for the highest levels of achievement possible in all areas.

Inclusivity » NCCO ensures that all feel welcomed and valued.

Performance » NCCO serves as a venue and amplifier for choral performance.

Research/Scholarship » NCCO prioritizes the discovery of new knowledges and inquiries.



We then ranked these principles by five different metrics based on the respondent data:

- ||| **Highest priority** (a ranking based on the #1 priority identified by each respondent)
- ||| **Lowest priority** (a ranking based on the #11 priority identified by each respondent)
- ||| **Top Three ranking** (a ranking based on whether a response was a #1, #2, or #3 priority)
- ||| **Bottom Three ranking** (based on whether a response was a #9, #10, or #11 priority)
- ||| **Polarization score ranking** (based on whether the principle was highly likely to be simultaneously in the top and bottom of user rankings, indicating high polarization)

We then created an overall total ranking based on how these principles were scored in each of the five rankings above.

Guiding Principles

Highest Priority Ranking

higher score = # of people listing as #1 priority

Advocacy	= 59
Excellence	= 50
Inclusivity	= 46
Education/Pedagogy	= 45
Diversity	= 44
Equity	= 36
Community	= 32
Performance	= 32
Access	= 31
Research/Scholarship	= 23
Composition	= 10

Lowest Priority Ranking

higher score = # of people listing as #11 priority

Advocacy	= 1
Community	= 2
Research/Scholarship	= 2
Education/Pedagogy	= 2
Diversity	= 3
Performance	= 5
Equity	= 8
Inclusivity	= 12
Excellence	= 15
Composition	= 17
Access	= 21

Top Three Ranking

higher score means more votes in highest #1, 2, 3 priority

Education/Pedagogy	= 96
Advocacy	= 88
Performance	= 82
Excellence	= 82
Community	= 77
Research/Scholarship	= 76
Diversity	= 74
Inclusivity	= 73
Equity	= 68
Access	= 59
Composition	= 49

Bottom Three Ranking

lower score means fewer votes in #9, #10, #11 priority

Education/Pedagogy	= 10
Community	= 12
Advocacy	= 16
Research/Scholarship	= 14
Diversity	= 18
Inclusivity	= 23
Performance	= 24
Equity	= 29
Excellence	= 30
Access	= 43
Composition	= 45

Polarization Score Ranking

lower score shows more polarization

Education/Pedagogy	= 86
Advocacy	= 72
Community	= 65
Research/Scholarship	= 62
Performance	= 58
Diversity	= 56
Excellence	= 52
Inclusivity	= 50
Equity	= 39
Access	= 16
Composition	= 4

Overall Total Rank Score

1. Advocacy	1, 1, 2, 3, 2 = 9
2. Education/Pedagogy	4, 4, 1, 1, 1 = 11
3. Community	7, 2, 5, 2, 3 = 19
4. Research/Scholarship	10, 3, 6, 4, 4 = 27
5. Diversity	5, 5, 7, 5, 6 = 28
6. Performance	8, 6, 3, 7, 5 = 29
7. Excellence	2, 9, 4, 9, 7 = 31
8. Inclusivity	3, 8, 8, 6, 8 = 33
9. Equity	6, 7, 9, 8, 9 = 39
10. Access	9, 11, 10, 10, 10 = 50
11. Composition	11, 10, 11, 11, 11 = 54

Based on these data, a few things become clear:

- ▶ Advocacy is incredibly important to our membership, rising to the top 3 spaces of all five rank orders and is the #1 priority in the overall total rank score.
- ▶ Education/pedagogy is a very close second, and was the top ranked item on 3 of our rankings.
- ▶ While community did not appear to be important based on the #1 priority choices, it was overwhelmingly in the top 3 spots of a clear majority of respondents (and this is born out by the qualitative data about networking, peer interaction, and relationships).
- ▶ The five guiding principles of diversity, excellence, inclusivity, performance, and research/scholarship all scored very similarly in our overall total rank score (between 27 and 33), showing that the rank order of these is more or less interchangeable, after the first three principles listed above. This shows a clear importance for each of these in our efforts.
- ▶ When considering the four DEIA principles together, equity and access were less important focal points for the respondents than diversity and inclusivity.
- ▶ Composition is dead last in nearly every ranking, and not an important point of focus for our respondents.



We invited respondents to provide any additional thoughts on the guiding principles, and we received 54 responses:

- // 17 respondents (31.5%) noted that it was difficult or challenging to rank these principles
 - ▷ How can any of these be less than a first priority?
 - ▷ All these principals are all mostly equally important!
 - ▷ These are all good priorities, hard to rank!
 - ▷ I don't think it's possible to prioritize those 11 things. Seems like a waste of brain power.
 - ▷ They are interrelated, interconnected, and all important in different ways.
 - ▷ All are good principles, and it was difficult to prioritize since even my #11 choice is important.
 - ▷ It's difficult for me to prioritize fundamentals such as diversity and inclusion as those are paramount to every discussion though when I attend a conference it truly is about the high caliber performances and peer engagement. Understand I support diversity and inclusion entirely it's just hard for me to "prioritize" something that should be understood if you understand what I mean.
 - ▷ They are all connected. Sorry for the lack of variety in my responses.
 - ▷ Hard to prioritize various aspects of fairness and access. Each important. Seems like a separate issue from the more productivity-oriented issues.
 - ▷ Of course these are not discrete categories. Community, which I ranked highly, presumes inclusivity, diversity, and access, for example.
 - ▷ This is incredibly difficult. All of these items are of paramount importance. I'm not sure how to rank interpersonal concepts versus pedagogical and music ones.
 - ▷ It is difficult to rank them because they are intersectional.
 - ▷ I like all of these guiding principles. It is very hard to rank them!
 - ▷ I think many of the principles should be given equal weight, so I am not satisfied with my responses
 - ▷ Equal weight to all is good.
 - ▷ I think they are all important; too difficult to prioritize.
- // 11 respondents (20.3%) specifically highlighted diversity, equity, inclusivity, or access
 - ▷ I think your time and effort should be spent on the core NCCO goals relating to music. I see organizations competing to be holier than thou in their social justice missions. That should be a component of all organizations but not draining huge resources from your core reasons for being formed.
 - ▷ Four out of eleven dedicated to DEI is too many
 - ▷ I feel that the principles of access, equity, diversity, inclusivity are extremely important, might best be addressed as a single item.
 - ▷ I think equity and access are redundant on this list. Otherwise looks good!
 - ▷ Inclusivity and diversity are incredibly important, but it should also be a given, considering our line of work.
 - ▷ As much as I know how difficult it may be to accomplish, all of the principles are equally important after diversity, equity and inclusivity
 - ▷ Nothing to add, but things like access, inclusivity, diversity, community, and equity should be

continuing guiding elements of Research/Scholarship, Performance, Education/Pedagogy.

- ▷ Could we not discount the wonderful body of early music simply because it is not more politically important to focus on minority composers? Do we give up the Mona Lisa and only value modern art by painters of color? We have always had too much focus on the modern repertoire, and now the current climate is making it “shameful” to perform for this organization not to address the racial divide.
- ▷ I think NCCO needs to actively seek out presenters who can educate choral professionals about repertoire and approaches that we don’t already know much about. If one of our goals is to consider Gospel music equal to other choral music, for example, we should have a lot of opportunities to learn about and hear it in our conferences. As far as advocacy goes, NCCO should work to get publishers to actively promote work by underrepresented composers, even if they have to revisit what their “quality standards” are (which might be very entrenched in white supremacy).
- ▷ I’d like to see more women and people of color. I’d also like to see smaller schools get some play. And those of us in smaller schools be selected to present. We need to get full professor too. And frankly, I get tired of hearing the same people at every conference.

One respondent in particular offered detailed suggestions for tackling these issues:

I find some of the criteria innately scaffolded or connected (equity and access, community and inclusion). Consequently, ranking these priorities is a confusing task for me. I also politely disagree with the task of prioritizing these specific priorities. Scholars such as Geneva Gay, Zaretta Hammond, Paolo Freire, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith state in their work that access, advocacy, equity, inclusion, and community are integral ways of rooting an organization or a community to ensure that it can provide the reach and scope of their content area (which in our case would be—research/scholarship, performance, composition) in informed, relevant, and responsive ways. Therefore, in my opinion, the DEI(A) principles (priorities) should be non-negotiable or “un” prioritized as they are structural phenomena that are innately connected—rooting and scaffolding to the remaining priorities within the content area of our organization. This cultural ecosystem (Smith, 2018) then provides the structural/philosophical change that situates all of our “choral” components within a DEI(A) lens, not as disconnected priorities. With that said, from the remaining content area priorities, I rank them below—research/scholarship performance composition Finally, in terms of excellence, I am incredibly cautious about anchoring this term to organizational priorities. I believe our current state of choral “excellence” within our organization and in peer/parent organizations such as ACDA and NAFME is largely framed through Eurocentric and cis/heteronormative criteria. I do believe that NCCO is uniquely positioned to change this issue, and I believe that a culturally affirming, responsive, and radical redefinition of the word “excellence” comes from a commitment to rooting our work in DEI(A) philosophies. In other words, this is not a ranked “priority” to me; it is the result of a connection between the DEI(A) “priorities” and the content area “priorities”. I thank you all for setting up this task, as it invited deep reflection and critique from me. Thank you for holding the door open on this.

The full responses to this and all qualitative questions may be found in **Appendix A**.



Part 4 → Becoming More Anti-Racist

How can NCCO build a community of welcome, where members feel safe to bring their full selves to the table? (108 responses)

✔ 26 respondents (31.5%) reflected on **issues of access, representation, inclusivity, or diversity**

- ▷ Conferences need to have easily accessible gender-neutral restrooms for everybody.
- ▷ Schedule non-white speakers.
- ▷ Invite lesser known and emerging young members to share their passions and expertise from their own experiences...both musical content and contextual life experiences.
- ▷ Ask this question of the people who currently don't feel safe.
- ▷ Making sure that their interests are represented.
- ▷ Feature a variety of collegiate groups and conductors at conferences.
- ▷ Invite as many people as possible to participate in working conferences.
- ▷ Broadening outreach to communities of college students, faculty that are underrepresented (community colleges, two-year colleges, private/independent colleges, HBCUs)
- ▷ They should communicate an understanding that not all colleges are the same, and that tiny liberal arts colleges with unbalanced choirs are just as valued as strong state school choral programs, despite not being able to make music with as much "excellence." They should also work directly with HBCU choral directors to hear their ideas.
- ▷ Be genuinely open to differing perspectives.
- ▷ Feature Leadership and presenters from diverse backgrounds
- ▷ Make sure that repertoire, selected choirs, selected panelists, all those who present at the conference, represent many facets of the membership.
- ▷ Invite everyone, give equal opportunity for performance and presentation to everyone, and treat members with respect regardless of ANY demographic.
- ▷ Host a conference at an HBCU. Openly address LGBTQ+ issues.
- ▷ By being intentionally open and accepting in all aspects of our shared human condition.
- ▷ Being willing to accept the notion that all people from all places have value and purpose, including their musical traditions and modes of music making.
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing. Push for more HBCU participation. Encourage multi-cultural performing groups and programming of a diverse nature.
- ▷ Recognize that welcoming "others" includes everyone.
- ▷ Normalize land acknowledgements & pronouns, continue to reach out and consult with marginalized folks on issues while still respecting their boundaries, emphasize allyship with our white and/or privileged colleagues, diversify your lens of anti-racism, apologize and own mistakes when (un)/intentional trauma or harm is inflicted on a member/colleague during NCCO events, do the work in building our scope and reach to HBCUs, Tribal Colleges, Two-Year institutions.
- ▷ Seek representatives from the diverse American cultures and ethnicities to sit at the directing table, perhaps as a committee with a specific mandate to secure representation of diverse artistic manifestations, as long as they are choral, with a full examination, not as a token.

✔ 19 respondents (17.6%) encouraged us to **"keep doing what you're doing"**

- ▷ Stay the present course
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing.
- ▷ Keep it as it is, open, friendly and inclusive!
- ▷ Keep educating and showcasing a variety of experiences.
- ▷ Continue to program conventions and publications with attention to access, equity, diversity, inclusivity.
- ▷ I really think NCCO has done a good job of this because of the small size
- ▷ I think it already does.
- ▷ I feel like NCCO is already doing this
- ▷ I think you're doing well at this.
- ▷ You do a pretty good job already
- ▷ I have always felt that NCCO is succeeding in this regard. I see efforts toward inclusion (not

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token efforts), and I have not witnessed exclusion. Keep going along this trajectory.

- ▷ I think this is working well already. There's less of that "let me put my choral director hat on" as

12 respondents (11.1%) mentioned **dismantling the exclusive, club, clique-ish attitude and adopting a deliberate anti-elitist stance**

- ▷ Discourage all use of in-group signaling and intellectual/ideological bullying. Take a stand and be very clear and open about it. People will opt in or out as it suits them, and the remaining members are likely to feel sufficiently safe.
- ▷ Lose the "club" mentality. It's kind of like you don't know you're welcome in the club until you've been told you're in the club. My impression is that the organization was started by a select group of collegiate choral conductors and it didn't feel like an organization open to all. It felt elitist. Yes, it should be an organization that is targeted to a select set of interests, but the content of the discussion should be what ultimately dictates who is in an who isn't. Folks that aren't served by the content discussed will want out on their own.
- ▷ My answer does not mean that these things aren't already present in NCCO. The leadership should mirror the principles listed. There is no place for elitism in NCCO.
- ▷ Don't make all the performances by top level choirs.
- ▷ Conquer elitism.
- ▷ Pursue as active an anti-prejudice agenda as possible within the context of NCCO's mission.
- ▷ We can't do much more than always refuse to discriminate by race or color or gender.
- ▷ Understand and name the euro-centricism of this org, or, work to be non-euro-centric.
- ▷ I would suggest we are pretty good at this already though again let's try and avoid those graduate school cliques. Also please keep the website and all publication resources accessible to all.
- ▷ Creating a culture where perfection of any kind is not a goal, and flaws are embraced.
- ▷ By diversifying it's membership, resisting an air of elitism in NCCO events and programming
- ▷ Ensure that you do not hold the mega university as "the" one way of "doing choral music."

9 respondents (8.3%) specifically mentioned **discussions, workshops, gatherings, and engaging in challenging conversations**

- ▷ Invite the challenging conversation.
- ▷ Continue to provide challenging programming in a safe, call-in space.
- ▷ Consider having affinity groups gather for discussion. Invite members to join in various activities of NCCO.
- ▷ By fostering more meetings/trainings like we had with Dr. Washington
- ▷ I think workshops such as the one you did last spring on systemic racism help a lot (for the National Board). It would be good to follow-up on this with events where members could actually sit and talk with one another about these issues. A plenary session at the next conference with breakout rooms, facilitated by someone trained to address issues of systemic racism and inclusion, perhaps. Something like that. But please follow-up on what you have begun....that is crucial. Maintain and keep the conversation going and expanding.
- ▷ I think that the fostering of community is foundational. Because the NCCO is a smaller organization than the ACDA, perhaps something like this could work: an hour could be set aside near the beginning of the conference in which members are randomly assigned to two different small groups with three or four people each and with the national board members divided as much as possible among the groups. Each group would have a half-hour conversation in which each person in the group could share their personal story of how they came to college/university choral music, what is important to them in choral music, what excites them about choral music, etc. Then, each person knows four to six other people (that they might not otherwise

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have known) at the conference a bit better, and everyone has had a chance to share something about themselves in a safe environment. I find that people are often more willing to share in a smaller group - they can see the faces and the affirmation of people more clearly, and they are freer to speak because they feel less on display. Having led regular seminar classes for two full academic years, my experience is that saying something in front of a smaller group first makes people more willing to say something in front of or to bring something to the attention of a larger group.

- ▷ I think the summit this summer was an excellent start. The organization needs to continue to

9 respondents (8.3%) had specific suggestions about **leadership and governance**

- ▷ Assure broad, sensitive, aggressive, wise board leadership
- ▷ Honesty, openness, friendliness, reaching out to all who are present, with a smile.
- ▷ Choose leadership with this goal.
- ▷ Have officers and prominent members discuss their own faults/failings in the past.
- ▷ Be authentically real and project the desire to welcome everyone.
- ▷ Listen more fully rather than listen and then do it the way you first chose
- ▷ Continue to elevate a diverse leadership group.
- ▷ It starts with leadership—if the leadership of the organization prioritizes that in both words and actions, the culture of the organization will follow.
- ▷ Outreach, bringing in marginalized voices onto the board and letting them serve at the very top

Additional responses centered on **finding common ground, rethinking strategies with regard to repertoire, curriculum, and teaching, building a broader mentorship program, increasing visibility for the organization, being transparent**, and more. A small minority of respondents also expressed concern with focusing NCCO's efforts on anti-racism efforts.



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How can we ensure access to NCCO for all collegiate choral educators? (110 responses)

36 respondents (32.7%) offered suggestions to **reduce the cost of the conference, specifically travel, hotel, and registration fees**

- ▷ Keeping cost for conferences as low as possible.
- ▷ It's travel costs that prevent me from participating.
- ▷ Depends on what you mean by access and what you mean by NCCO. The membership dues are reasonable. If cost of attendance is a stumbling block to more diverse participation, then NCCO is gonna have to make conference attendance more affordable for the underrepresented folks. Beyond that, we have to ask those populations "How could NCCO better serve you?"
- ▷ Offer grants for those who cannot afford membership or conference fees
- ▷ By making it affordable, and providing content worth the cost of membership.
- ▷ Adjunct professors make less money and may not receive funds to attend NCCO conferences. Are any programs in place to assist them?
- ▷ We can't force people, of course. Some people don't come because they receive little or no support from their universities and can't afford the travel. However, I am of the mind that "if you build it, they will come."
- ▷ Lower cost of conferences
- ▷ Probably impossible without great underwriting funding
- ▷ Work to make conferences as casual and affordable as possible.
- ▷ Offer funding for those whose colleges don't help support their travel
- ▷ Offer conference and membership incentives to people in need.
- ▷ If there's a way to help find much less expensive housing for conference attendees, that would cut down a lot on the cost. Or if there were regional conferences.
- ▷ Do you need to provide more scholarships?
- ▷ Is it possible to find scholarship \$\$ to help with attendance at conferences?
- ▷ Seek to offer scholarships/grants for conference attendance.

31 respondents (28.2%) suggested **outreach, advocacy, recruitment, and better communication strategies**

- ▷ Let people know what we are doing.
- ▷ Continued efforts to contact every collegiate choral director in the US and Canada.
- ▷ Work through area representative to spread the word.
- ▷ Keep ties with educator's institutions
- ▷ Active and intuitive website
- ▷ Targeted marketing to educators not served as readily?
- ▷ Strong marketing and continued low registration costs
- ▷ Advertise more.
- ▷ Active allyship
- ▷ Pro-active recruitment of members, schools (e.g., HBCUs), expertise
- ▷ Ask, advertise, connect. Let people know that you want them there and that you have something useful to offer.
- ▷ Continue to promote and encourage membership from a lower level. Those at the top already know of NCCO and will continue to support. Graduate students and smaller college involvement will better this organization.
- ▷ Keeping up-to-date records. Advocacy. Outreach programs to directors who do not know about NCCO. Diverse representation in all areas of the organization.
- ▷ Invite members and non-members to conferences and to audition their choirs for conference participation.
- ▷ Increase your social media presence

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▷ I am not sure how feasible this would be, but here is an idea that comes to mind: the executive board could find a listing of all U.S. colleges and universities. Then the national board members of each region could research and contact the choir directors of each institution in their region that are not already represented in NCCO. There could be a form email that the board

members could adapt, and that email could say something like this:

"We want to ensure that all college and university choir directors can be members of NCCO, so if there is something standing in the way of you becoming a member of our organization, please let us know about it so that we can help." (This would also serve as a membership drive, too!)

14 respondents (12.8%) specifically asked us to **continue the low costs of membership and conference fees**

- ▷ Maintain a low cost of membership and conference attendance.
- ▷ The cost is reasonable, in my opinion.
- ▷ What kind of access issues are there right now? I do not feel that NCCO has access issues. Anyone can join by paying the very reasonable dues. You get out of it what you put into it.
- ▷ Keep cost of membership/conferences low
- ▷ Keep conferences inexpensive.
- ▷ Keep the cost down for membership and conferences and maintain open-access website resources for all.
- ▷ Keep costs reasonable enough that people can afford to be there.
- ▷ Keep membership prices low.
- ▷ Keep the fees low.

8 respondents (7.3%) suggested **thinking carefully about the conference dates and locations**

- ▷ Timing of the conference date and location have made attendance difficult
- ▷ Continue to move around the country with conference locations.
- ▷ Funding and location should be carefully considered to allow all to participate.
- ▷ Constantly evolving communication and varying conference locations.
- ▷ Conference in the summer.
- ▷ Find less expensive locations to hold the conference, while still being close to a major airport.
- ▷ Is it possible that late October would make travel both less expensive and still provide the



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opportunity to have collegiate choral ensembles perform.

7 respondents (6.4%) commented on quality of content and programming

- ▷ Advertising the wealth of choices available at conferences.
- ▷ Consider specific elements that cater to people in various types of school: community college, four year undergrad without grad programs, etc.
- ▷ Encourage and enable participation among members from diverse professional situations
- ▷ Perhaps selecting centralized locals for the conferences.
- ▷ such as community colleges, commuter colleges, adjunct professors, in addition to tenure-line folks. This can be an economic issue in addition to creating welcome through programming.
- Offer programming that speaks to all collegiate faculty
- ▷ Create an organization that is deemed essential.

7 respondents (6.4%) encouraged us to “keep doing what you’re doing”

- ▷ Stay the course
- ▷ What you’re doing is working
- ▷ I don’t know what more you can do.
- ▷ Keep doing what you’re doing
- ▷ I think access is already there. It’s just that we are all so busy and have to make choices
- ▷ Continue the welcoming atmosphere. I do not see this as an area of concern.
- ▷ I see no current obstacles to access.

Additional responses focused on the possibility of regional gatherings, student involvement, expanded offerings beyond the conference, publications, and thinking about additional membership categories.



How can we place intentional inclusivity at the center of our work, especially in the areas of repertoire, research, pedagogy, and programming? (108 responses)

19 respondents (17.6%) recommended **intentional programming and making it a priority**

- ▷ By doing it.
- ▷ Make it priority. Tell your members you’re going to highlight groups that are representative of the whole US, support composers of color, highlight research in that area, and put an emphasis on inclusion.
- ▷ The answer is in the question: intentional programming
- ▷ Be intentional.
- ▷ Continue programming topics, guest artists and clinicians that address this issue
- ▷ Establish specific lecture, performance, publication, etc. slots for people and/or topics related to whatever demographics desired, name them as such, promote them as such, review them as such, and provide funding to support the work and travel of recipients of those slots. You might even provide opportunities for people to contribute specifically to those funds.
- ▷ Plan for it. Choose topics for sessions and invite speakers/clinicians with expertise or representation in mind.
- ▷ Go after hot topics in conference programming and articles
- ▷ Involve choral directors in the field who are acknowledged experts in these areas.
- ▷ A period of intentional emphasis on the works, long neglected, of minority composers.
- ▷ Have a theme(s) for the conference. Accept research and repertoire pertaining to that theme. Or, require a percentage of the repertoire fulfill certain categories, like the Institute for Composer Diversity.
- ▷ Be bold in programming and curating. Take risks. Bring humor and lightness into the mix

14 respondents (13.0%) focused on **broadening diversity and inclusion efforts**

- ▷ Broaden and feature more areas of research at conferences and in the Choral Scholar
- ▷ Include as much as possible in the discussion without overlooking our past and history
- ▷ Every notice, publication, message, etc. should include a DEI statement.
- ▷ Let's be sure we remember the lessons of 2020 and have inclusive concert repertoire as a regular part of our performance regimen.
- ▷ Make inclusivity part of the organization's mission.
- ▷ I think you might have to consider broader or different categories for selecting presenters and performers, you might need to do away with blind auditions, and you might need to relax the standards of excellence a bit
- ▷ Intentional inclusivity is not the "center" of our work, it is an essential presumption
- ▷ By encouraging the broadest participation from all who care to be involved.
- ▷ Continue to be mindful of inclusivity and belongingness.
- ▷ Perhaps create multiple categories for inclusion in conferences. ACDA's "Ethnic and Multicultural" label is outdated, but it has proved effective at bringing non-classical performances to conferences.
- ▷ Inclusivity is at the center of pedagogy and a session on inappropriate language in the rehearsal would be a solid conference offering.
- ▷ Ensure a diverse board & selection committee and give them a mandate to be inclusive even to the point of "quality" as long as there are a good number of traditionally excellent offerings. You can't force interest on a public.

12 respondents (11.1%) referenced **our publications and resources**

- ▷ Provide info on resources and let members make their own decisions
- ▷ Work with publishers to seek out more BIPOC and non-cis-male composers, rather than relying on "the quality of the submissions they get."
- ▷ Support people who are making online databases and websites, particularly making recordings and perusal scores of repertoire by these composers easily available, and including information about difficulty. Promote Project Encore and similar projects. Have a repository for sample programs for many different sizes/make-ups of choirs, ones that include composers from underrepresented backgrounds.
- ▷ Go after hot topics in conference programming and articles
- ▷ Invest time and resources in research and scholarship in areas that have previously been ignored.
- ▷ Help fund composers and librettists of underrepresented groups.
- ▷ Provide examples of work other are doing that is widely considered effective.
- ▷ Also, provide practical tools at conferences so members can grow in the ability to conduct unfamiliar repertoires and diversify their choral programs.
- ▷ Request ideas, performances, research and pedagogy and critical reviews from college directors in the nation and world.
- ▷ Research is truly an individual effort so I think that's on each one of us independently.

9 respondents (8.3%) suggested that **leadership efforts play a key role**

- ▷ I deeply appreciated the diversity and inclusion training offered for board members.
- ▷ Share the governance of the organization with diverse members deliberately.
- ▷ Avoid the superficial. If the outreach and outcomes are genuine and significant it will be valued.
- ▷ Consult those who have had success in these areas.
- ▷ ACDA Regional leaders are currently developing guidelines in these areas. NCCO and ACDA leaders should confer to help effect change across our profession. ACDA Western Region has established a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee which is actively working with the Conference Committee for March 2022.
- ▷ Ensure a diverse board and membership
- ▷ Advocacy and action — do what you say you do and make it intentional.



✔ 9 respondents (8.3%) specifically mentioned **allowing for differing perspectives**

- ▷ Allowing for different voices to be expressed.
- ▷ Look for session proposal that are unique and outside of the kind of sessions we see regularly at ACDA.
- ▷ Try very hard to involve many different perspectives in planning and implementing.
- ▷ Repertoire should not need to be delivered with classical vocal production; pedagogy should not privilege bel canto technique as being the safest or most legit or most safe: science has proven otherwise, and, it does a disservice to those who excel in singing technical other than bel canto.
- ▷ Encourage diversity in all conference offerings, through presenters, repertoire in performances, interest session topics, etc.
- ▷ Ideally, by developing a membership that would naturally address these areas from diverse perspectives.
- ▷ Highlight non-stereotypical rep by composers of various ethnicities and cultures
- ▷ Embrace historical music by women and BIPOC.
- ▷ Curate new perspectives in the center of the organization

✔ 7 respondents (6.5%) recommended **dialogue or challenging the status quo**

- ▷ Have hard conversations with membership. Be proactive. Expect push back. Take some bold stances (like: why aren't we pushing more on publishing companies to do better? If we don't, who will? Also, why aren't we challenging licensure test questions and expectations? Why aren't we challenging the idea of the canon? Why aren't we revisioning all of what we do?).
- ▷ Let folks know that it's about teaching and not perfection.
- ▷ By continuing to talk about it , research it, and act on the results
- ▷ Having open, transparent conversations is a good start. I think this area is so important and I'm so glad that we are finally starting to talk about it more as an organization.
- ▷ We can start to have brave, vulnerable, difficult conversations about these things
- ▷ Listen to the experts and the people who have truly been doing the work

✔ 7 respondents (6.5%) expressed concerns about **quotas and tokenism related to these efforts**

- ▷ Some of these questions come off as incredibly pretentious. You could start there. If this is all NCCO is going to focus on in the future, they really ought to change the organization's name and purpose.

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- ▷ A better question might be, “How can we place intentional inclusivity at the center of our work and not make it seem like a nod to the current social climate or too little, too late?” This is a tough question. What we should not do is have one conference that hits all the “feels” and then go right back to the Western art music traditions we have all grown up with. We are trying to adapt and improve something that has taken 300 years (conservatively) to cultivate.
 - ▷ Difficult to answer. Intentional inclusivity can result in intentional exclusion of worthy colleagues.
 - ▷ Please don’t accept proposals to check quotas on boxes you want to fill. Accept choirs and proposals based on the merit of the proposition not on trying to be more inclusive. If the presenter/choir achieves excellence it shouldn’t matter what their subject matter might be.
 - ▷ I would be concerned for quotas in concert repertoire (minutes, number of pieces etc.). Quotas for concert programs can feel very much like tokenism (“and now, here is the ‘multicultural’ selection”; “and now, here is the selection by a ‘female’ composer”). Rather, I think conscious decisions for invited ensembles and presenters that represent diversity could be a way to be more authentic in our efforts toward genuine inclusivity.
 - ▷ I believe programming should be the choice of the individual applicants. In other words, I don’t think it is necessary.
 - ▷ Reframe the question. Inclusivity = I’m in/you’re out, and I have the privilege (arrogance) of “inviting” you into “my” space.
- 🚩 6 respondents (5.6%) encouraged us to **reach out and recruit**
- ▷ Reach out to underrepresented areas for participation in conferences.
 - ▷ Reach out and recruit submissions, sessions, performers. Invite a more diverse range of offerings.



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- ▷ Broadening the outreach of the organization.
- ▷ It seems that having this come from the membership makes it most authentic. Even if a core committee makes the final decision on these matters, a survey could be sent to members in which they could ask for the coverage of certain

topics in publications/conferences as well as offer their own expertise in them.

- ▷ Find conductors who are moving beyond using non-white, male music within their concert programming. Not using them as special pieces of toe-tapping closers

Additional ideas brought up include **providing financial support, training and workshops, and focusing on music of the canon.** A small minority believes that we are already doing well in this area.



How can we establish a culture of respect for diverse perspectives? (104 responses)

30 respondents (28.8%) encouraged us to **continue to diversify our programming, performances, and presentations**

- ▷ It starts with making sure that everyone can see themselves on the stage or in front of the lectern. You can't change people, but you can change practices.
- ▷ More inclusivity in regards to presenters and conductors
- ▷ By always respecting diverse perspectives
- ▷ Continue to center POC speakers, panelists, board members as you have lately.
- ▷ We need to offer a diversity of perspectives and be respectful in doing so. The proof is in the doing.
- ▷ More sharing of diverse perspectives will lead to more respect.
- ▷ Diversity needs to be a part of every aspect of our profession. By seeing diverse perspectives as separate categories, i.e. multicultural or ethnic perspectives, we continue to attach "otherness" to them rather than pursuing inclusion. Inclusion means the homogenization of diversity.
- ▷ By having voices of diverse perspectives at the table for everyone to listen to and consider
- ▷ I'd imagine that we could have decades of conferences, tools, materials, and networking opportunities that are entirely for and made up of BIPOC. While yes, it is good to have all perspectives including those who've had a main platform for generations, many of those perspectives have been logged and documented for many years, while others are still underrepresented. Having decades of entirely BIPOC would still not be enough to equal the playing field, but it's a start.
- ▷ Continue to make diversity intentional. I'm very impressed and grateful for the conscious inclusivity fostered by our leadership.
- ▷ More conferences with different topics involving different music/performances from diverse cultures.
- ▷ An easy answer would be to monitor the diversity of perspectives in publications, conference presentations, and performances
- ▷ Hire diverse presenters as clinicians.

21 respondents (20.2%) stressed the **importance of listening and authentic/genuine conversation**

- ▷ I'm gonna be blunt about this: speaking as a white cis male, we white cis males need to just shut up and listen more. Often when we're called to task for not being inclusive, we have a whole host of rationalizations. We need to yield the floor and sit with the criticisms longer and let them sink in.
- ▷ Listening for what everybody has to say, yet avoiding Tokenism.
- ▷ Create rules and opportunities for respectful dialogue
- ▷ Have listening sessions and panels of people to speak.
- ▷ Facilitate conversations about difficult topics; particularly those relevant to choral music

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- ▷ Model it. Perhaps plan roundtables or invite keynote speakers to speak directly to this issue.
- ▷ Perhaps sessions devoted to inclusion could be sponsored by the organization—not presented only if someone proposes it—with hired facilitators who could help people who don't know they need any help or don't think they need any help. Let's face it, we can all learn something about ourselves
- ▷ By being attuned to the subtle, built-in discrimination, and by actively pursuing the opinions and suggestions from marginalized communities
- ▷ Listen first, speak second, no matter what.
- ▷ Listen to the membership and create times for all to speak.
- ▷ We need as many conductors of diverse backgrounds to have a seat at the table and we need to listen to them.
- ▷ To me this deals with ethics, compassion, and healthy human interactions at the foundation.
- ▷ Emphasize listening
- ▷ Be honest, stay transparent, work hard.
- ▷ Be respectful.
- ▷ Give them voice
- ▷ Engage in humble conversations.

11 respondents (10.6%) encouraged us to **“keep doing what you're doing”**

- ▷ Stay the course
- ▷ I think you're doing a great job of this already. Stop forcing it.
- ▷ I don't perceive that NCCO has ever had a culture of disrespect.
- ▷ Keep the discussion going
- ▷ I feel that you are already doing this
- ▷ Inclusivity is about giving different perspectives a voice at the table. Keep up that work.
- ▷ I think you already have.
- ▷ Continue to focus on these aspects in a positive way.
- ▷ I feel like this culture already exists among conductors in higher ed.
- ▷ Again, the membership should drive this, but I feel NCCO has done well in establishing a culture of respect.
- ▷ Don't we already have that? I think there's way more respect in the choral world than in the world at large.

10 respondents (9.6%) referenced **the role of leadership**

- ▷ Excellent question! Leadership must model this.
- ▷ I think we, as a profession, are (in general) moving away from the “mighty maestro” which her/

his flock of followers. I think some of the folks at the forefront are about the music and the people around them rather than themselves.



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- ▷ Explicitly demand it of the membership, and if people quit, let them go.
- ▷ By treating these perspectives not as something unusual, but as a regular part of everything we do. Work to eliminate the sense of tokenism.
- ▷ If you create an advisory board with frequent meetings and activities, some of the best ideas will emerge there
- ▷ Have the officers demonstrate deeper listening.
- ▷ With kind and patient people involved in NCCO.
- ▷ It starts with leadership - if the leadership of the organization prioritizes that in both words and actions, the culture of the organization will follow.
- ▷ The exec board needs to diversify

9 respondents (8.7%) spoke of a **need for resources and training**

- ▷ By modeling those behaviors and offering qualified training.
- ▷ We must teach each other how to offer a critique or an opposing argument that doesn't feel like an attack on the individual. My university has offered several excellent workshops for faculty on encouraging exactly this. What about a non-judgemental session on this at a conference (not at 8:00 am on the last day, but not necessarily as a plenary session either.) Don't schedule against it or make it right before/after a meal break.
- ▷ At the summit in August, I thought, let's do more training stuff. I know I want to be more inclusive, but I lack terminology and exposure sometimes. I loved hearing from an expert and from colleagues in different areas and with different experiences on this. There was a depth to that experience. How can you recreate that for members? A webinar will likely not cut it :)
- ▷ Hearing sessions from those who have experienced this first hand in the choral community.

Additional responses referenced **opportunities for community, communication/outreach, changes to policy and mission, and excellence.** A small minority of respondents had concerns.



In your opinion, what does it mean for NCCO to prioritize “excellence” in its work? (105 responses)

16 respondents (15.2%) spoke of **excellence as elitist, Euro-centric, or exclusive**

- ▷ I fear it means exclusion for some, and I wonder what we're doing for “really good” ... it can be elitist to prioritize only when we can attain the highest level and can limit our view of what we are striving for.
- ▷ Those in power can show more vulnerability, so that it doesn't become all about choirs sounding perfect or being looked down on.
- ▷ I believe a narrowly defined and enforced sense of what is “excellent.”
- ▷ Recognizing excellence in its specific context, rather than in some global sense.
- ▷ See previous note on this. We should all stop using that word for a good long time.
- ▷ ‘Excellence’ is a subjective term that has the capacity to negatively impact people in some spheres of society, especially those at the margins. What I deem ‘excellent’ another might disagree with. Rather than use this term globally, to represent many different aspects of our work, it should be used in specific terms and be clearly defined.
- ▷ Excellence without a predetermined Anglo-European prejudice
- ▷ Working to eliminate elitist attitudes and providing a space for different demonstrations of excellence is paramount.
- ▷ Make the rubrics clear, and have some measuring of excellence not be Eurocentric, but meeting

a variety of style-genres in their own context of excellence.

- ▷ I think that the term “choral excellence” is pretty self-explanatory.
- ▷ As with the choral profession writ large, “excellence” = whiteness
- ▷ Honestly, it reads uncomfortably to me. Excellence has often been a code word for narrow and

close-minded. It shouldn't be. True excellence allows for creativity of thought, not a narrow view. Even the guidelines for performance represent a specific point of view and limits creative thinking and truly excellent programming

- ▷ Currently it has been to only allow the top choral programs to perform at the conference.

12 respondents (11.4%) referenced **high quality and standards**

- ▷ Value high standards in all areas of performance, research, etc.
- ▷ Strive for the highest quality choral performances, research, choral literature, and education.
- ▷ Excellence is our first concern.
- ▷ Without it, why?
- ▷ High quality choral music making and choral music experiences.

- ▷ The highest standards in performance and research
- ▷ We strive for this in all that we do. The collegiate community will not be served by anything less.
- ▷ High-quality choirs and presenters at conferences; high-quality compositions and research in our publications.

11 respondents (10.5%) mentioned **excellence as related to self-improvement and growth**

- ▷ Continually reassessing whether its goals for “excellence” are being met on the many fronts where excellence is possible and expected, keeping its members engaged and aware of these activities, and, in particular, seeking out the perspectives and suggestions of those not currently in the center of the organization.
- ▷ To consistently seek the needs of the organization and to attempt to meet those needs through the auspices of our experiences, expertises, and mission.
- ▷ To continue to explore how music is an essential part of what makes us human - and to seek to champion performances and research that digs deeply into how music creates both a path for self-discovery and a unique tool for creating community.

- ▷ That everyone is inspired to be their best selves and that this is supported for all. Not that there is just one standard of excellence it each one's own personal fulfillment
- ▷ It means that NCCO provides educational resources for its members and ways for conductors to learn from one another for the sake of raising the standard in our field.
- ▷ Choosing to work as hard as possible to achieve the highest level of excellent in all non-public areas (not just performance, that is a given for most of us.)
- ▷ Excellence is an attribute for which one strives. It can be evaluated and documented.
- ▷ Excellence is often only connected to outward achievement--awards, recognition--while most of our lives do not live in the plane, nor should they, of outer rewards.

11 respondents (10.5%) took an **expansive view of excellence beyond performance**

- ▷ Continue to educate ourselves in the culture of excellent work. This will necessarily have different meanings.
- ▷ Musically enriching and exciting performances and sessions
- ▷ Excellence in performance, research, and publication.

- ▷ Excellence is broad term, not a narrow one. I believe that everything I have seen at an NCCO conference has been excellent.
- ▷ One hopes for contextualized perspectives on excellence.
- ▷ Finest performances, new research and development, conversations about making music.
- ▷ Excellence is rigor in teaching, performance and research. It's not just about the highest level, it's

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about thoughtfulness and innovation. NCCO should be presenting those who are forging paths and making connections that are meaningful and discipline-defining.

- ▷ Excellence exists in many forms. We need to celebrate excellence in pedagogy, research, out-

reach, stewardship, mentorship, and service to community in addition to excellence in choral performance.

- ▷ Applying current research and creativity to choral music in widely varying scenarios.

10 respondents (9.5%) specifically defined it as **excellence in performance**

- ▷ Maintaining a high level of musicianship in performances, but also offering opportunities to areas of higher education that may benefit from the information being provided and conferences and sessions throughout the year.
- ▷ Performance excellence; excellence in selection of repertoires
- ▷ Musical excellence
- ▷ Importance is placed on superior performance.

- ▷ Polished, professional-level choral performances of a diverse repertoire of high-quality music. Invited choirs demonstrate the best artistry and technical prowess that we have in the nation. All other priorities of the organization should point to that end. I view higher education choral music-making as one step removed from professional choral music-making. Similar to college-level sports and their professional counterparts.

9 respondents (8.6%) specifically **linked excellence to diversity**

- ▷ In my opinion, there is no excellence without diversity. Therefore, I think NCCO needs to continue to diversify its board, membership, and offerings, including conference offerings
- ▷ We want excellence in our ability to connect people. That means prioritizing diversity and creating activities in which conference members interact and get to know each other.
- ▷ There are excellent performers and scholars in all areas; seek them out and involve them.
- ▷ It is a complicated question, because it depends on the culture or background. I think it is great that we are starting to include non-European cultures when we think about this question.

- ▷ All things are related so my previous comment for encouraging respect for diversity holds true here. This needs to be intentional in programming and in outreach.
- ▷ I believe rigor, consistency, and quality in the context of resources available is an expanded definition of excellence. Prioritizing excellence in this context will enhance the diversity and quality of our interactions with one another.
- ▷ Broaden the choral world's perspectives and knowledge base by accepting more tonal styles and repertoires into the choral canon, then seek to learn how each style and repertoire defines "excellence" for itself.

Additional responses focused on the **unique needs of choral music, on excellence specific to conferences, on the problem of defining excellence, on excellence as situational, and on excellence in teaching and pedagogy**. A small minority of responses thought that excellence and diversity initiatives are incompatible, and another small minority does not think that excellence should be a priority for NCCO.

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From NAC International Perspectives, Women and Global Solidarity:

Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

What do you believe NCCO can start doing immediately to move toward being a more anti-racist organization? (99 responses)

- /// 18 respondents (18.2%) advocated for structural change at the level of guiding principles, governance, and leadership
 - ▷ Persist in this mission, even when it is not a hot priority item, in the future.
 - ▷ Challenge membership to celebrate a variety of communal music making, even if it's not Bach.
 - ▷ Ask: is the organizational structure inclusive? How do we find diverse viewpoints and bring them to the table? And how do we in the current structure react/listen to new ways of doing things?
 - ▷ Make sure it's not just people in high-level academic positions who are in leadership, since those people are more likely to be privileged and favored by the current system. Go beyond traditional ways of networking that will reach those without existing connections.
 - ▷ Expand the leadership to include voices from other perspectives.
 - ▷ Identify potential organizational leadership candidates who can clearly articulate the character of the organization both to the choral community and to the public at large.
 - ▷ Perhaps on the National Board we can have reps for 1) BIPOC, 2) LGBTQ, etc in addition to regional reps.
- ▷ I like seeing more shared governance, so thanks for the surveys. I completely believe that you all read and heed them! Is the executive and national board equally representative of gender and race/ethnicity? I would think that is an important step - get your stakeholders to represent the membership communities you are hoping to attract.
- ▷ Involve those in our profession who are most respected. Have them help design programs that reach underserved populations and more importantly, help with the communication and outreach. They can't be figureheads but instead facilitators.
- ▷ The Executive Board should review the constitution and bylaws with an anti-racist lens and make proposed changes to the National Board. Also, the planning committees for NCCO9 should involve as diverse a membership as possible.
- ▷ Create the advisory board, in full integration with the administration, and develop targeted projects to feature different ethnicities on their terms, but not in isolation. A constant dialogue with the heretofore power centers must exist.



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- ▷ Call out our biases as part of our sessions. Dominick has started this work by publishing data on races of officers, choirs, etc; continue to be honest about this while engaging clinicians and choirs that can show excellence in different ways.
- ▷ Ensure the board reflects our choral representation fairly and work from there. Welcome under-represented segments and give them a seat.

17 respondents (17.2%) called for **broader representation and specifically inviting BIPOC individuals into our work**

- ▷ Bring more diverse voices into the conversation. Every official NCCO committee or working group needs a more diverse group of voices doing the talking.
- ▷ Explore specific invitations to ensembles that may not normally go through the regular audition process.
- ▷ Invite HBCU colleges. Ask them what they want to see at our conferences that would be useful.
- ▷ Be transparent. Acknowledge biases and work from there.
- ▷ Keeping a diverse group of people engaged at all levels of the organization to consider and revise the working machinery of the organization and, again, actively inviting those who have felt unwelcome to join and participate.
- ▷ Engage as many people from as many different backgrounds as are interested in being a part of the choral music world. Invite any and all to share their musics and themselves to grow and build a better community of choral musicians on our planet.

9 respondents (9.1%) suggested **changes to policy**

- ▷ Examine policy.
- ▷ Change policies, procedures.
- ▷ Conquer elitism, rewrite the guidelines for submissions to perform at conferences.
- ▷ By continuing a policy of non-discrimination.
- ▷ Help establish new audition descriptions and procedures that eliminate bias.
- ▷ The very act of moving toward intentional diversity, equity and inclusivity will require changing systems, structures, policies and practices, the given definition of anti-racism. Changing attitudes will take time.

- ▷ Ask people of color to be a part of our organizations hierarchy.
- ▷ Build an Advisory Board with all people being represented.
- ▷ Boldly call out those that display racists speech or actions.
- ▷ Lead by example, walk-the-walk, you don't have to talk it. NCCO members are some of the most inclusive, open-minded people I have ever met in my profession.

- ▷ Again, stress inclusivity and model thru inclusion of non-white presenters and conductors
- ▷ I think promoting works by composers of color and women and non-binary backgrounds is an important start
- ▷ Invite collegiate directors of Gospel, Mariachi, Black Church Music, Jazz, and Pop/Soul/R&B to sit in positions of power.
- ▷ Encourage diversity of presenters, interest session topics, repertoire at conferences.
- ▷ Value all people for who they are, not their labels or categories.
- ▷ Seek to have diversity in officers and planning groups. It's also about religious group. Include music of diverse religious groups, both sacred and secular.
- ▷ Continuing to provide opportunities and resources, presented by BIPOC that help bring this topic to the fore among our membership. NCCO is a great source of information for me, and I see this organization as a leader for not only BIPOC, but LGBTQ+ and women in our field, as well.

- ▷ NCCO cannot do everything to solve the problems of systemic racism, but it can do some things that keep in balance its original mandate; i.e., the canon of choral repertoire. We can expand on the canon to include works by under-represented composers not earlier included.
- ▷ Consider a multi-component audition process, for example, that does not favor the white, western art music tradition.
- ▷ Work on anti-racist policies in all aspects of the organization

9 respondents (9.1%) recommended specific **adjustments to conference planning**

- ▷ In your next national conference, have the focus be on anti-racism.
- ▷ Rethink how and what NCCO offers in the terms of professional development.
- ▷ Focus more on actual choral music. As an underrepresented person in the field, I am only interested in this being a professional choral organization.
- ▷ See previous answers about representation and inclusion at conferences and NCCO sponsored workshops. This could even happen outside of conferences in a virtual format
- ▷ I am a member of this group because of the music making that occurs. Keep the focus there and you are already breaking down barriers.
- ▷ Again, discourage conductors from programming “impressive” canonic repertoire.
- ▷ Commission BIPOC composers.
- ▷ Encourage scholarship from BIPOC scholars.
- ▷ Intentional programming

7 respondents (7.1%) recommended **continued dialogue and discussion**

- ▷ Engage in uncomfortable discussions.
- ▷ By helping members understand that what they may think of as normal is, to some, racist.
- ▷ Admitting that we are racist. Work together to change.
- ▷ Talk about it openly at the conference
- ▷ Continue to have open and direct conversations about race among our colleagues. This is incredibly valuable.
- ▷ Foster small group discussions where you mix participants of different backgrounds and college/university socio-economic opportunities. Mediate the sessions so that all feel safe to share. Have each small group come up with ideas for identifying and eliminating racism. You may want to have a series of videos and written narratives regarding the issues face individuals and groups that suffer from the effects of racism.
- ▷ Listen. Ease up on the strict rules and strong statements from a few.

7 respondents (7.1%) encouraged us to **continue the work we’ve been doing**

- ▷ Make sure you follow-up on what you’ve been doing, and keep the conversation going and expanding.
- ▷ I think, from my sequestered viewpoint, NCCO has already begun to move toward being a more anti-racist organization.
- ▷ Addressing the issue, seeking feedback from membership - already in progress
- ▷ I think we are on the right track.
- ▷ The answer is right there in the statement: shared equity between people of different races, orientations, faiths and cultures. From my viewpoint, I do believe NCCO is trying to foster this.

6 respondents (6.1%) commented that they’ve **never sensed racism within NCCO**

- ▷ I have never sensed a whit of racism in this fine organization.
- ▷ I don’t feel NCCO is racist.
- ▷ I don’t believe that NCCO is a racist organization. Continue to be open to all performances, literature and research.
- ▷ This question infers that NCCO is racist. I object strongly to this characterization.
- ▷ I have never felt that NCCO was a racist organization, but I realize actively becoming anti-racist is another step. But I don’t really know how to achieve that.
- ▷ I don’t feel we are. If this is going to be a political organization, then we are missing the point.

Additional responses focused on the **role of power, support and funding, involving students of color, and individual responsibility**. A small minority of respondents were unsure how to answer the question.

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Through your observations and experiences, please list ways in which NCCO has colluded or been complicit with discrimination, prejudice, bias, etc. (78 responses)

✔ 18 respondents (23.1%) **did not observe any discrimination, bias, or prejudice**

- ▷ I am pleased to say I haven't witnessed any instances.
- ▷ None observed or experienced.
- ▷ None.
- ▷ I do not have any significant observations/experiences of this personally, but it is good for the organization to ask so that those who have are able to express them either anonymously or personally.
- ▷ I have not felt this.
- ▷ Not observed
- ▷ none
- ▷ I have never seen anything from NCCO that I felt was inappropriate in any way.
- ▷ None that I can tell.
- ▷ I think NCCO has not necessarily done this anymore than any other professional organizations in the arts.
- ▷ I really have not seen any observations or experiences regarding this question in any NCCO conferences.
- ▷ I haven't seen any. I am a brown, Jewish, Gay man and have never felt discriminated against by NCCO.

✔ 13 respondents (16.7%) were **not sure or were unaware of any instances**

- ▷ I do not know.
- ▷ Not sure
- ▷ I am unaware of negative collusion and/or complicity.



- ▷ I have much more experience with ACDA, so a lot of my comments relate to both. I don't know of any specific answers to this question.
- ▷ I don't feel close enough to the organizational structure to answer this.
- ▷ I don't have enough experience with NCCO to comment on this.

- ▷ Beyond the clear and appropriate bias toward excellence in collegiate choral music in all its facets, I am unaware of collusion or complicity regarding discrimination.
- ▷ Not aware of any
- ▷ I'm not aware of any actions that fit this.
- ▷ I don't know of any. Maybe I've had blinders on?

11 respondents (14.1%) had **no basis or experience to assess the question** (not applicable)

- ▷ No basis to assess.
- ▷ My experience with NCCO isn't long-standing enough to notice any blatant infractions.
- ▷ No experience to draw from here.

- ▷ N/AI am not qualified or inclined to point fingers.
- ▷ Not applicable in my short tenure as a member.
- ▷ Not enough experiences to comment.

9 respondents (11.5%) offered perspectives on a **lack of gender, racial, and ethnic diversity**

- ▷ There's a very obvious if unspoken "old guard/new guard" thing going on between the founding members (mostly older white men, including me) and the younger generation of higher ed choral directors. Things are moving in the right direction, but we have to let the new folks do the planning, instead of having the older folks doing the planning *on behalf of* those not in the conversation.
- ▷ I don't blame NCCO per se, but rather the systemic bias toward white male collegiate choral directors. Last time I looked around at an NCCO conference, there were comparatively few women in attendance.
- ▷ Until recently, the board and leadership were very white. Glad to see this changing. Same concerns re: repertoire.
- ▷ As a liberal woman, I frequently experience bias/discrimination in our male-dominated field. However, it is not productive for me to complain and cry about it - I continue to strive for

excellence and let my work speak for itself. This survey is probably the most offensive thing I've encountered thus far in NCCO.

- ▷ I am a white woman. I have experienced all of the negatives that go with that. So, yes, I would like for under-represented populations to have more representation, but at the same time I feel that some of my white male colleagues are being cancelled.
- ▷ No bias—just my perspective on the leadership (which is not extensive) is that it has been more white male.
- ▷ White men have been at the top of choral music in all "high" areas of choral music (primarily professional and collegiate). That ranking has perpetuated itself.
- ▷ There have been too few choirs from HBCU universities/colleges in the past
- ▷ Not making an effort to diversify the organization. Not (yet) addressing racism in membership.

6 respondents (7.7%) mentioned **elitism and issues of representation in the choral canon**

- ▷ I would probably say by holding a narrow focus on the Western canon as "gospel"—but efforts are being made to broaden the organization's perspective, for sure. These should be continued and expanded.
- ▷ Not just NCCO, but ACDA and other conferences have become conferences for the elite and wealthy. If ensembles are selected by a panel of blind adjudicators, then discrimination, prejudice, and bias should be more or less eliminated,

provided the adjudicators from varied institutions and cultural backgrounds themselves.

- ▷ Not challenging the narrative. Promoting the "canon." Not calling out publishers. Offering the same people who already have power and privilege in our field the opportunities for leadership.
- ▷ It is my observation that our organization's leadership is constructed of professors from the top, most elite and selective institutions. This is not a negative observation, just one to note when identifying individuals to lead. Perhaps

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it will strengthen our institution if we make an intentional effort to engage conductor/teachers in leadership roles from a variety of tertiary backgrounds (community colleges, small private schools, small state schools, etc).

- ▷ We focus too much on elitism in performance and token leadership roles. Do not get me

4 respondents (5.1%) mentioned **recent active steps that NCCO has been taking**

- ▷ I have not attended the conventions, so cannot speak to those. However, I note that the organization has identified a shift in its membership and programming overtime that indicates a conscious attention to addressing these issues (per emails this year).
- ▷ I think distancing from ACDA and their practices is a start. Let's get more women and people of color on the board.
- ▷ It appears to me that the organization is taking important and positive steps in the right direc-

tion in this regard. We are all late to the table, but I sensed that NCCO's current agenda will yield highly positive results. You must not let this slip below a top priority.

- ▷ NCCO has inherited rather a modus operandi that reflects Western European attitudes in Classical music. It is history, and now you will be open to innovation.

tion in this regard. We are all late to the table, but I sensed that NCCO's current agenda will yield highly positive results. You must not let this slip below a top priority.

- ▷ That this organization is addressing antiracism head-on and continuing to do so is an important step in enacting change. Collegiate conductors have a vast amount of privilege we can leverage toward antiracism not only in NCCO, but in the profession and in our local contexts.

Additional responses mentioned an **atmosphere of inclusion, concerns about guidelines for submission to perform at the conference, exclusion in the field in general, and systemic bias.**





CEO
The University of Tennessee
College of Business
Knoxville, TN
www.utk.edu

Frank A. Robinson
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN

Part 4 → Final Thoughts

Visioning for the future: how do you hope NCCO will look five years from now? What changes will have occurred? (86 responses)

✦ 28 respondents (32.6%) envision NCCO as a **more inclusive, open community**

- ▷ Open, inclusive, welcoming, and continued work in diversity and access.
- ▷ I wanna see more directors from HBCUs and more directors from community colleges. If we have made NCCO relevant and accessible to those two groups, we will have come along way.
- ▷ I hope it will continue in its attempts to have membership and offerings reflect the diversity of our professional constituency, and that statistics reflect this trend.
- ▷ Comments after sessions by individuals of color will never include, "He/She was so articulate."
- ▷ I would love to see NCCO become more vibrant, more welcoming to all collegiate colleagues (which means reaching out).
- ▷ More involvement from two year, community, 4-year colleges and universities.
- ▷ I hope it will be very inclusive of collegiate choirs with different abilities. I hope repertoire not currently seen as worthy of performance in a college setting will be more respected and valued. I hope the newer voices in the field will be welcomed, whether or not these people are seen to have high status
- ▷ More inclusion of smaller, non-tier 1 institution members.
- ▷ Conferences will feature colleges and universities from across the Carnegie rankings.
- ▷ A larger and more diverse membership that will include more conductors from small colleges
- ▷ Continue to focus on/advocate for collegiate choral work, but include a bigger umbrella of leadership and membership.
- ▷ Diverse! And more inclusive.
- ▷ Just more opportunities for all types of higher ed through sessions, concerts, leadership (large, small, HBCU, private, public)
- ▷ My hope is that honest strides are made to include conductors/teachers that don't currently feel wanted by NCCO.
- ▷ I hope that it continues to be an organization that helps college and university choir directors to do their best work and that it becomes an even more communal organization.
- ▷ A broader, more inclusive membership (in attendees and performers and speakers) which works hand-in-hand in re-establishing the very highest levels of scholarship and repertoire.
- ▷ Hopefully larger and more diverse. Representative of all sizes and levels of programs. An organization that champions innovation and excellence, but never at the expense of its members or prospective members.
- ▷ More joy. A real sense that everyone is seen
- ▷ Our profession will include more marginalized people, repertoire
- ▷ I imagine our focus on inclusion will create more focus on diversity, however it's difficult to implement those kind of sea-changes in such a short time period.
- ▷ In five years, NCCO should see the fruits of investing in those who have not been supported in the past. More people will flock to NCCO because they know they will not only be accepted, but brought to the front. More choristers will see NCCO not as a daring organization, but a new basis for investing in I.D.E.A.
- ▷ More inclusiveness of directors and groups from all socio-economic backgrounds. Valuing the singers creating the performance more than we do the score or conductor.
- ▷ Have a younger, more diverse membership.

✦ 11 respondents (12.8%) envision NCCO having a **stronger reputation and impact on the profession**

- ▷ NCCO would be more treasured by Higher Ed conductors.
- ▷ I hope that it continues to be an organization that helps college and university choir directors to do their best work and that it becomes an even more communal organization.
- ▷ I feel like NCCO is growing and establishing itself more permanently from ACDA. I like that and hope it keeps doing so.
- ▷ Broader appeal
- ▷ Clearly, NCCO should be an exemplar of diversity, equity, inclusion, and excellence. We should



look back in five years and wonder how we had not reached that level by 2020.

- ▷ It will be a prominent collegiate choral organization with excellence as one of its primary goals through diverse performances, research, pedagogy and repertoire.
- ▷ You will have an advisory board on diversity, grants for creation, performance and research targeted for diverse project profiles, an ever-more prestigious journal, conferences that address the most innovative choral topics of the day but also in-depth scholarship of choral repertoires, and a rich professional network of collegiate conductors assisting each other.
- ▷ I hope that NCCO will act as a leader directing the change we so desperately need in our profession.

10 respondents (11.6%) envision **greater diversity of repertoire and performing ensembles**

- ▷ More energetic and diverse programming and sessions
- ▷ Sessions or performances featuring music composed by women or anyone of color will cease being a novelty. White choirs who perform a spiritual on their program will do so because of its pedagogical and historical quality and the term “cultural appropriation” will not be heard. Black choirs who perform the Mozart Requiem will be lauded for their artistry rather than compared to a Gospel Choir.

- ▷ I love NCCO. My only hope is that we continue to hear from great choirs that we haven’t heard from. And I hope some of them are from traditionally under represented groups and HBCU’s.
- ▷ In my opinion, NCCO is redundant, bordering on irrelevance and is now grasping for attention. While NCCO is not entirely “subsidiary” to ACDA (see earlier response), it certainly operates in overlapping constituencies. The difference is NCCO is more focused, serving a smaller, more elite (*gasp!*) community. In five years, I think NCCO will look largely the same. That’s ok.
- ▷ With the present leadership, I believe NCCO will be more recognized by the entire choral community.

- ▷ Greater emphasis on non-Western traditional musics, performers, sessions.
- ▷ More diversity in membership, racially and musically.
- ▷ The choral canon is more inclusive of all cultures but maintains the repertoire that has become accepted over 600 years of choral evolution.
- ▷ I’ll go to a conference and not know any of the repertoire that’s performed.
- ▷ Non-genre biased communication and broader genre inclusion in performances and topics.

Final Thoughts

- ▷ You will have an advisory board on diversity, grants for creation, performance and research targeted for diverse project profiles, an ever-more prestigious journal, conferences that address the most innovative choral topics of the day but also in-depth scholarship of choral

9 respondents (10.5%) envision a larger NCCO in size and membership

- ▷ Hopefully larger
- ▷ Bigger, stronger, more visible. I think NCCO is on that path right now.
- ▷ Better attended conferences
- ▷ The membership will be larger.
- ▷ A larger and more diverse membership that will include more conductors from small colleges
- ▷ We'll have several new members, whom I look forward to meeting.
- ▷ Hopefully larger and more diverse. Representative of all sizes and levels of programs. An orga-

8 respondents (9.3%) envision an NCCO as it was founded, preserving traditions

- ▷ The founding goals and objectives will still be central.

repertoires, and a rich professional network of collegiate conductors assisting each other.

- ▷ Concerts that reflect a thoughtful, more inclusive revision of the choral canon, but without tossing the traditional canon entirely.

nization that champions innovation and excellence, but never at the expense of its members or prospective members.

- ▷ I'm not sure it will look much different than it does now and as I really consider we do have a lot of work to do in terms of engaging a more ethnically diverse membership. I'm not exactly certain how to do this but when I truly reflect upon attendance at our conferences, for example, there's much work to be done.
- ▷ Have a younger, more diverse membership.

- ▷ Go back to music making and worry less about "topics of the day."



- ▷ I hope NCCO will look more like a professional choral organization - not a social activist organization.
- ▷ The choral canon is more inclusive of all cultures but maintains the repertoire that has become accepted over 600 years of choral evolution. I really hope that NCCO does not decide that they need to jump on the social justice bandwagon and abandon their primary mission of serving college choral directors. I want everyone to have access to our organization and I want to learn and grow. I don't want to have my art form used as a bludgeon against me.
- ▷ I would like to see NCCO focus on its area of specialty, choral music, and desist from trying to be a social justice activist group. The world already has groups which specialize in that area. NCCO cannot possibly be all things to all people.

8 respondents (9.3%) envision NCCO as a change agent in the profession

- ▷ I hope that NCCO will act as a leader directing the change we so desperately need in our profession.
- ▷ Decentering performance could give us more time for those difficult discussions.
- ▷ I envision it will come out of the pandemic with a renewed purpose and vision.
- ▷ Figure out the specific distinctives of NCCO and develop them consistently; how is it different than ACDA? Why should it exist? What are its greatest gifts to American choral singing? Is it necessary?
- ▷ I hope in 5 years that diversity, equity, and inclusion will be more naturally considered part of being an excellent organization, rather than a separate category or box to tick.
- ▷ Social/gender/sexuality/race etc. kept in its proper perspective, not as the purpose of the organization.
- ▷ An importance of preserving the Western Choral Tradition. Rare at NCCO have I heard much Renaissance music for example, except from my own performance years ago. I realize that full Baroque/Classic Chor/Orch performances are not likely to be performed. But, I would like to see more Romantic 19th c. music performed as well as choral music from the early 20th century. Where has Britten gone? I am happy with 21st century repertoire, since I enjoy composing SATB TTBB SSAA compositions and arrangements. If 12 college choruses perform, it would be good for us to hear a wonderful variety within each chorus.
- ▷ In five years, NCCO should see the fruits of investing in those who have not been supported in the past. More people will flock to NCCO because they know they will not only be accepted, but brought to the front. More choristers will see NCCO not as a daring organization, but a new basis for investing in I.D.E.A.
- ▷ Diverse, robust, strong. Prominence of conferences and publications
- ▷ A radical shift. A diverse community. Sessions and topics that are applicable to everyone. Affirming BIPOC and LGTBQIA+ mentorship structures. A celebration of a global and culturally affirming choral canon. Redefined excellence.

Additional responses focus on **pedagogy, programming, curriculum, professional development, advocacy, scholarship, and collaborations with partner organizations.**

One third of respondents (62, 33.3%) also shared some additional thoughts that are located in Appendix A.

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Of the 182 survey respondents, the following 40 individuals chose to identify themselves and they each provided their name at the end of the survey. We gratefully acknowledge their contributions with our utmost thanks.

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APPENDIX A

Full Qualitative Responses

“If you are or have been a member, why did you choose to join NCCO?” (153 responses)

Focus on University / college (41 responses, 26.8%)

- ▷ More focus in university choral subjects
- ▷ It is the only professional organization that focuses exclusively on collegiate choral music.
- ▷ My primary occupation is as a collegiate choral director - so the organization seemed very relevant.
- ▷ I felt it was important to be a part of a group specifically focused on college/university choral studies.
- ▷ Nice to be part of an organization that caters specifically to university-level choral directors.
- ▷ Related to College Teaching and Conducting
- ▷ College and university focus on choral literature and performance.
- ▷ Identifying and serving Collegiate choir issues.
- ▷ to have networking and artistic opportunities with an exclusively college/university/pro focus
- ▷ I like that the organization is more specifically geared to meet my needs as a collegiate conductor.
- ▷ Organization is geared to developing and supporting collegiate choral professors.
- ▷ To be able to concentrate on issues and repertoire important to college/university professors.
- ▷ An organization which addresses collegiate issues.
- ▷ Interest in the collegiate context
- ▷ Speaks directly and only to those of us who teach in higher ed. Everything is relevant
- ▷ Focused on the needs of collegiate choral conductors;
- ▷ Emphasis on college education
- ▷ Focus on issues specific to higher ed choral programs.
- ▷ It's nice to have an organization specifically for higher ed choral music.
- ▷ The organization really caters to my needs as a collegiate choral conductor.
- ▷ Pursuit of choral topics that relate to higher education
- ▷ Specific focus on college/university-level work, professional development and networking
- ▷ It specifically serves the needs and imagination of collegiate choral directors.
- ▷ I was excited to participate in an organization that focused on college choirs.
- ▷ Exclusive focus on music for collegiate choirs
- ▷ Focus of pedagogy, repertoire and varied issues centered in collegiate choral music
- ▷ Concentration of college choirs.
- ▷ I wanted to maintain membership in an organization devoted exclusively to choral singing at the collegiate level.
- ▷ Its attention to collegiate ensembles with high artistic aims
- ▷ To stay current with repertoire and issues specific to college choral music programs
- ▷ Focus on college/university choral issues/repertoire
- ▷ Focus on higher ed choral issues and research
- ▷ I appreciate NCCO's support for those of us working in higher education.
- ▷ I want to become more involved with choral music at the collegiate level.
- ▷ I appreciate the focus on choral music in higher education
- ▷ It was specific for Collegiate Choral Directors
- ▷ I needed an organization focused on collegiate choral music.
- ▷ More topical information regarding the collegiate choral profession.
- ▷ The organization's focus in supporting choral artists/educators in higher education
- ▷ It's an organization that specifically serves higher ed choral professionals
- ▷ Conferences geared for collegiate teachers

Networking / Community (34 responses, 22.2%)

- ▷ Networking
- ▷ Make connections in collegiate choral conductors network
- ▷ Connection with other professionals. Access to resources to enhance my work. Potential opportunities to serve my profession.
- ▷ It is good to identify with the collegiate choral community. We need each other
- ▷ Ongoing education and connection
- ▷ Scholarship and collegiate community
- ▷ Networking opportunities
- ▷ Thought it would connect me with like minded educators around the country.
- ▷ I am a DCA at a college, maintaining connection to other conductors in the same field is important to me.
- ▷ To network and learn from colleagues specific to the college and university environment.
- ▷ To be better involved with collegiate choral music in the US / North America.
- ▷ Colleagues in Higher Education
- ▷ to have networking and artistic opportunities with an exclusively college/university/pro focus
- ▷ To network among higher education choral professionals
- ▷ Networking, resources, conference opportunities
- ▷ As a composer of challenging choral music, I think of it as my ideal community.
- ▷ To connect with colleagues, to continue learning and growing, to share best practices.
- ▷ Needed collegiate colleagues!!
- ▷ Specific focus on college/university-level work, professional development and networking
- ▷ Networking opportunities and resources.
- ▷ To have an opportunity to connect with colleagues
- ▷ It is good to identify with the collegiate choral community. We need each other
- ▷ More specific development and collaboration with collegiate colleagues.
- ▷ Networking
- ▷ To be a part of broader community of choral conductors and scholars.
- ▷ Networking
- ▷ Connection with other professionals.
- ▷ Connection to other university choral professionals
- ▷ Professional development and networking
- ▷ For exchange of ideas with colleagues. Inspiration. Fellowship
- ▷ I broke into the college teaching world, and I was looking for connections and resources.
- ▷ Scholarship and collegiate community
- ▷ great network
- ▷ I hoped it would provide helpful resources and networking opportunities

Alternative to other service organizations (18 responses, 11.8%)

- ▷ Looking for a scholarly alternative to ACDA.
- ▷ Better representative of collegiate work than ACDA
- ▷ I joined as a DMA student and in support of the notion that higher education had topics not sufficiently addressed by ACDA.
- ▷ Provided something that ACDA didn't.
- ▷ I like the smaller feel of NCCO compared to ACDA.
- ▷ The concept, and its subsequent reality, addressed a gap not filled by other service organizations.
- ▷ Disillusioned by other organizations
- ▷ Topics are much more pertinent to my current situation than other service organizations.
- ▷ Chosen for the specialization of post-secondary interests and performances in our field (as a healthy and vibrant compliment to other organizations such as ACDA etc.)
- ▷ Looking for an alternative to ACDA that features collegiate issues and performances
- ▷ I greatly appreciate the focus of the group on higher education. I am still an ACDA member and enjoy it, but it is far less focused by design.
- ▷ Its emphasis on real scholarship, good quality choral music (unlike ACDA), and educating the next generation of singers, scholars and conductors
- ▷ While ACDA serves the choral community at large, NCCO focuses on issues relative to choral singing in higher education specifically. This is helpful to me as a higher education professional.
- ▷ ACDA has a wide reach, but this necessarily reduces the focus on issues specific to collegiate choral work.
- ▷ Unique niche in the professional choral sphere
- ▷ When NCCO was formed to provide a place for college conductors to focus on all aspects of our work, in contrast to ACDA, I chose to become a founding member.

- ▷ I work in higher ed and have never worked in public K–12 which seems to be the primary membership of ACDA

- ▷ I wanted another performing option for my choir in addition to ACDA

Important to me / preferred organization / Mission / Service (15 responses, 9.8%)

- ▷ Believe in the mission
- ▷ It seemed to support and address issues that are of importance to me.
- ▷ Resources, information most specific to my position.
- ▷ It is my preferred organization, gives me by far the best support and development of any service organization.
- ▷ It made sense, given my employment, and of course I really like the people that run the thing.
- ▷ The idea of a smaller, more integrated professional organization appealed to me.
- ▷ It's specificity to my field and my interests
- ▷ I believed strongly in the need for NCCO. I made certain that my school was a founding member, but I forgot to join at that time and joined right after.
- ▷ I love the organization.
- ▷ Colleagues and Mission
- ▷ To support NCCO as body of collegiate choruses
- ▷ Potential opportunities to serve my profession.
- ▷ Directly related to my areas of experience and interest
- ▷ Strong commitment to the profession, realistic vision for our profession

Conference (15 responses, 9.8%)

- ▷ Conference
- ▷ We run great conferences.
- ▷ Collegiality, resources, the conference
- ▷ Networking, resources, conference opportunities
- ▷ Conferences were so much better. Real in-depth sessions and nice long breaks to meet with others.
- ▷ I attended the first conference in San Antonio and was impressed with the size and the high quality of the performances and interest sessions.
- ▷ The conferences are extremely helpful to me.
- ▷ I've always loved the smaller atmosphere and performances.
- ▷ Interested in attending the conference
- ▷ The conferences are well run and feature excellently adjudicated performances and presentations.
- ▷ Conference attendance (first time joining), and continuing to be a member due to collegiate-specific topics, advocacy, curriculum development, programming, and scholarship.
- ▷ To attend a conference
- ▷ To attend the National Conference at LSU
- ▷ I wanted to attend the national conference in November 2019.
- ▷ Awesome conferences

Opportunities for Performance / Research / Scholarship (11 responses, 7.2%)

- ▷ Our support of scholarship and the creation of new information is really helpful to the profession.
- ▷ For additional opportunities to perform, share research, and learn.
- ▷ To continue to learn best practices for teaching at the collegiate level
- ▷ Conference attendance (first time joining), and continuing to be a member due to collegiate-specific topics, advocacy, curriculum development, programming, and scholarship.
- ▷ Access to The Choral Scholar
- ▷ Looking for a scholarly alternative to ACDA.
- ▷ Its emphasis on real scholarship, good quality choral music (unlike ACDA), and educating the next generation of singers, scholars and conductors
- ▷ While ACDA serves the choral community at large, NCCO focuses on issues relative to choral singing in higher education specifically. This is helpful to me as a higher education professional.
- ▷ Presentation opportunities, learning about new repertoire
- ▷ Scholarship and collegiate community
- ▷ I learned a lot from the publications...

Referral from a colleague or mentor (to responses, 6.5%)

- ▷ Joan Conlon told me to
- ▷ Encouragement by friend/colleague
- ▷ My former boss suggested I join.
- ▷ A colleague suggested it, and she is an excellent choral musician.
- ▷ Friends encouraged me. I did not join at the beginning because, when the organization was founded, my state rep did nothing. I did not hear about it until a week after the founding member cutoff appeared. I tried to join as a founding member but was turned off by the response.
- ▷ My mentor, Chet Alwes, was founding member, and he advised me to join when I became a collegiate choral director.
- ▷ Recommendation of a mentor
- ▷ recommended
- ▷ I was encouraged by another member to join.
- ▷ Encouragement from a colleague

Professional Development (8 responses, 5.2%)

- ▷ For additional opportunities to perform, share research, and learn.
- ▷ Professional connections and workshops
- ▷ New PD opportunities
- ▷ More specific development and collaboration with collegiate colleagues.
- ▷ Ongoing education and connection
- ▷ Access to resources to enhance my work.
- ▷ Professional development and networking
- ▷ I broke into the college teaching world, and I was looking for connections and resources.

Quality (6 responses, 3.9%)

- ▷ Quality music from qualified leadership
- ▷ Excellent collegiate choral ensembles and richly musical conductors
- ▷ Its emphasis on real scholarship, good quality choral music (unlike ACDA), and educating the next generation of singers, scholars and conductors
- ▷ To gain access to performance and scholarship consistently at the level of higher education.
- ▷ Quality performances of good choral literature.

Professional Expectation (6 responses, 3.9%)

- ▷ my profession expects it
- ▷ It was appropriate to my profession at the time
- ▷ Foundational organization for the profession
- ▷ It seemed as if I should give it a try at least once.
- ▷ All the cool kids were doing it!
- ▷ Many of my conductor friends are members

Joined as a student

- ▷ I joined when I as a Ph.D. student with the hopes of obtaining a college teaching position.
- ▷ I started my DMA program.

Outreach from Leadership

- ▷ I was asked to join the National Board.
- ▷ I was asked to represent the Central division

2020 – DEIA

- ▷ Interested in the conversations and paradigm shifting that NCCO is working to facilitate in choral music.
- ▷ I noticed that they have been doing important things.

2020 - COVID

- ▷ COVID environment support.

Curiosity

- ▷ To find out what it would be about and see what benefits it might hold for me, and to support a new organization of this kind.

Business Specific

- ▷ To support and reach my customers
- ▷ This is a great way for us to be involved with NCCO conference with sponsorship

Given An Attendance / Scholarship Opportunity

- ▷ To participate in scholarship opportunities



“What does NCCO provide for you uniquely that you do not receive from other membership or service organizations in our field?” (146 responses)

Higher Ed Focus (48 responses, 32.8%)

- ▷ Greater connections to information specific to Higher Ed. Colleagues that daily do the type of work I do and face the same challenges.
- ▷ The academic world is different from the other places we create choral music.
- ▷ Specific focus on collegiate choirs.
- ▷ NCCO is specific to higher ed.
- ▷ A perspective with a more narrow focus that is pertinent to what I do.
- ▷ Focus on topics specific to college
- ▷ Solely collegiate level choral offerings
- ▷ The intersection between choral music and collegiate teaching. Having a CMS for choral music is so important.
- ▷ It provided resources specific to teaching choral music at the university level
- ▷ Focus on collegiate choral music
- ▷ Focus on Collegiate choruses.
- ▷ Specific Higher Ed driven programs and offerings.
- ▷ An exclusive focus on collegiate choral music.
- ▷ specifically college material and resources, new colleagues
- ▷ Other organizations (ACDA, etc.) do a nice job! But, NCCO is focused for me and I didn't have to sift through information for things that interested me in NCCO.
- ▷ Narrowed focus on collegiate age
- ▷ Focus on interests of collegiate choral musicians
- ▷ A focus on higher education.
- ▷ Conferences and information that applies specifically to higher ed choral music teaching.
- ▷ Immersion in artistic/professional issues unique to higher education
- ▷ Contacts, information, resources most specific to choral music in higher education.
- ▷ It has more relevant discussions/resources to the college level than ACDA
- ▷ More topical information regarding the collegiate choral profession.
- ▷ Specifically designed for college choral. directors
- ▷ The perspective of exclusively higher education colleagues in choral music.
- ▷ Material, repertoire, ideas, colleagues more specific to higher education
- ▷ The collegiate/higher Ed choral experience.
- ▷ Addresses specific issues of higher ed choral
- ▷ specific focus on college/university-level work
- ▷ A smaller, clarified focus on choral music-making in higher education.
- ▷ college specific
- ▷ Probably a higher-ed-centered approach to PD
- ▷ Clear attention to the needs and artistry of the higher education community.
- ▷ ACDA is a bit too broad sometimes and NCCO is more college specific.
- ▷ Professional development relevant to higher education.
- ▷ Devoted attention to collegiate choral issues.

- ▷ A more focused lens on research, teaching, and performance in the collegiate choral area
- ▷ Because NCCO is focused on college groups exclusively, I can attend a conference and only hear groups that are germane for my work with college students.
- ▷ Other organizations, while useful, are not as focused.
- ▷ Resources specifically for college
- ▷ A membership which appears to be more targeted to the teaching and conducting I currently do.
- ▷ A convention specifically tailored to my position.
- ▷ Particular emphasis on working with college students and within a college/university setting
- ▷ NCCO fills a need for tools, resources, and networking specific to collegiate-level choral experiences. If not for NCCO, many would search within larger organizations such as ACDA for these and would come up short in comparison.
- ▷ Higher education topics; other organizations have multiple foci so this organization provides more quantity of info that directly applies to my work
- ▷ I appreciate the focus on collegiate choral directors that is not always part of ACDA and other organizations.
- ▷ Information and networking specifically for collegiate directors
- ▷ Specific information related to collegiate work and professional work.

Repertoire / Resources / Research / Quality / Interest of Programming (23 responses, 15.8%)

- ▷ A greater quantity of repertoire applicable to my situation
- ▷ tremendously helpful for repertoire, research, and collegial networking
- ▷ Interesting sessions and a higher level of repertoire performed at conferences.
- ▷ high quality choral performances of interesting and occasionally ground-breaking repertoire
- ▷ A chance to hear interesting programs and to interact with peers
- ▷ A community more interested in exploring challenging music.
- ▷ Materials and techniques that add to my knowledge base.
- ▷ Deep content
- ▷ In the past, scholarly articles and performances
- ▷ higher quality performances of good repertoire
- ▷ More sessions devoted to my specialty
- ▷ High quality adult choruses of every kind
- ▷ Conference presentations are of a high quality
- ▷ scholarly articles
- ▷ Peer-reviewed publications, focus on college choral music teaching
- ▷ repertoire
- ▷ Focused access to academics
- ▷ Broader, more relevant repertoire selection in conference performances, interest sessions and panels that specifically relate to higher ed issues
- ▷ Variety of programming in invited conference performances
- ▷ Similarly, the concerts at conferences are essentially all pertinent to my work
- ▷ Primarily the quality of presentations, but also the quality of performances, as well as the diversity of choral sounds.
- ▷ Genre specific concerts, articles, and topics - the pulse of collegiate choral music in the USA.

Networking / Community (17 responses, 11.6%)

- ▷ network specific to collegiate choral conducting
- ▷ a greater number of close colleagues to interact with in person at conferences
- ▷ NCCO provides a broader collection of community college members.
- ▷ An opportunity to give back and mingle with young singers and the industry
- ▷ I very much enjoyed the networking opportunities at the conferences.
- ▷ Collegiality
- ▷ More consistent connections with others in higher ed.
- ▷ Opportunities to exchange ideas with college and university peers
- ▷ I enjoy networking at conferences.
- ▷ The ability to easily network with colleagues in higher education
- ▷ A smaller community to connect with
- ▷ Education and collegiate friends
- ▷ Access to scholarly and artistic dialogue at a high level
- ▷ connection with colleagues in higher ed
- ▷ sense of intimacy from being a smaller organization
- ▷ when I had the pleasure of presenting a brief lecture at the 2017 national conference, it was one of the smartest audiences I had ever had the pleasure of speaking to regarding my re-

search. Moments like that make you raise your level.

Conference (14 responses, 9.6%)

- ▷ Affordable conference
- ▷ a greater number of close colleagues to interact with in person at conferences
- ▷ I very much enjoyed the networking opportunities at the conferences.
- ▷ When I was employed as a full-time choir director in higher education, I felt that the NCCO conferences were designed to inspire and support my career as a collegiate choir conductor.
- ▷ conferences focused completely on my field
- ▷ Conferences solely dedicated to collegiate choral affairs.
- ▷ NCCO conference
- ▷ Targeted, focused conferences and another option for research/scholarly activity
- ▷ Specific group of collegiate choral conductor/educators who share similar circumstances and needs
- ▷ smaller conferences with the chance to really get to know colleagues
- ▷ More interesting conferences than ACDA.
- ▷ Resources and conferences that are tailored specifically to college/university choral faculty
- ▷ NCCO provides collegiality through shared conference experiences that is unique to the choral organizations I belong to.
- ▷ Conference, repertoire, research, chance to meet and interact with fellow people in similar jobs, professional development opportunities tailored to collegiate teaching
- ▷ The smaller size of the conference attendance is also a plus.

Not sure / None (12 responses, 8.2%)

- ▷ Not sure.
- ▷ That's an excellent question. I am not sure I know yet.
- ▷ Not sure.
- ▷ I'm not quite sure how it's different from something like ACDA. I know it's supposed to serve conductor's on higher education.
- ▷ This is hard to answer as personal circumstances have kept me from a full engagement in events, but repertoire and pedagogy are major concerns.
- ▷ Good question. I didn't join the first year because I was an officer in ACDA and saw it as more of the same. I joined later when I saw its potential to go beyond ACDA for our profession.
- ▷ I have not been able to figure this out yet
- ▷ I haven't been a member for a few years so I can't really say.
- ▷ Nothing
- ▷ To be honest, I was not able to discern any advantage at the time.
- ▷ Because I can't attend conferences, unfortunately very little, although I'm aware it benefits my colleagues.
- ▷ I don't know that it does, which is probably why my membership has lapsed.

Opportunity for Performance / Presentation / Research (8 responses, 5.5%)

- ▷ more accessibility to present and conduct my choirs at a national convention
- ▷ A vehicle for scholarly presentations
- ▷ A chance to perform
- ▷ Additional performing opportunities
- ▷ Access for college choirs.
- ▷ Targeted, focused conferences and another option for research/scholarly activity
- ▷ Research opportunities, collegiate-specific performing opportunities
- ▷ More opportunities to share research.

Advocacy (3 responses, 2%)

- ▷ Advocacy for the needs of university students like my own.
- ▷ I hope it can provide a unique dialogue in terms of the challenges collegiate educators face on a regular basis.
- ▷ An opportunity to collaborate with higher ed colleagues, addressing issues which affect my program and our profession

Opportunity for Service (3 responses, 2%)

- ▷ board membership, editorial membership, task-force opportunities.
- ▷ I also just enjoy the members very much and enjoy editing for The Scholar

- ▷ My support is genuinely appreciated by those who know of it and understand (hello board+) and are working hard to advance NCCO.

DEIA (2 responses, 1.4%)

- ▷ Authentic attention to decentering whiteness in the choral field, instead of mere lip service.
- ▷ Offerings are more specific to collegiate teaching, curriculum, innovation, and research than

- other organizations. The community is also an important component, especially as NCCO has aimed to be more broadly inclusive in gatherings, conference offerings, etc.

Professional Support / Tenure and Promotion (2 responses, 1.4%)

- ▷ guidance in the tenure and promotion process

- ▷ I especially appreciate the position papers (i.e. tenure guidelines, etc.).

Other

- ▷ National leadership that doesn't showboat like Tim Sharp.

- ▷ The academic world is different from the other places we create choral music.

Same as previous answer (why I joined is what you offer uniquely) (9 responses)

- ▷ See above (6 respondents)
- ▷ Previous answer (2 respondents)

- ▷ Please see above.



What could we do to ensure that you continue to renew your membership in the National Collegiate Choral Organization? (129 responses)

Communication / Reminders (17 responses, 13.2%)

- ▷ send a reminder email and a flyer of events for the following year.
- ▷ Way back the Executive Board Secretary used to send a reminder and that really helped keep me on track because even though I marked I am a regular member, which I think is true, it's possible my membership has lapsed! I do make sure it's current for every conference cycle at the very least though since I missed the last one I could be unintentionally non-compliant now that I think about it.
- ▷ Keep me posted on activities
- ▷ Send reminders. :)
- ▷ Reminders to renew my membership.
- ▷ Remind me when it's due.
- ▷ Send me an email to let me know it has expired. I didn't realize it had.
- ▷ Reminders when my membership lapses!

- ▷ Remind me when my registration is due.
- ▷ keep in touch with a monthly newsletter email reminders! :-)
- ▷ Keep nagging me with emails! :)
- ▷ Gentle reminders, simple (at-the-moment) payment options.
- ▷ send reminder to renew when membership lapses
- ▷ Remind me when "retired" membership is due, and the cost.
- ▷ Continue to improve communication.
- ▷ You might already send these, but I need reminders.

Focus on DEIA (16 responses, 12.4%)

- ▷ Provide for research in anti-colonizing choral practice.
- ▷ Keep addressing topics of interest and concern in our field in a timely and continuous manner.
- ▷ I think the organization is too narrowly focused on the larger institutions of higher learning and promoting one type of literature to be performed as evidenced by their requirements when submitting applications to perform at the biennial conferences.
- ▷ Relevancy. Create value in all types of collegiate singing, not just the "best"
- ▷ I would enjoy if interest sessions at conferences were more diverse topically. Occasionally, I have felt a little "echo-chamber" at our events. I love that we seem to have a broad diversity of performing ensembles from around the nation. Thanks for that!
- ▷ Continue what you are doing, as well as educating us to look at truly understand all people. We need to better understand each others backgrounds, challenges and beliefs.
- ▷ Make sure choirs from all levels and types of colleges and universities are represented at conference performances. Continue the excellent work toward racial and ethnic equity
- ▷ Move the needle toward equity in ways that ACDA, for example, is not.
- ▷ Provide an inroad and delightful feature for ***innovative approaches*** to what are generally featured at convention performances. Specifically, NCCO is Eurocentric, with choral tone biases for Eurocentric tone production even when singing non-European music. (There is widespread othering of Jazz, Gospel, Pop, Black Church music, and Musical Theatre.)
- ▷ Also, more support for women in higher ed DCA positions.
- ▷ Continue the professional offerings open to NCCO members-only, whether on virtual or in-person platforms. (e.g. DEI opportunities last summer were outstanding).
- ▷ Work harder to get rid of the elitist, rule-dominated image.
- ▷ Increase representation from treble voice choirs and from high-quality second and third tier choirs. While excellent performances by the top choirs in the country are inspiring and enjoyable, hearing more examples of high-quality non-major choirs and non-auditioned choirs would be invaluable. Continue to focus on diversification of repertoire by prioritizing composers from underrepresented populations.
- ▷ I will always be a member of NCCO and I believe others will continue to join if the Guiding Principles from the Anti-Racism Summit are pursued purposefully.
- ▷ Provide inclusive, relevant content
- ▷ I work at a Community College. 2-year schools don't really fit any existing choral resource org. mold. I would like to see NCCO devote some attention to 2-year schools.

Keep doing what you're doing (general) (14 responses, 10.9%)

- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing.
- ▷ Keep it up
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing.
- ▷ Nothing new, really.
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing with the energy and human resources available to you.
- ▷ I like what you are currently doing!
- ▷ Keep doing what you are doing! Bravi!!
- ▷ Continue what you are currently doing.
- ▷ I'm satisfied with what you are currently doing.
- ▷ no suggestions
- ▷ Keep up the great work.
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing
- ▷ Keep doing the work you are doing.
- ▷ I love what NCCO offers.

Keep doing what you're doing (Specific) (12 responses, 9.3%)

- ▷ Continue to focus on artistry and education issues specific to collegiate singers, while addressing the issues of our time.
- ▷ Continue providing professional development for choral conductors.
- ▷ Continue to provide content/events that cater to advanced choral professionals.
- ▷ Continue to perform the canon of repertoire, do an occasional major work.
- ▷ Continue to offer unique and relevant resources.
- ▷ Continue to provide webinars or online resources
- ▷ Continue the thoughtful initiatives
- ▷ Continue your attention to scholarship and the most advanced and innovative directions in the choral art

- ▷ Continue to provide leadership for specifically collegiate choral directors
- ▷ Continue offering a convention.
- ▷ Keep up the good work and the commitment to moving the profession forward to meet the

New Modalities for Engagement (9 responses, 7.0%)

- ▷ Consider virtual alternatives for special sessions.
- ▷ Continue to look for ways to engage the membership outside of the conference.
- ▷ Offer useful methods to reach your members like banner ads / text in broadcast emails, or other creative ways where you know members are looking at what you offer. I doubt that the web site traffic is high, or expansive across your membership.
- ▷ Help me figure out how to engage practically with the organization

Cost / Affordability / Access (8 responses, 6.2%)

- ▷ Cut the skyrocketing cost of travel and hotel.
- ▷ My membership has lapsed because I am only teaching as an Adjunct at the college level right now. Without institutional support, I wasn't able to attend the last two conferences and so my membership has lapsed.
- ▷ Keep membership fees the same.
- ▷ reduce membership fees
- ▷ Lower retired rate for membership and conferences

Affirmative: I will renew (9 responses, 7.0%)

- ▷ I will renew
- ▷ No need - I think it's important and will.
- ▷ Nothing. I'm in.
- ▷ I will renew
- ▷ As long as I am able, I will be a member.
- ▷ Nothing. I always renew when reminded!
- ▷ no worries. I will.

Musical Quality / Excellence (6 responses, 4.7%)

- ▷ Maintain the focus on quality craft, both composition and performance
- ▷ Stay out of politics and stick with music. The music is the driving force.
- ▷ Better quality programming and presenting works that many of us have no other opportunity to hear (its sliding toward ACDA)&more scholarly interest sessions (same)

needs of college/university conductors and their students.

- ▷ Continue what you have been doing while also being mindful of any new needs that may be helpful to your constituency

- ▷ Provide support services.
- ▷ Could there be a compelling event in the off-years from the conference?
- ▷ Be more proactive with innovative topics, conversations, support in the field, etc.
- ▷ Improve the website. Solicit and post more material and performances
- ▷ Engage more frequently than the national conference, which seems to be the prompt for paying dues.

- ▷ Offer a category for retired/semi-retired individuals
- ▷ Reduce the price of conference attendance.
- ▷ Keeping it as affordable as possible, honestly. My institution requires memberships in professional groups but won't cover the costs for any of them. In addition, I teach a lot of applied voice in addition to my conducting which means that in addition to ACDA and NCCO, I am also expected to be a member of NATS and at times MTNA and NAFME.

- ▷ No worries, I will renew! :)
- ▷ You can count on me to remain a member. I am increasingly disillusioned with ACDA at the state, regional, and national levels (yes, all of them), and NCCO is the professional organization from which I gain the most benefit and which I enjoy the most.

- ▷ Remain focused on issues related to choral music and choral conducting in higher education. I feel that the organization in recent years has pivoted away from these core principles, and instead chosen to emphasize social/racial/gender issues. These issues are certainly relevant to choral music, but they should not be the primary focus.
- ▷ Continue excellence
- ▷ Repertoire

Not sure (6 responses, 4.7%)

- ▷ Not sure... I'm retired. I have enjoyed concerts and interest sessions very much.
- ▷ Unclear
- ▷ Probably nothing
- ▷ I'm not sure anything an organization can do to ensure my membership. That is my choice to continue or not.
- ▷ Not sure at this point.
- ▷ I would have to see something it provides that other organizations do not.

Conferences (4 responses, 3.1%)

- ▷ The conference comes at the time of our annual Choral Festival so it is often impossible to attend.
- ▷ Relevant PD opportunities/conferences
- ▷ I would renew it if I were able to attend more of the conferences
- ▷ Depends on the appeal and feasibility of attending the conferences.

Students

- ▷ Look for ways to involve and mentor college students.
- ▷ Maybe info as to why my students should be involved.

Other

- ▷ I'm not a member only because I currently do not work in higher education. I will definitely join if that changes later on.
- ▷ I am an honorary life member. I would however always renew my membership if I had to pay a regular membership.



What benefits do you receive or have you received by attending our conferences? (121 responses)

Networking / connecting / relationship (61 responses, 50.4%)

- ▷ Wonderful education, friendships across the college choir community
- ▷ I also got to connect with more conductors.
- ▷ connecting with colleagues
- ▷ Meet new colleagues
- ▷ Networking, specifically with collegiate conductors. It is much less overwhelming than a national ACDA conference.
- ▷ networking opportunities
- ▷ connecting with colleagues...
- ▷ networking
- ▷ Opportunity to connect and re-connect with colleagues across the country
- ▷ time to network with other collegiate conductors,
- ▷ Important interaction with colleagues and collegiate ensembles
- ▷ Networking, friendship
- ▷ relationship building
- ▷ Seeing and networking with colleagues.
- ▷ networking opportunities
- ▷ getting a chance to visit with other collegiate conductors.
- ▷ meeting new people
- ▷ Speaking with colleagues in our profession
- ▷ Learning, interaction with others
- ▷ I also got to meet and interact with other collegiate choral directors.
- ▷ Networking
- ▷ Networking
- ▷ chances to meet composers
- ▷ seeing old friends
- ▷ Networking opportunities
- ▷ They are great opportunities to renew friendships
- ▷ New contacts, good info, shared time with valued colleagues
- ▷ and the time to connect with colleagues
- ▷ Direct interaction with peers.

- ▷ Close contact with friends and exchanging new ideas with professionals! I love NCCO!
- ▷ Troubleshooting and surveying ideas with colleagues.
- ▷ Exposure to unique and high quality compositions and the highest quality of performance artistry
- ▷ professional development, networking; listening to and reflecting on the beauty of choral music
- ▷ seeing colleagues, hearing under-performed works, excellent choirs, learning from thought-provoking scholars
- ▷ connections and knowledge
- ▷ I enjoy networking and the relevant interest sessions. Also, hearing great choirs of diverse backgrounds.
- ▷ Excellent discussion and ideas to bring back to my campus.
- ▷ Seeing old friends
- ▷ Seeing colleagues I trust and admire.
- ▷ Great networking opportunities.
- ▷ Networking, concerts, new publications, socializing with friends and colleagues
- ▷ camaraderie
- ▷ Collegial conversations
- ▷ informal conversations with colleagues
- ▷ networking
- ▷ Networking and hearing outstanding collegiate choruses
- ▷ The opportunity to meet and collaborate with other women in the field of choral music in higher education
- ▷ I value the shared conference experiences with my colleagues above all.
- ▷ Seeing what is happening at other colleges/universities, repertoire and programming ideas, networking
- ▷ I have enjoyed the sessions, concerts, and networking opportunities
- ▷ Stronger relations with other College/University conductors.
- ▷ Education and collegiate friends
- ▷ Information, inspiration and networking
- ▷ Hanging out with friends.
- ▷ networking and socializing with colleagues
- ▷ Social/Networking
- ▷ reconnecting with colleagues
- ▷ Networking; elevated music performances; choral materials; etc.
- ▷ Concert groups usually present solid repertoire but also the opportunity to socialize meaningfully and actually meet new colleagues and steal their good ideas.
- ▷ Professional development, collegiality, engaging with relevant contemporary issues.
- ▷ Networking was good.
- ▷ Rep. ideas, networking, hearing high level performances.
- ▷ Networking and resources (repertoire) and ideas.

Quality of Programming: Performances / sessions / clinicians (35 responses, 28.9%)

- ▷ Great performances, great repertoire, great clinics-lectures.
- ▷ Interest sessions were amazing!
- ▷ Love hearing the concerts
- ▷ Excellent concerts, some excellent presentations
- ▷ Choral performances
- ▷ Outstanding concerts, seeing new venues, interest sessions geared toward the collegiate conductor
- ▷ I enjoy conferences as a chance to "clean my ears" and to experience new ideas, pedagogy, and performances.
- ▷ Hearing world class choral singing in live performances
- ▷ fine performances
- ▷ hearing the performances and the sessions
- ▷ I heard life-changing concerts. No worries in terms of the conferences.
- ▷ The interest sessions were particularly interesting and useful for me.
- ▷ Inspiration through excellent performance & thoughtful sessions
- ▷ Hearing great choirs,
- ▷ Some great sessions, such as those focusing on specific types of repertoire.
- ▷ Great sessions and performances.
- ▷ The first class performances, wonderful presentations
- ▷ Exposure to unique and high quality compositions and the highest quality of performance artistry
- ▷ professional development, networking; listening to and reflecting on the beauty of choral music
- ▷ seeing colleagues, hearing under-performed works, excellent choirs, learning from thought-provoking scholars
- ▷ Excellent performances and interest sessions.

- ▷ Exposure to top tier performances, repertoire, and conducting.
- ▷ I enjoy networking and the relevant interest sessions. Also, hearing great choirs of diverse backgrounds.
- ▷ exceptional choirs; rich choral offerings
- ▷ Great interest sessions.
- ▷ Excellent concerts. Interesting presentations
- ▷ Networking, concerts, new publications, socializing with friends and colleagues
- ▷ excellent concerts
- ▷ Conference presentations have been excellent - although performance facilities were less so.
- ▷ good interest sessions
- ▷ Networking and hearing outstanding collegiate choruses
- ▷ I have enjoyed the sessions, concerts, and networking opportunities
- ▷ Performances, panel discussions, interest sessions
- ▷ transcendent concert experiences
- ▷ Networking; elevated music performances; choral materials; etc.
- ▷ Concert groups usually present solid repertoire but also the opportunity to socialize meaningfully and actually meet new colleagues and steal their good ideas.
- ▷ I thought the interest sessions were very informative.
- ▷ Rep. ideas, networking, hearing high level performances.

Repertoire / resources / current trends (33 responses, 27.3%)

- ▷ repertoire ideas
- ▷ exposure to new repertoire--including new ethnic music (newly composed and older, unknown music.)
- ▷ Access to current trends and research
- ▷ hearing new or new-to-me repertoire
- ▷ hearing and learning new repertoire
- ▷ I enjoy conferences as a chance to "clean my ears" and to experience new ideas, pedagogy, and performances.
- ▷ Excellent resources
- ▷ getting repertoire ideas
- ▷ creative stimulation, knowledge for field
- ▷ Repertoire, sessions more directly related to my daily work than other conferences, ideas from mixers and conversations
- ▷ Repertoire, programming, scheduling, structuring, curriculum ideas.
- ▷ Some great sessions, such as those focusing on specific types of repertoire.
- ▷ Opportunity to hear stimulating music and thinking
- ▷ New literature to perform, new techniques to deploy.
- ▷ Deep and highly relevant content.
- ▷ Exposure to unique and high quality compositions and the highest quality of performance artistry
- ▷ professional development, networking; listening to and reflecting on the beauty of choral music
- ▷ seeing colleagues, hearing under-performed works, excellent choirs, learning from thought-provoking scholars
- ▷ learning new repertoire, learning new things in interest session
- ▷ Discovering cool new rep during performances (usually.)
- ▷ Networking, concerts, new publications, socializing with friends and colleagues
- ▷ rep and programming ideas
- ▷ exposure to repertoire that would normally not be performed on an ACDA convention.
- ▷ Repertoire
- ▷ repertoire/programming ideas, information on current trends/needs, etc.
- ▷ Seeing what is happening at other colleges/universities, repertoire and programming ideas, networking
- ▷ New ideas for programing
- ▷ Information, inspiration and networking
- ▷ repertoire
- ▷ professional development through the sessions, repertoire through the concerts
- ▷ Learning new repertoire
- ▷ 1) Receiving results of research and 2) hearing repertoire from the canon.
- ▷ Professional development, collegiality, engaging with relevant contemporary issues.
- ▷ Rep. ideas, networking, hearing high level performances.
- ▷ Networking and resources (repertoire) and ideas.

Inspiration (10 responses, 8.3%)

- ▷ Inspiration
- ▷ Inspiration, support from friends and colleagues,
- ▷ Being fed musically
- ▷ Inspiration
- ▷ I thought the conferences were amazing. I shook hands with conductors and composers I had only studied or heard about.
- ▷ very inspiring
- ▷ More than words can say.
- ▷ Collegiality, emotional / spiritual renewal
- ▷ Inspiration. Excellent performances and interest sessions.
- ▷ Information, inspiration and networking

Not able to attend (7 responses, 5.8%)

- ▷ The conferences unfortunately coincided with my Fall touring dates so was never able to attend.
- ▷ I have only attended the first conference and have wanted to attend every year after and have not been able to work it into my schedule. I usually have an all-state or honor choir conflict.
- ▷ I just don't have bandwidth now with my current job.
- ▷ I enjoyed my experience at the 2nd National Conference but have not attended since for reasons mentioned earlier.
- ▷ I would like to attend, but just have not had the flexibility yet.
- ▷ As mentioned above, I haven't yet been able to attend a conference, but this may change soon (post-pandemic).
- ▷ I have never been able to attend because of scheduling conflicts.

Size / Focus / Time / Schedule (6 responses, 5.0%)

- ▷ Intimacy, more scholarly focus
- ▷ Also, easier to meet people in our field of collegiate choral music than at ACDA
- ▷ More focused interest sessions and topical performances.
- ▷ The time to connect with colleagues
- ▷ relaxed schedule and opportunity to spend time with friends and colleagues.
- ▷ A chance to focus on the topic most important to me.

Opportunity for performance / presentation (6 responses, 5.0%)

- ▷ performing opportunity
- ▷ performing
- ▷ Presenter
- ▷ In 2019, a performing opportunity for my choir.
- ▷ The conference I attended was specific to my arrangement being included in NCCO's Publishing Series.
- ▷ I was asked to organize and moderate a panel for the Baton Rouge conference which was a wonderful experience.

N/A

- ▷ n/a (3)

Other

- ▷ Though it is a component of the early mandate of the organization, I think it is less important as a vehicle for early-career professional advancement, given that there are now so many other avenues for this in the digital world as compared to 15 years ago.
- ▷ My college served as a stopping point for a featured choral ensemble -- a nice collaboration!
- ▷ I am a fan of ACDA as well though it's such a massive event it's difficult to meet new people in an authentic way. I do notice cliques developing, usually related to where we all went to graduate school, so it would be nice to keep "mixing" it up as much as possible at large-scale social events. Now, more than ever, we need opportunities for human connection.
- ▷ Engagement with my customers and support of their goals. PS I can't remember all the early conferences I may have attended (there are more).

In your perception, could you please describe the average NCCO conference attendee? (113 responses)

Matter-of-fact definitions (35 respondents, 31.0%)

- ▷ Collegiate choral director, 35-65 years.
- ▷ Collegiate choral professional
- ▷ Committed to higher ed.
- ▷ College choral director
- ▷ Choral conductor in higher education
- ▷ ...Higher ed choral conductor?
- ▷ Collegiate professors and their students
- ▷ College choral musicians
- ▷ Director or Associate Directors of Choral Music
- ▷ college chorus director
- ▷ Collegiate choral musicians.
- ▷ ? College choral directors.
- ▷ Active college/university choral professor.
- ▷ College or university conductor
- ▷ Mostly college and university faculty and some graduate students
- ▷ College/University Choral director.
- ▷ Collegiate-minded student or disciple of higher education
- ▷ This might be unfair, but "collegiate choir director" seems pretty accurate...it seems to skew older (50s - 60s), but my sample size of attended events is small.
- ▷ collegiate...
- ▷ A collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ high education employee
- ▷ Collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ College professor
- ▷ ? A college/university choral conductor.
- ▷ Collegiate Choral Directors
- ▷ College professor or graduate students.
- ▷ Someone teaching in community college, college, or university
- ▷ full-time college/university choral faculty
- ▷ college or university professor
- ▷ I really don't know how to answer that question, other than "someone who is involved with choral music in some way at the higher ed level"
- ▷ A collegiate choral director
- ▷ Collegiate professionals.
- ▷ Collegiate professor
- ▷ Collegiate conductors and grad students.
- ▷ Collegiate choral conductors and graduate students

Positive / Specific Ideas / Philosophies (16 responses, 14.2%)

- ▷ Looking for camaraderie with fellow singers and great educational aspects
- ▷ College choral faculty hoping to learn something and also see how their own program stacks up with the national trends.
- ▷ Average NCCO member interested in learning more about and performing the great variety of repertoire. Concerned about quality of service offered to members
- ▷ smart, educated passionate
- ▷ Not well. Probably professionally rooted in choral higher education and affiliate organizations.
- ▷ A dedicated, ambitious choral professional.
- ▷ A person involved in academia, very interested in furthering their knowledge of the choral world.
- ▷ Educated, attentive listener.
- ▷ college/university choir directors who take their work and their profession seriously
- ▷ Not average! Committed and serious representatives of a broad spectrum from the collegiate choral scene.
- ▷ Person interested in the furtherance of the choral art
- ▷ Someone actively involved in their own position, whether it be as a conductor, scholar, or composer
- ▷ Dedicated, kind, intelligent, musical
- ▷ Colleagues who are interested in delving deeply into any given subject, whether it be systemic racism, conducting techniques, serving more than just white choirs, hearing Bach and Brahms. I think we can do both.
- ▷ Fantastic

Negative / Narrow / Elitist perception (14 responses, 12.4%)

- ▷ Snobby
- ▷ Interested in older, complex repertoire and elite choirs

- ▷ Northeastern, small private school choral directors
- ▷ Tenure-track collegiate choral professors.
- ▷ Conductors leading conducting graduate programs.
- ▷ They tend to gear more on the young professional side, and those employed by tier 1 institutions rather than the diversity of collegiate institutions in the US.
- ▷ Collegiate professors primarily from large collegiate institutions
- ▷ Collegiate Choral elites - Small group of cliquish conductors
- ▷ Like an ACDA conference, but only for college groups.
- ▷ I've never attended so I am only projecting here. Perhaps it is because I assume it is not for directors who have small or different / innovative programs. It seems to be about big schools, traditional programs, high profile work. In addition to my choral-orchestral work, I also have jazz and pop choirs. I find that many collegiate directors do not seem to value this work as much as they do classical, and not many convention topics address these.
- ▷ White, male, from affluent schools with large, competitive programs
- ▷ Upper echelon College/University professor
- ▷ University choral director and keener graduate students
- ▷ Outstanding college choral directors

White / Male (11 responses, 9.7%)

- ▷ White, male, mid-career or later, at a well-funded institution with a well-funded program
- ▷ White and male
- ▷ white college professor, mostly men
- ▷ Middle-aged white man with an academic job
- ▷ White, male, older collegiate choral conductor
- ▷ lots of white males....
- ▷ A white male in his 40s :). Seriously though, I look around and *really wonder* why there are so few women and people of color. It's probably a normal indicator of our field but it seems so stark at the conference! Are we sure that the conference is representative of the membership? That's something I would like to know, just to be sure that there aren't specific hurdles that are preventing our membership from attending (cost, time of year, etc.)?
- ▷ White, male, from affluent schools with large, competitive programs
- ▷ The average NCCO attendee is a white male and this needs to be changed.
- ▷ It's an increasingly diverse membership, but the old white guys certainly do still act as though they're the core group and the ones in charge. :)
- ▷ Privileged, white, male

Younger (10 respondents, 8.8%)

- ▷ Young-ish, excellent musician, hungry, tomorrow's choral leaders
- ▷ The up and comers. More on the edges of philosophy spirituality and life style
- ▷ Young collegiate conductor and/or graduate student in choral music
- ▷ predominately the younger Collegiate Choral directors. 30--50
- ▷ They tend to gear more on the young professional side, and those employed by tier 1 institutions rather than the diversity of collegiate institutions in the US.
- ▷ A young collegiate conductor
- ▷ I thought the average age was young
- ▷ Collegiate choral professional, trending young/early career.
- ▷ Often rather young, many middle aged, some oldies like me
- ▷ A college professor in choral music. Multi generational (but younger than those at ACDA).
- ▷ A college or university instructor/professor. It is a wonderful cross section of incredibly accomplished conductors and younger professionals in the field.

More inclusive (7 responses, 6.2%)

- ▷ Generally 30ish to 80ish American collegiate choral director/conductors of various gender and ethnic identities
- ▷ Mostly collegiate choral directors, many students, retired conductors, composers, and exhibitors
- ▷ Tricky question: they come in categories, right? There is no monolithic, average attendee. You

have the graduate students, eager and cerebral and analytical. You have the early and mid-career collegiate folks who are building portfolios, networking and looking for a niche, and then you have the late career or retired folks who attend for a wide variety of reasons, whether social or musical or educational. They all strike me as having different needs.

- ▷ All different and that's a good thing.

N/A

- ▷ n/a
- ▷ N/A

Not sure

- ▷ Not sure
- ▷ I have insufficient basis
- ▷ Not sure how to answer this
- ▷ I'm afraid I can't remember.

Prefer not to answer

- ▷ Prefer not to answer

- ▷ 35-55 year old white male and female college/university professors and a good dose of students and sponsors.
- ▷ Choral directors from all levels of colleges/universities who have aged well beyond their years due to overwork.
- ▷ A college or university instructor/professor. It is a wonderful cross section of incredibly accomplished conductors and younger professionals in the field.

- ▷ No opinion
- ▷ NA

- ▷ i have only been to one and it was long ago, so I'm not sure my perception is well remembered or formed.



What could we do to improve our conferences? (95 responses)

Inclusivity / Diversity / Access: Representation & Attendance (21 responses, 22.1%)

- ▷ Because most meals are on one's own, it could be good for those involved in leadership to reach out directly to newer members to invite them to join a group informally.
- ▷ Become even more welcoming. Occasionally I sense a bit a scholar aloofness. A defensiveness about the profession
- ▷ Share the governance of NCCO by diversifying the members chosen to serve on conference selection committees and this will lead to improved conference activities for all.
- ▷ Reaching out to a great variety of college/university choral colleagues, building more mentorship and sharing opportunities (especially in small groups).
- ▷ Increase representation from treble voice choirs and from high-quality second and third tier choirs. While excellent performances by the top choirs in the country are inspiring and enjoyable, hearing more examples of high-quality non-major choirs and unauditioned choirs would be invaluable.
- ▷ Increase attendance. Not sure why still lots of people don't attend.
- ▷ Make them less elitist and more representative of the wider variety of choral issues that are faced at all levels of collegiate choral instruction.
- ▷ more diversity, more performances or workshops with learning choirs, not just the most highly qualified, demonstration repertoire accessible for more levels of chorus
- ▷ Performing groups are too lofty for most of us to replicate in our choirs
- ▷ I don't see many conductors like me (working at a purely undergraduate university or community college) at the conferences. Interest sessions (and performances) rarely seem designed for us.

- ▷ Broaden the types of institutions invited to perform and the repertoire considered for performance.
- ▷ Include choirs as performers who don't come from large university programs with schools of music or performance degrees
- ▷ Be deliberately more inclusive
- ▷ Diversity.
- ▷ If we all really want to make change, we have to go at the roots of issues. It's not enough to encourage people or groups of color to attend or get involved in the moment... it's about subverting the current trends that make it harder for those groups to be in the field. What if NCCO offered free membership and resources to high school choristers if they are interested in going into higher education? What if NCCO reached out to community and rural colleges with extra perks for their students and teachers? What if NCCO ambassadors went to underserved rural and urban elementary and middle schools and got kids excited about becoming a music director? *These* are ways to bring about long-term, systemic change.
- ▷ Please keep cost down for the attendees, and mindfully consider destination in terms of appeal but also travel expenses, as fewer institutions are supporting attending as opposed to presenting. There's been a lot of sponsorship money coming in and I know it really helps with the overall picture. I will admit I do prefer warmer climate locations if possible!
- ▷ Lower registration fees (my college provides only \$600 a year for professional development).
- ▷ I really appreciate the work and time that goes into creating these conferences. In many ways, I think they are excellent. That said, I have found the panel discussions to not be very diverse. I think the panel presentations are well thought out and important topics. But in 2017 for example, there was a panel regarding voice

teachers and conductors. The two conductors on the panel were both excellent in Brett Scott and Bill Weinert. I have high regard for both. However, by representing CCM and Eastman how many "rank and file" NCCO members can relate to such situations? Similarly, at the same conference, there was a noble session regarding gender identity. As I'm sure most have, I have trans students in my single gender ensembles. The panel was by all means worthy. However, they were essentially with in the same age range, all served private institutions, and all from the Northeast. This narrowed the understanding of what someone in Oklahoma might be experiencing, for example. My experiences are however limited to 2017 as it was the first conference I could attend. My institution will only pay for travel if we are presenting which makes it more difficult to attend as many conferences as I would prefer.

- ▷ Need more practical interest sessions too. Not all of us teach at a huge R1 with 500 music majors or more
- ▷ Keep them small, keep the cost down as much as possible, and consider ways to offer assistance to members who have little funding for travel at their institutions. small liberal arts colleges are struggling. It's often the case that I have to choose between ACDA and NCCO because I can't afford both.
- ▷ Continued work in BIPOC/LGBTQIA+ representation in sessions, visibility and outreach with HBCU and Tribal Colleges, sessions and community building activities for Two-Year and SLAC/LAC colleagues, opportunities for BIPOC mentorship for untenured, junior, and graduate students in navigating academia as a choral scholar
- ▷ Broader representation of collegiate choral singing

Positive (18 responses, 18.9%)

- ▷ It was amazing!
- ▷ Just keep doing what you're doing. The new officers help bring new perspectives.
- ▷ I have certainly enjoyed the many conferences I've attended. The two conferences that I missed were because of financial reasons and because I wasn't working at a college or university that could help pay for the conference.
- ▷ I have enjoyed each of the conferences I have attended. One thing I like about NCCO is that

the presenters aren't trying to reinvent the wheel or "instruct" the others. In my experience, it has been a nice exchange of ideas.

- ▷ I loved the first conference, the size, the performances and sessions. They were all excellent.
- ▷ Can't think of a thing
- ▷ No comment. I really thought the ones I attended were great.
- ▷ The one I attended was fine
- ▷ Nothing comes to mind.

- ▷ Not sure - I really enjoyed the two that I attended.
- ▷ The Charleston conference was excellent. Performance venues were well chosen, convenient, and set in an interesting city. Interest sessions featured clinicians from whom we could learn a great deal.
- ▷ I like them fine.

- ▷ I've only been to one conference and I thoroughly enjoyed it
- ▷ Nothing I can think of at the moment.
- ▷ The publicity leads me to believe that they are fine as they are.
- ▷ The conferences are outstanding.
- ▷ They are great. Don't change a thing!
- ▷ Hard to answer this. The ones I was able to attend were seamless.

Diversity: Repertoire / Sessions (10 responses, 10.5%)

- ▷ Continue to focus on diversification of repertoire by prioritizing composers from underrepresented populations.
- ▷ Make sure that a wide range of repertoire is valued, not just conventional contemporary European/American music; have more opportunities for composers to exhibit/share their work
- ▷ Broaden the types of institutions invited to perform and the repertoire considered for performance.
- ▷ Diversify interest session topics
- ▷ Continue to diversify offerings.
- ▷ I beg you, please discourage "impressive" canonic repertoire in performance. I love Schoenberg and Poulenc as much as anyone else, but I don't come to NCCO to hear Friede auf Erden or Figure Humaine. I already know

those pieces (and there's no way my choir could pull them off, anyway.) Would rather hear new rep and more creative programming.

- ▷ A good mix of sessions and topics are presented. It's important for NCCO to respond to what is current and timely in our field, as you have been doing.
- ▷ I enjoyed the concerts but the repertoire did not speak to the average college choir
- ▷ The conferences appear from the outside to be another reward for those following the status quo in collegiate choral music.
- ▷ In addition to your focus on diversity, allow concert programs to vary within them. The focus on one (often heady and esoteric) composer or oeuvre is rough to listen to for 3 days.

Specific Ideas for Programming / Direction (10 responses, 10.5%)

- ▷ I would like to continue to see excellence in the choral field, but I would also like to see examples of excellence in educating the average choral singer, or the below-average choral singer.
- ▷ Keeping abreast of issues contemporary and historic.
- ▷ Q and A with experienced conductors and young ones
- ▷ I loved the topics presented in New Haven on Baroque performance practice, and Helmuth Rilling's sessions (in Colorado, I think). I am

not as interested in highly specialized, narrow-focused sessions.

- ▷ More concert performances
- ▷ Q/A or lecture by the conductors of accepted choirs.
- ▷ Promote ingenuity; welcome it! Make innovation a clearly projected value.
- ▷ More and longer interest sessions
- ▷ Discontinue all panel presentations! Discourage performances of a single composer's music.
- ▷ I don't know but perhaps more dialogue with college voice teachers.

Calendar / Time of Year (8 responses, 8.4%)

- ▷ Move them one week earlier or later...they hit exactly at my own personal major work weekend, which has kept me from attendance in recent years
- ▷ I personally think conference should be slightly longer.
- ▷ Maybe one day longer with a little more unscheduled time

- ▷ Possibly consider moving the conference to the January or February.
- ▷ Scheduling: consider the travel necessary when conferences are held on either coast (difficult to miss so many teaching days). Preference is to use Sunday as a full travel day: even though many collegiate conductors have church jobs,

NCCO's conferences are aimed at collegiate conductors.

- ▷ The one I attended was great. It's just at a bad time of the year for me in relation to my work schedule.

- ▷ Have them at a different time or at least rotate so that the same people are not excluded year after year
- ▷ For me personally, change the date. Early November is always our choral/orchestral major work concert at my school, and for a variety of reasons, I'm not able to change this date.

Concerns about quality of performances / sessions (5 responses, 5.3%)

- ▷ The quality of the concert sessions was somewhat uneven.
- ▷ The evening performances in College Park were too long, and too many concert sessions over a one-day period.
- ▷ Vetting of some interest sessions
- ▷ Some of the performances and interest sessions are a little hit or miss, but I largely enjoy them a lot and think they are well-curated.
- ▷ Make sure the performing groups are well-vetted and excellent across the board.

Specifics to Scheduling / Logistics / Venues (4 responses, 4.2%)

- ▷ Better acoustical conditions for the performances
- ▷ Avoid scheduling multiple sessions at the same time.
- ▷ Go back to having no two sessions at the same time.
- ▷ Continue to offer few if any sessions that conflict with other sessions; as often as possible, I love when we all attend the same thing at the same time.

Canon Repertoire (4 responses, 4.2%)

- ▷ Ensure that the programming represents a substantial portion of repertoire from the choral canon.
- ▷ If I remember correctly, the performances from the last conference included no repertoire from before the Romantic Period, so I would appreciate a bit more historical variety.
- ▷ Keep its original mission on scholarship and excellent performances of first-rate repertoire -- the repertoire entirely missing now from ACDA and (usually) from Chorus America
- ▷ Maclary concert last year was a perfect repertoire offering: Stravinsky 'Les Noce' and Schoenberg's 'Friede auf Erden.' To that one could add anything that speaks to contemporary concerns.
- ▷ Ask chosen choirs to sing more polyphony from varied eras. Polyphony now is rarely heard; because publishers don't publish it; because composers don't write it; we MUST perform polyphony or we lose the Western Choral Tradition!

College Focus (3 responses, 3.2%)

- ▷ Be sure that ALL presentations are designed for collegiate level conductors- those with advanced degrees in music. This is not NAFME or ACDA where the attendees may or may not be collegiate level faculty.
- ▷ At the first few conferences, I attended, the interest sessions were nearly all researched-based, presented in the format of a scholarly academic conference. At the last few conferences I attended, the interest sessions were much more similar to what I would experience at ACDA. I am much more interested in the research-based, scholarly academic presentations - creating a significant different between NCCO and ACDA conferences.
- ▷ Differentiate more assertively from ACDA in your attention to the more scholarly aspects of our art, and that may involve different kinds of events

Virtual / Online

- ▷ Consider a virtual version.

COVID-specific

- ▷ Have one as soon as this pandemic is over, it will bring hope! (Nov 2021)

Location

- ▷ Have one in the Midwest.
- ▷ Make them local to Chicago :)

N/A

- ▷ N/A (3)
- ▷ I haven't attended enough conferences to give an accurate opinion.
- ▷ No opinion
- ▷ Not sure - I haven't been able to attend in a while.
- ▷ My experience was limited to the 5th conference so I have no valid comment.
- ▷ Having not attended recently, I cannot speak to this.

Other

- ▷ Focus more on actual choral music.
- ▷ An abundance of food options near concert/session venues.
- ▷ Continue excellence
- ▷ You're doing pretty well. More ways for supplier industries to reach our customers.



Do you have additional thoughts on the guiding principles listed above, or any that are not listed and should be considered? (54 responses)

Hard to rank / Equal weight to all (17 responses, 31.5%)

- ▷ How can any of these be less than a first priority?
- ▷ Also I'm not sure I used the scale as intended because to me all of these topics are first priority but I guess we have to choose so I made some tough choices. For example, I'm not against composition, however of all the areas cited above it's probably the least important to me as an NCCO member because I don't compose and while I support and like living composers I think our organization is truly geared toward conductors.
- ▷ Equal weight to all is good.
- ▷ As much as I know how difficult it may to accomplish, all of the principles are equally important after diversity, equity and inclusivity
- ▷ All these principals are all mostly equally important!
- ▷ Hard to prioritize various aspects of fairness and access. Each important. Seems like a separate issue from the more productivity-oriented issues.
- ▷ These are all good priorities, hard to rank!
- ▷ Of course these are not discrete categories. Community, which I ranked highly, presumes inclusivity, diversity, and access, for example.
- ▷ I don't think it's possible to prioritize those 11 things. Seems like a waste of brain power. They are interrelated, interconnected, and all important in different ways.
- ▷ They are all connected. Sorry for the lack of variety in my responses.
- ▷ All are good principles, and it was difficult to prioritize since even my #11 choice is important.

- ▷ This is incredibly difficult. All of these items are of paramount importance. I'm not sure how to rank interpersonal concepts versus pedagogical and music ones.
- ▷ It is difficult to rank them because they are intersectional.

IDEA (11 responses, 20.3%)

- ▷ I think your time and effort should be spent on the core NCCO goals relating to music. I see organizations competing to be holier than thou in their social justice missions. That should be a component of all organizations but not draining huge resources from your core reasons for being formed.
- ▷ Four out of eleven dedicated to DEI is too many
- ▷ Inclusivity and diversity are incredibly important, but it should also be a given, considering our line of work.
- ▷ As much as I know how difficult it may to accomplish, all of the principles are equally important after diversity, equity and inclusivity
- ▷ Could we not discount the wonderful body of early music simply because it is not more politically important to focus on minority composers? Do we give up the Mona Lisa and only value modern art by painters of color? We have always had too much focus on the modern repertoire, and now the current climate is making it "shameful" to perform for this organization not to address the racial divide.
- ▷ I think equity and access are redundant on this list. Otherwise looks good!
- ▷ Nothing to add, but things like access, inclusivity, diversity, community, and equity should be continuing guiding elements of Research/Scholarship, Performance, Education/Pedagogy.
- ▷ I think NCCO needs to actively seek out presenters who can educate choral professionals about repertoire and approaches that we don't already know much about. If one of our goals is to consider Gospel music equal to other choral music, for example, we should have a lot of opportunities to learn about and hear it in our conferences. As far as advocacy goes, NCCO should work to get publishers to actively promote work by underrepresented composers, even if they have to revisit what their "quality standards" are (which might be very entrenched in white supremacy).
- ▷ I like all of these guiding principles. It is very hard to rank them!
- ▷ I think many of the principles should be given equal weight, so I am not satisfied with my responses
- ▷ I think they are all important; too difficult to prioritize.
- ▷ I feel that the principles of access, equity, diversity, inclusivity are extremely important, might best be addressed as a single item.
- ▷ I'd like to see more women and people of color. I'd also like to see smaller schools get some play. And those of us in smaller schools be selected to present. We need to get full professor too. And frankly, I get tired of hearing the same people at every conference.
- ▷ I find some of the criteria innately scaffolded or connected (equity and access, community and inclusion). Consequently, ranking these priorities is a confusing task for me. I also politely disagree with the task of prioritizing these specific priorities. Scholars such as Geneva Gay, Zaretta Hammond, Paolo Freire, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith state in their work that access, advocacy, equity, inclusion, and community are integral ways of rooting an organization or a community to ensure that it can provide the reach and scope of their content area (which in our case would be—research/scholarship, performance, composition) in informed, relevant, and responsive ways. Therefore, in my opinion, the DEI(A)principles (priorities) should be non-negotiable or "un" prioritized as they are structural phenomena that are innately connected—rooting and scaffolding to the remaining priorities within the content area of our organization. This cultural ecosystem (Smith, 2018) then provides the structural/philosophical change that situates all of our "choral" components within a DEI(A) lens, not as disconnected priorities. With that said, from the remaining content area priorities, I rank them below— research/scholarship performance composition Finally, in terms of excellence, I am incredibly cautious about anchoring this term to organizational priorities. I believe our current state of choral "excellence" within our organization and in peer/parent organizations such as ACDA and NAFME is largely framed through Eurocentric and cis/heteronormative criteria. I do believe that NCCO is uniquely po-

sitioned to change this issue, and I believe that a culturally affirming, responsive, and radical redefinition of the word "excellence" comes from a commitment to rooting our work in DEI(A) philosophies. In other words, this is not a ranked "priority" to me; it is the result of a

connection between the DEI(A) "priorities" and the content area "priorities". I thank you all for setting up this task, as it invited deep reflection and critique from me. Thank you for holding the door open on this. *

No, N/A (4 responses, 7.4%)

- ▷ No
- ▷ No

- ▷ NA
- ▷ None

General affirmation

- ▷ Excellent survey. Take charge of waves of innovation coming up in the music profession as a whole.

Additional values / ideas / thoughts on mission

- ▷ Specifically, choral leadership—leading through the process of creating, and teaching, and building community—should be an important ideal, individually articulated.
- ▷ NCCO serves the choral community at the higher education level in a way this more specific than ACDA does. College/university choral educators should serve ACDA, but should be served by NCCO.
- ▷ Focus on inspiration and learning, support with friends a fellowship of colleagues, diver-

sity of ideas, joy in music making, pointing towards the future with an open mind and eliminate musical snobbery

- ▷ As part of "fostering an ecosystem of connected individuals," focus on creating useful repertoire lists so that new and high quality compositions can be disseminated throughout that ecosystem. Also creating a space to share professional openings - job board.

Excellence as problematic (2 responses, 3.7%)

- ▷ The pandemic has reaffirmed to me that community matters more than anything, and that "excellence" needs to be reclaimed from its association with white, canonic choral elitism.

- ▷ Be sure excellence is defined in an anti-racist way to include more than the current Euro-centric goals and objectives.

Access / Anti-elitism

- ▷ Higher education in general and vocal performance audition requirements excludes so many people. How can we influence access to choir, and what do we offer if people get to us?
- ▷ Access can be expanded to consider the limited access some educators at smaller schools have.
- ▷ I might say "heterogeneity" or even "anti-elitism": while I understand that NCCO was cre-

ated in part because folks felt like ACDA wasn't meeting their needs, NCCO currently does not meet the needs of the vast majority of college choir directors by maintaining a focus on the most selective and high-performing ensembles in the country while most of us will never have choirs that can perform at that level.

Opportunities for performance, etc.

- ▷ NCCO must strive to provide opportunities that will support collegiate level faculty. Opportunities for juried performances and other presentations are far to few in our profession:

1 ACDA regional each 2 years, 1 ACDA national each 2 years, 1 NCCO national each 2 years.

- ▷ For me, the most important part of NCCO is giving a venue for Collegiate directors to per-

form, to publish, to network, and to be a part of a larger community.

- ▷ I see a lot of performances at ACDA. I would like to see more offered for the diversity of college experiences - all-undergraduate, non-audi-

Canon

- ▷ Preserve polyphony by performing choral music of the 15th–17th centuries, 18th century counterpoint, 19th, 20th, 21st century polyphony. Knowledgeable teaching of 15th-17th century polyphonic works. Rehearsal acumen related to choral music of the 15th - 21st centuries -

Concerns

- ▷ This group seems closed and does not always listen to members outside of the inner clique
- ▷ NCCO has a serious clique problem. I regularly comment about it in NCCO surveys, but there hasn't been any change. There is really only a small group of conductors who are "included" socially, for performance, etc.

Personal rankings

- ▷ As I indicated in my ranking, NCCO should value multiple priorities equally. Advocacy, Access, Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity should all hold an equal place in the priorities of NCCO.
- ▷ This is a complicated question, and difficulty to actually enumerate in the way you have it

Other, problems with survey

- ▷ Well, you give 7 priorities and more questions than 7 so that's not rankable.
- ▷ I believe that the survey formatting does not work with all browsers; I was only given 7 priority options

Other

- ▷ I would attend the conferences and be active in NCCO if I did not have the job I have. NASM conferences are just a few days away from NCCO conferences, and I just can't do both, and all my days are spent "administrating" rather than thinking of choral music.

tioned choirs, small schools - best practices for building strong singers from adult beginner to professional. I'm also interested in finding collaborative research and in learning more about balancing teaching load and research.

excellence of intonation, rhythmic acuity, timbre, balance, intensity. Informed knowledge of nuances: dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato that will highlight expressivity in all eras.

- ▷ If the guiding principles for this choral organization do not prioritize choral music and issues related to teaching, I will look elsewhere for resources and networking opportunities and save myself \$100.

organized here. The ones that are important to me of this list (in no particular order) are: Performance, Research/Scholarship, Excellence, Community, Advocacy, Education/Pedagogy.

- ▷ Excellence should be number 1 but the form will not allow me to make that choice.

How can NCCO build a community of welcome, where members feel safe to bring their full selves to the table? (108 responses)

Access / Representation / Inclusivity / Diversity (26 responses, 24.1%)

- ▷ Conferences need to have easily accessible gender-neutral restrooms for everybody. Schedule non-white speakers.
- ▷ Invite lesser known and emerging young members to share their passions and expertise from their own experiences...both musical content and contextual life experiences.
- ▷ Ask this question of the people who currently don't feel safe.
- ▷ Making sure that their interests are represented.
- ▷ Feature a variety of collegiate groups and conductors at conferences.
- ▷ Invite as many people as possible to participate in working conferences.
- ▷ Broadening outreach to communities of college students, faculty that are underrepresented (community colleges, two-year colleges, private/independent colleges, HBCUs)
- ▷ They should communicate an understanding that not all colleges are the same, and that tiny liberal arts colleges with unbalanced choirs are just as valued as strong state school choral programs, despite not being able to make music with as much "excellence." They should also work directly with HBCU choral directors to hear their ideas.
- ▷ Be genuinely open to differing perspectives.
- ▷ Feature Leadership and presenters from diverse backgrounds
- ▷ Make sure that repertoire, selected choirs, selected panelists, all those who present at the conference, represent many facets of the membership.
- ▷ Invite everyone, give equal opportunity for performance and presentation to everyone, and treat members with respect regardless of any demographic.
- ▷ Host a conference at an HBCU. Openly address LGBTQ+ issues.
- ▷ By being intentionally open and accepting in all aspects of our shared human condition. Being willing to accept the notion that all people from all places have value and purpose, including their musical traditions and modes of music making.
- ▷ Curate the speakers carefully
- ▷ I can't recall how appearances by choirs are arranged--is it by audition and/or self-nomination? Perhaps institute a percentage of choirs that are simply invited? This also would involve a coordination of location of events in order to make appearances financially and personally feasible ("time and money" issues) for groups generally unrepresented.
- ▷ Actively include HBCU's as well as other minority populated programs
- ▷ Start reaching out to those who can't afford to be members, have never considered being a member, or feel NCCO and other organizations like it are closed off.
- ▷ Continue to engage individuals who teach in a variety of school sizes, school missions, and socio-economic and culturally diverse institutions.
- ▷ Continue, when possible, to involve faculty members from smaller, lesser known music departments, and not just the larger schools of music and conservatories.
- ▷ Seek representatives from the diverse American cultures and ethnicities to sit at the directing table, perhaps as a committee with a specific mandate to secure representation of diverse artistic manifestations, as long as they are choral, with a full examination, not as a token.
- ▷ Attract kind, sincere, committed musicians and showcase that in friendly inclusive conferences with good choral performances too.
- ▷ Diversity, inclusiveness, excellence
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing. Push for more HBCU participation. Encourage multi-cultural performing groups and programming of a diverse nature.
- ▷ Recognize that welcoming "others" includes everyone.
- ▷ Normalize land acknowledgements & pronouns, continue to reach out and consult with marginalized folk on issues while still respecting their boundaries, emphasize allyship with our white and/or privileged colleagues, diversify your lens of anti-racism, apologize and own mistakes when (un)/intentional trauma or harm is inflicted on a member/colleague during NCCO events, do the work in building our scope and reach to HBCUs, Tribal Colleges, Two-Year institutions....

Keep doing what you're doing (19 responses, 17.6%)

- ▷ Stay the present course
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing.
- ▷ Keep it as it is, open, friendly and inclusive!
- ▷ Keep educating and showcasing a variety of experiences.
- ▷ Continue to program conventions and publications with attention to access, equity, diversity, inclusivity.
- ▷ I really think NCCO has done a good job of this because of the small size
- ▷ I think it already does.
- ▷ I feel like NCCO is already doing this
- ▷ I think you're doing well at this.
- ▷ You do a pretty good job already
- ▷ I have always felt that NCCO is succeeding in this regard. I see efforts toward inclusion (not token efforts), and I have not witnessed exclusion. Keep going along this trajectory.
- ▷ I think this is working well already. There's less of that "let me put my choral director hat on" as there is at ACDA. I feel like I can bring myself to conferences.
- ▷ I believe that is something you are currently working on.
- ▷ I feel it already does
- ▷ This question assumes that NCCO is not currently a community of welcome, which I would contest.
- ▷ I believe NCCO has done well in this regard, welcoming members to bring their full professional selves to the table. An emphasis on our professional roles should remain the focus since its a professional organization.
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing.
- ▷ Continue being inclusive
- ▷ We have been doing that.

Club / Clique / Exclusivity / Anti-Elitism (12 responses, 11.1%)

- ▷ Discourage all use of in-group signaling and intellectual/ideological bullying. Take a stand and be very clear and open about it. People will opt in or out as it suits them, and the remaining members are likely to feel sufficiently safe.
- ▷ Lose the "club" mentality. It's kind of like you don't know you're welcome in the club until you've been told you're in the club. My impression is that the organization was started by a select group of collegiate choral conductors and it didn't feel like an organization open to all. It felt elitist. Yes, it should be an organization that is targeted to a select set of interests, but the content of the discussion should be what ultimately dictates who is in an who isn't. Folks that aren't served by the content discussed will want out on their own.
- ▷ My answer does not mean that these things aren't already present in NCCO. The leadership should mirror the principles listed. There is no place for elitism in NCCO.
- ▷ Don't make all the performances by top level choirs.
- ▷ Conquer elitism.
- ▷ Pursue as active an anti-prejudice agenda as possible within the context of NCCO's mission.
- ▷ We can't do much more than always refuse to discriminate by race or color or gender.
- ▷ Understand and name the euro-centricism of this org, or, work to be non-euro-centric.
- ▷ I would suggest we are pretty good at this already though again let's try and avoid those graduate school cliques. Also please keep the website and all publication resources accessible to all.
- ▷ Creating a culture where perfection of any kind is not a goal, and flaws are embraced.
- ▷ By diversifying it's membership and resisting an air of elitism in NCCO events and programming
- ▷ Ensure that languaging and events do not hold the mega university as "the" one way of "doing choral music."
- ▷ Recognize that excellence does not only mean excellence in performance.

Workshops / Community Gathering / Discussion (9 responses, 8.3%)

- ▷ Invite the challenging conversation.
- ▷ Continue to provide challenging programming in a safe, call-in space.
- ▷ By fostering more meetings/trainings like we had with Dr. Washington
- ▷ I think workshops such as the one you did last spring on systemic racism help a lot (for the National Board). It would be good to follow-up on this with events where members could actually sit and talk with one another about these issues. A plenary session at the next conference with breakout rooms, facilitated by someone trained to address issues of systemic racism and inclusion, perhaps. Something like that. But

please follow-up on what you have begun....that is crucial. Maintain and keep the conversation going and expanding.

- ▷ Consider having affinity groups gather for discussion. Invite members to join in various activities of NCCO.
- ▷ I think that the fostering of community is foundational. Because the NCCO is a smaller organization than the ACDA, perhaps something like this could work: an hour could be set aside near the beginning of the conference in which members are randomly assigned to two different small groups with three or four people each and with the national board members divided as much as possible among the groups. Each group would have a half-hour conversation in which each person in the group could share their personal story of how they came to college/university choral music, what is important to them in choral music, what excites them about choral music, etc. Then, each person knows four to six other people (that they might not otherwise have known) at the conference a bit better, and everyone has had a chance to share something about themselves in a safe environment. I find that people are often more willing to share in a smaller group - they can see the faces and the affirmation of

people more clearly, and they are freer to speak because they feel less on display. Having led regular seminar classes for two full academic years, my experience is that saying something in front of a smaller group first makes people more willing to say something in front of or to bring something to the attention of a larger group.

- ▷ I think the summit this summer was an excellent start. The organization needs to continue to address the subject and provide spaces for open conversations and resources for members to improve both their knowledge base and interpersonal skill set. This issue needs to be part of the organizations ongoing work.
- ▷ Schedule more events like the webinar on becoming more racially inclusive, and allow members to discuss the organization with the officers listening to their reflections and ideas without judgment.
- ▷ Foster small group discussions where you mix participants of different backgrounds and college/university socio-economic opportunities. Mediate the sessions so that all feel safe to share.
- ▷ Focus some sessions on small-group discussions, or even "buttonholes" a la Chorus America (1-on-1 conversations).

Leadership / Governance / Authentic Listening (9 responses, 8.3%)

- ▷ Assure broad, sensitive, aggressive, wise board leadership
- ▷ Continue to elevate a diverse leadership group.
- ▷ Choose leadership with this goal.
- ▷ Have officers and prominent members discuss their own faults/failings in the past.
- ▷ Be authentically real and project the desire to welcome everyone.
- ▷ Listen more fully rather than listen and then do it the way you first chose
- ▷ Honesty, openness, friendliness, reaching out to all who are present, with a smile.
- ▷ It starts with leadership - if the leadership of the organization prioritizes that in both words and actions, the culture of the organization will follow.
- ▷ Outreach, bringing in marginalized voices onto the board and letting them serve at the very top

Common ground

- ▷ Treat it a little like a church; how is one both served and provided opportunities to serve. What common banners fly over us that allow us to unite in vision and work.
- ▷ Have a set of guiding principles that is truly forward looking, avoid the pitfalls of so many other musical societies.

Repertoire / Curriculum / Teaching

- ▷ Rethink curriculum and the repertoire canon.
- ▷ Leadership and presenters should work toward the expansion and valuing of all art musics (to me this also includes vocal jazz!) invite Mar-
quess Garrett and Rosephanye Powell, and Jing Ling Tam (to name only 3) to present on their specialties (research areas.)
- ▷ Address how we teach, not just what we teach.

- ▷ Celebrate process and not product.

- ▷ Repertoire: encourage/require applicants for performances and presentations to focus on inclusive repertoire and research projects

Mentorship / Community

- ▷ Develop mentorship groups of 2-4 professionals who support and encourage each other routinely, and may also collaborate in music performance or scholarship or service activities.

- ▷ At NCCO, I also enjoy meeting together with fellow conductors/scholars in small sub-groups. These foster a sense of community and opportunity to exchange ideas, encourage research, support younger colleagues.

Visibility / Transparency

- ▷ Build NCCO's visibility so college choral conductors know the value of the organization for their professional careers

- ▷ Make the exact sentiment known to all. Be transparent.
- ▷ Outreach/communication
- ▷ Continue publicizing your mission to do so.

Survey / Soliciting input

- ▷ This survey is a great start.
- ▷ By continuing to solicit feedback from members and especially non-members to learn where the barriers are and how to address them

- ▷ Continue doing what you're doing and asking questions like this.

IDEA: concerns

- ▷ The obsession with building a community of welcome feels forced, and as a result makes me feel unwelcome. The effort is appreciated, but this is a professional organization, not a sixth grade classroom.
- ▷ I think this is a valuable goal, and I hope we take steps to further the sense of welcome, but I am concerned that this and related fields (diversity equity, inclusion) are so exclusively highlighted on this form. I hope that in addition to being welcoming and becoming more so that we also spend energy making sure we

are creating an organization that people want to be welcomed into, by continuing to advocate for soul-stirring performance, innovative and thought-provoking research, and thoughtful expansion of our pedagogical ideals.

- ▷ I don't understand the question. Not trying to be obtuse---I don't understand how one brings "their full selves to the table" in any professional organization. You join, you pay dues, you go to conferences, hopefully are inspired and learn some things that help you improve.

Art / Music First

- ▷ I believe that we are best served through our art. If the art and music making are exemplary, then we are achieving our goals.

I feel welcome, but defer to others / Questioning individual perspective

- ▷ I have always felt welcome. So I am would be interested to hear if others respond differently.
- ▷ Hard to say that it doesn't, but that could be my gender/age bias. I certainly welcome the opportunity to meet folks from different walks of our professional world and learn from them. How that is fostered, I'm not sure.

- ▷ I have no idea, since I always feel welcome. But perhaps those who don't will share their thoughts.
- ▷ I am not qualified to respond, as I have not felt unwelcome.

Not sure, N/A

- ▷ N/A
- ▷ Of that I am unsure.
- ▷ Honestly not sure.
- ▷ NA
- ▷ unknown

Other

- ▷ I'm sorry but each of these is way more than a survey question....



How can we ensure access to NCCO for all collegiate choral educators? (110 responses)

Conference: Travel Cost / Fees / Adjunct Status (36 responses, 32.7%)

- ▷ Sliding scale dues structure? In terms of conferences--one of the reasons I haven't attended more is that I work at an institution with very limited travel funds. Unless I'm presenting, my institution won't fund any travel, and then only a portion of it. Perhaps consider taking some of these institutional differences into account when setting conference fees? If I can only afford to attend one conference, it's almost always ACDA—
- ▷ Actual conference attendance is always gonna be difficult cuz it's just freakin' expensive to travel.
- ▷ Keeping cost for conferences as low as possible.
- ▷ It's travel costs that prevent me from participating.
- ▷ Depends on what you mean by access and what you mean by NCCO. The membership dues are reasonable. If cost of attendance is a stumbling block to more diverse participation, then NCCO is gonna have to make conference attendance more affordable for the underrepresented folks. Beyond that, we have to ask those populations "How could NCCO better serve you?"
- ▷ Offer grants for those who cannot afford membership or conference fees
- ▷ By making it affordable, and providing content worth the cost of membership.
- ▷ Adjunct professors make less money and may not receive funds to attend NCCO conferences. Are any programs in place to assist them?
- ▷ We can't force people, of course. Some people don't come because they receive little or no support from their universities and can't afford the travel. However, I am of the mind that "if you build it, they will come."
- ▷ Lower cost of conferences
- ▷ Probably impossible without great underwriting funding
- ▷ Work to make conferences as casual and affordable as possible.
- ▷ Offer funding for those whose colleges don't help support their travel
- ▷ Offer conference and membership incentives to people in need.
- ▷ If there's a way to help find much less expensive housing for conference attendees, that would cut down a lot on the cost. Or if there were regional conferences.
- ▷ Do you need to provide more scholarships?
- ▷ Is it possible to find scholarship \$\$ to help with attendance at conferences?
- ▷ Seek to offer scholarships/grants for conference attendance.
- ▷ Perhaps consider raising the annual dues on a sliding scale maybe with an experience component. Those mid career or later probably have higher incomes than people in their early career. Perhaps the same is possible for conference fees with a scale determined by whether or not someone receives funding assistance from their institution. For example, a member who receives assistance from their institution for conference attendance could afford to pay more and then this possibly subsidizes, in an indirect way, someone who receives little or no assistance to attend.
- ▷ Affordable dues and conference fees

- ▷ Have a method for waving dues for conductor/teachers that are in financial need, provide a reduced rate for first year members, financial sponsor one ensemble that is worthy of conference performance but unable to afford costs associated with travel (perhaps feature them virtually?)
- ▷ Discount for the conference for first time attendees? I think once people have experienced it they are invested.
- ▷ I think investigating costs to attend conferences would help ensure access
- ▷ Grant support -for help with attendance - currently, at my institution there is no funding for travel due to budget cuts over the last few years.
- ▷ Find ways to offer tools, services, and materials for free to those who need it verses those who would only benefit. Large groups of people NEED a leg up to get to the same place as others. It's time to take that extra step.
- ▷ Be mindful of the cost and location of conferences. Some large metro areas do not have affordable hotels, Airbnb, or Vrbo stays. The MD conference was lovely, but it was incredibly expensive for me to attend.
- ▷ Consider lowering the price for a new member their first year with the understanding that they might not have disposable income yet.
- ▷ Offer more grants for research and performance
- ▷ Publicity, reasonable fees.
- ▷ Maybe always offer a Zoom registration for much lower fee?
- ▷ I realize \$100 [for membership] isn't much but it used to be \$50 and times are tough financially right now for many people. It would be great if a generous sponsor would cover half of everyone's membership for 2021-2023 as that's when the economic hurt will truly be brought to bear.
- ▷ Dues and conference scholarships
- ▷ Consider lowering dues
- ▷ Reach out to faculty in those institutions to share the word and provide very inexpensive membership (\$15)
- ▷ I don't have a good answer for this, but I do worry about our colleagues who are not full-time faculty. I'd like to see NCCO make a special push to include adjunct and part-time choral faculty, as these folks are doing incredible work all while being underpaid, overworked, and under-appreciated.
- ▷ Help defray conference hotel costs. There's no way to account for travel for every individuals, but hotel costs can be mitigated.
- ▷ Again, membership cost
- ▷ Do you already offer scholarships or the waiving of membership dues?

Communication / Outreach / Advocacy / Recruitment (31 responses, 28.2%)

- ▷ Let people know what we are doing.
- ▷ Continued efforts to contact every collegiate choral director in the US and Canada.
- ▷ Work through area representative to spread the word.
- ▷ Keep ties with educator's institutions
- ▷ active and intuitive website
- ▷ Targeted marketing to educators not served as readily?
- ▷ Strong marketing and continued low registration costs
- ▷ Advertise more.
- ▷ I am not sure how feasible this would be, but here is an idea that comes to mind: the executive board could find a listing of all U.S. colleges and universities. Then the national board members of each region could research and contact the choir directors of each institution in their region that are not already represented in NCCO. There could be a form email that the board members could adapt, and that email could say something like this: "We want to ensure that all college and university choir directors can be members of NCCO, so if there is something standing in the way of you becoming a member of our organization, please let us know about it so that we can help." (This would also serve as a membership drive, too!)
- ▷ Active allyship
- ▷ Pro-active recruitment of members, schools (e.g., HBCUs), expertise
- ▷ Ask, advertise, connect. Let people know that you want them there and that you have something useful to offer.
- ▷ Continue to promote and encourage membership from a lower level. Those at the top already know of NCCO and will continue to support. Graduate students and smaller college involvement will better this organization.
- ▷ Constantly evolving communication and varying conference locations.
- ▷ Marketing
- ▷ Make our presence known in all college music departments

- ▷ Keeping up-to-date records. Advocacy. Outreach programs to directors who do not know about NCCO. Diverse representation in all areas of the organization.
- ▷ I would like to know better WHO is actually a member of NCCO. Who is not a member? I think to ask the inclusivity question, you need to ask the exclusivity question. Why are people not joining? Who is not represented in our ranks? The main hurdle, I suspect, is the mentality of "that's not for me". So, there is advocacy work to do first. Yes, it is for you, and here's why. My 2 cents :)
- ▷ Surveys like this one to assess common points of needs and interests. Make it relevant.
- ▷ You can bring a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. Widely publicizing what the organization does will raise awareness, but for some, it's difficult to be involved in multiple professional organizations.
- ▷ Membership outreach.
- ▷ I did not know NCCO existed when I first started teaching at the university level. Only after expressing disappointment with an ACDA conference did a mentor suggest that I look in NCCO. I think there are college and university choral faculty who are not fully aware of NCCO and it's mission.
- ▷ If they feel welcomed through outreach and communication they will feel more connected.
- ▷ Find ways to deliberately invite more college educators to join.
- ▷ Invite members and non-members to conferences and to audition their choirs for conference participation.
- ▷ Increase your social media presence
- ▷ Publicity, reasonable fees.
- ▷ Advertising the wealth of choices available at conferences.
- ▷ Discover the names of choral conductors in colleges and universities through thoughtful questions; perhaps by emailing 50 state ACDA presidents/secretaries to see if they might be willing to give us the names of their college and university state choral conductors.

Continue low costs of membership / conference fees (14 responses, 12.8%)

- ▷ Membership dues are beautifully affordable.
- ▷ Reasonable membership fees
- ▷ Strong marketing and continued low registration costs
- ▷ Continue the low membership fee.
- ▷ keep the conferences affordable
- ▷ Maintain a low cost of membership and conference attendance.
- ▷ The cost is reasonable, in my opinion.
- ▷ What kind of access issues are there right now? I do not feel that NCCO has access issues.
- ▷ Anyone can join by paying the very reasonable dues. You get out of it what you put into it.
- ▷ Keep cost of membership/conferences low
- ▷ Keep conferences inexpensive.
- ▷ Keep the cost down for membership and conferences and maintain open-access website resources for all.
- ▷ Keep costs reasonable enough that people can afford to be there.
- ▷ Keep membership prices low.
- ▷ Keep the fees low.

Conference date/time/location (8 responses, 7.3%)

- ▷ Timing of the conference date and location have made attendance difficult
- ▷ Continue to move around the country with conference locations.
- ▷ Funding and location should be carefully considered to allow all to participate.
- ▷ Constantly evolving communication and varying conference locations.
- ▷ Conference in the summer.
- ▷ Find less expensive locations to hold the conference, while still being close to a major airport.
- ▷ Is it possible that late October would make travel both less expensive and still provide the opportunity to have collegiate choral ensembles perform.
- ▷ Perhaps selecting centralized locals for the conferences.

Content / Quality / Programming (7 responses, 6.4%)

- ▷ By making it affordable, and providing content worth the cost of membership.
- ▷ Excellence in all areas
- ▷ Advertising the wealth of choices available at conferences.

- ▷ Consider specific elements that cater to people in various types of school—community college, four year undergrad without grad programs, etc.
- ▷ Encourage and enable participation among members from diverse professional situations such as community colleges, commuter colleges, adjunct professors, in addition to ten-

Keep doing what you're doing (7 responses, 6.4%)

- ▷ Stay the course
- ▷ What you're doing is working
- ▷ I don't know what more you can do.
- ▷ Keep doing what you're doing

Student involvement (6 responses, 5.5%)

- ▷ Encourage college students (grad and undergrad) be members for minimal cost and involved in planning/logistical/dreamer committees for initiatives and gatherings.
- ▷ I think NCCO needs to keep up its awareness, especially with doctoral conducting students; I honestly had not heard of NCCO until nearly completing my doctoral studies.
- ▷ Continue to promote and encourage membership from a lower level. Those at the top already

Regional gatherings

- ▷ Promote more small-scale, regional gatherings that could be 1–2 day events hosted by college/universities.
- ▷ Perhaps alternate regional and national events?

Expanded offerings

- ▷ An expanded offering of online resources and events could help here. Some don't have financial support from their institutions to travel. If there were valuable resources available online, people might join NCCO just for these resources, even if they are not able to travel to conferences.

Publications

- ▷ Scholarly publications and the choral series need to recruit submissions from underrepresented populations more proactively.

Opportunity

- ▷ Create opportunities for contribution and participation, not just attendance.

ure-line folks. This can be an economic issue in addition to creating welcome through programming.

- ▷ Offer programming that speaks to all collegiate faculty
- ▷ Create an organization that is deemed essential.

- ▷ I think access is already there. It's just that we are all so busy and have to make choices
- ▷ Continue the welcoming atmosphere. I do not see this as an area of concern.
- ▷ I see no current obstacles to access.

know of NCCO and will continue to support. Graduate students and smaller college involvement will better this organization.

- ▷ Professors should highly encourage their promising students to attend and build buzz from the rewarding experiences and meetings of like minds.
- ▷ Opportunities like the Kegerreis Scholarship in ACDA Eastern Division (for graduate students)

- ▷ If there's a way to help find much less expensive housing for conference attendees, that would cut down a lot on the cost. Or if there were regional conferences.

- ▷ Providing more resources/opportunities, separate from the conference, would likely encourage more individuals to keep their membership active, even if they can't attend a conference.
- ▷ Virtual offerings
- ▷ Providing streaming services for conferences

- ▷ Invite members to participate. For example, I have to have publications, committees, presentations in my professional organizations

for my tenure portfolio. I commit more to the

organizations where I more readily get those opportunities.

Membership Categories

- ▷ Change the descriptions of the membership categories to be more diverse.

- ▷ Foster a community where truly all voices are welcome.

No idea / not sure

- ▷ No idea.

- ▷ Unknown

Other

- ▷ I think it is important to differentiate from ACDA
- ▷ Funding for travel is a University area. You can't solve all things.

- ▷ More emphasis on our day-to-day reality, and less focus on a conference might help.



How can we place intentional inclusivity at the center of our work, especially in the areas of repertoire, research, pedagogy, and programming? (108 responses)

Intentional programming / Prioritizing it (19 responses, 17.6%)

- ▷ By doing it.
- ▷ Make it priority. Tell your members you're going to highlight groups that are representative of the the whole US, support composers of color, highlight research in that area, and put an emphasis on inclusion.
- ▷ The answer is in the question: intentional programming
- ▷ Be intentional.
- ▷ Continue programming topics, guest artists and clinicians that address this issue
- ▷ Establish specific lecture, performance, publication, etc. slots for people and/or topics related to whatever demographics desired, name them as such, promote them as such, review them as such, and provide funding to support the work and travel of recipients of those slots. You might even provide opportunities for people to contribute specifically to those funds.
- ▷ Plan for it. Choose topics for sessions and invite speakers/clinicians with expertise or representation in mind.
- ▷ Go after hot topics in conference programming and articles
- ▷ Involve choral directors in the field who are acknowledged experts in these areas.
- ▷ A period of intentional emphasis on the works, long neglected, of minority composers.
- ▷ Have a theme(s) for the conference. Accept research and repertoire pertaining to that theme. Or, require a percentage of the repertoire fulfill certain categories, like the Institute for Composer Diversity.
- ▷ Be bold in programming and curating. Take risks. Bring humor and lightness into the mix
- ▷ Careful choice of clinicians, of course.
- ▷ Have entire conferences around only one area of the world not the USA. Have a conference devoted to Mexican choral music, or African choral music, or East Asian, or Northern South American, etc. So much has been done with the USA-Western idiom with little moments of international penciled in. This would be a *real* change and people would take notice!
- ▷ Just do it, especially in projects of high visibility like commissions, premieres and awards
- ▷ Program lectures or lecture/demonstrations on:
 - 1) Music in Society (analyze different musics and their places and acceptance or non-ac-

ceptance in various underrepresented sectors of society), 2) Choral music by Contemporary Black American composers, 3) Choral music from (Guatemala, Mexico, etc.).

- ▷ Advocacy and action -- do what you say you do and make it intentional.
- ▷ This seems as if it would be something one could choose to do and then begin to do it. Giv-

Inclusivity (14 responses, 13.0%)

- ▷ Honor the fact that there is great music everywhere, regardless of style. Make sure conference programs reflect inclusivity.
- ▷ Broaden and feature more areas of research at conferences and in *The Choral Scholar*
- ▷ Include as much as possible in the discussion without overlooking our past and history
- ▷ Every notice, publication, message, etc. should include a DEI statement.
- ▷ Let's be sure we remember the lessons of 2020 and have inclusive concert repertoire as a regular part of our performance regimen.
- ▷ Make inclusivity part of the organization's mission.
- ▷ I think you might have to consider broader or different categories for selecting presenters and performers, you might need to do away with blind auditions, and you might need to relax the standards of excellence a bit
- ▷ Intentional inclusivity is not the "center" of our work, it is an essential presumption

Publications / Resources (12 responses, 11.1%)

- ▷ Broaden and feature more areas of research at conferences and in *The Choral Scholar*
- ▷ Provide info on resources and let members make their own decisions
- ▷ Work with publishers to seek out more BIPOC and non-cis-male composers, rather than relying on "the quality of the submissions they get."
- ▷ Support people who are making online databases and websites, particularly making recordings and perusal scores of repertoire by these composers easily available, and including information about difficulty. Promote Project Encore and similar projects. Have a repository for sample programs for many different sizes/makeups of choirs, ones that include composers from underrepresented backgrounds.
- ▷ Go after hot topics in conference programming and articles

en two research papers, feature the one written by someone new or who has not been given an NCCO venue before. Same thing with choirs. Same thing with teaching approaches, etc.

- ▷ Ensure that DEI(A) philosophies are a blatant and visible and part of your selection process
- ▷ By encouraging the broadest participation from all who care to be involved.
- ▷ Continue to be mindful of inclusivity and belongingness.
- ▷ Perhaps create multiple categories for inclusion in conferences. ACDA's "Ethnic and Multicultural" label is outdated, but it has proved effective at bringing non-classical performances to conferences.
- ▷ Inclusivity is at the center of pedagogy and a session on inappropriate language in the rehearsal would be a solid conference offering.
- ▷ Ensure a diverse board & selection committee and give them a mandate to be inclusive even to the point of "quality" as long as there are a good number of traditionally excellent offerings. You can't force interest on a public.
- ▷ Continuing to advocate for, and encourage participation from the entire choral community in promotional materials for events, specifically conferences
- ▷ Invest time and resources in research and scholarship in areas that have previously been ignored.
- ▷ Help fund composers and librettists of underrepresented groups.
- ▷ Provide examples of work other are doing that is widely considered effective.
- ▷ Also, provide practical tools at conferences so members can grow in the ability to conduct unfamiliar repertoires and diversify their choral programs.
- ▷ Request ideas, performances, research and pedagogy and critical reviews from college directors in the nation and world.
- ▷ Research is truly an individual effort so I think that's on each one of us independently.

Leadership (9 responses, 8.3%)

- ▷ I wish it was as easy as saying "Just do it." However, people's innate biases interfere with human-to-human interaction, regardless of how well intentioned they may seem. We should endeavor to select people who hold and embody the characteristics of diversity and inclusion within their hearts to positions of leadership and influence. We should hold all people accountable.
- ▷ I deeply appreciated the diversity and inclusion training offered for board members.
- ▷ Share the governance of the organization with diverse members deliberately.
- ▷ Avoid the superficial. If the outreach and outcomes are genuine and significant it will be valued.
- ▷ Consult those who have had success in these areas.
- ▷ ACDA Regional leaders are currently developing guidelines in these areas. NCCO and ACDA leaders should confer to help effect change across our profession. ACDA Western Region has established a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee which is actively working with the Conference Committee for March 2022.
- ▷ Ensure a diverse board and membership
- ▷ Advocacy and action -- do what you say you do and make it intentional.
- ▷ Curate new perspectives in the center of the organization

Diversity / unique voices / differing perspectives (9 responses, 8.3%)

- ▷ Allowing for different voices to be expressed.
- ▷ Look for session proposal that are unique and outside of the kind of sessions we see regularly at ACDA.
- ▷ Try very hard to involve many different perspectives in planning and implementing.
- ▷ In my own work, I love programming and working with African-American spirituals, but I was also very appreciative of the session in the last conference on the non-idiomatic works of African-American composers as well as the Abyssinian Mass, though it was disappointing that the latter wasn't as well-attended as some other things.
- ▷ Repertoire should not need to be delivered with classical vocal production; pedagogy should not privilege bel canto technique as being THE safest or most legit or most safe: science has proven otherwise, and, it does a disservice to those who excel in singing technical other than bel canto.
- ▷ Encourage diversity in all conference offerings, through presenters, repertoire in performances, interest session topics, etc.
- ▷ Ideally, by developing a membership that would naturally address these areas from diverse perspectives.
- ▷ Highlight non-stereotypical rep by composers of various ethnicities and cultures
- ▷ Embrace historical music by women and BI-POC.
- ▷ Curate new perspectives in the center of the organization

Dialogue / Challenge Status Quo (7 responses, 6.5%)

- ▷ Have hard conversations with membership. Be proactive. Expect push back. Take some bold stances (like: why aren't we pushing more on publishing companies to do better? If we don't, who will? Also, why aren't we challenging licensure test questions and expectations? Why aren't we challenging the idea of the canon? Why aren't we revisioning all of what we do?).
- ▷ Let folks know that it's about teaching and not perfection.
- ▷ By continuing to talk about it, research it, and act on the results
- ▷ Having open, transparent conversations is a good start. I think this area is so important and I'm so glad that we are finally starting to talk about it more as an organization.
- ▷ Become more than "college" centric.
- ▷ We can start to have brave, vulnerable, difficult conversations about these things
- ▷ Listen to the experts and the people who have truly been doing the work

Concerns / Worries / Quotas / Tokenism (7 responses, 6.5%)

- ▷ Some of these questions come off as incredibly pretentious. You could start there. If this is all NCCO is going to focus on in the future, they really ought to change the organization's name and purpose.
- ▷ A better question might be, "How can we place intentional inclusivity at the center of our work and not make it seem like a nod to the current social climate or too little, too late?" This is a tough question. What we should not do is have one conference that hits all the "feels" and then go right back to the Western art music traditions we have all grown up with. We are trying to adapt and improve something that has taken 300 years (conservatively) to cultivate.
- ▷ Difficult to answer. Intentional inclusivity can result in intentional exclusion of worthy colleagues.
- ▷ Please don't accept proposals to check quotas on boxes you want to fill. Accept choirs and proposals based on the merit of the proposition not on trying to be more inclusive. If the presenter/choir achieves excellence it shouldn't matter what their subject matter might be.
- ▷ I would be concerned for quotas in concert repertoire (minutes, number of pieces etc.). Quotas for concert programs can feel very much like tokenism ("and now, here is the 'multicultural' selection"; "and now, here is the selection by a 'female' composer"). Rather, I think conscious decisions for invited ensembles and presenters that represent diversity could be a way to be more authentic in our efforts toward genuine inclusivity.
- ▷ I believe programming should be the choice of the individual applicants. In other words, I don't think it is necessary.
- ▷ Reframe the question. Inclusivity = I'm in/you're out, and I have the privilege (arrogance) of "inviting" you into "my" space.

Reach out / recruit (6 responses, 5.6%)

- ▷ Reach out to underrepresented areas for participation in conferences.
- ▷ Reach out and recruit submissions, sessions, performers. Invite a more diverse range of offerings.
- ▷ Broadening the outreach of the organization.
- ▷ It seems that having this come from the membership makes it most authentic. Even if a core committee makes the final decision on these matters, a survey could be sent to members in which they could ask for the coverage of certain topics in publications/conferences as well as offer their own expertise in them.
- ▷ Find conductors who are moving beyond using non-white, male music within their concert programming. Not using them as special pieces of toe-tapping closers

Provide financial support

- ▷ Support for under-resourced faculty to attend conferences. I know dollars are tough to come by, but we need more voices in the room, not just those from rich programs that can afford conference attendance!
- ▷ Financial incentives

Training / Workshops / Webinars

- ▷ Offer training/seminars/webinars in performance practice of non-classical repertoire.
- ▷ This may require small-group discussions where members can share ideas for change and individuals can commit themselves to being more intentional regarding inclusivity in all of the areas mentioned.
- ▷ By continuing the work that has been started, providing spaces for conversations and resources for members.
- ▷ Foster small group discussions where you mix participants of different backgrounds and college/university socio-economic opportunities. Mediate the sessions so that all feel safe to share.
- ▷ Host more of the online seminars from the beginning of the pandemic—those were excellent.

Focus on Music / Canon

- ▷ Focus on challenging, thought-provoking, paradigm shifting topics and music. Leave the focus on the music.
- ▷ By aligning repertoire, research, and pedagogy with asking choral directors who are knowledgeable in historical research to relate these three affiliated areas to good stylistic polyphonic performance of the repertoire, 15th - 17th centuries, and the polyphony of the 19th, 20th, 21st centuries. Adding knowledge of Baroque and Classic performance to these criteria, repertoire joins programming which is backed up with research and pedagogy, - I would stress "Choral Ensemble Music Making": "How to acquire": excellence of pitch, duration, timbre, intensity, balance, with informed dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato.
- ▷ Prioritize it in leadership, conference themes, programming, presentations, communications; everything.
- ▷ I do not see this as a priority. I see perfecting our craft and performing/studying all the great works as a priority.

Already doing / Nod to past efforts

- ▷ I think you made good strides in the last conference
- ▷ I feel that you are already doing this
- ▷ I think we are already doing this.
- ▷ I think your guidelines for program submissions have been good.

Unsure / Unclear

- ▷ Not sure if this is asking about inclusion into NCCO or diversity initiatives.
- ▷ I'm sorry; I don't understand what 'intentional inclusivity' means.
- ▷ Unknown

Other

- ▷ See the Black Voices Matter pledge.
- ▷ Excellence in all areas
- ▷ This will likely happen as a result of societal changes, not because of anything the organization can do.
- ▷ I feel repertoire and programming is pretty strong in that respect already but of course I have inherent bias so it's a balancing act to remain authentic but also get out of our comfort zone.



How can we establish a culture of respect for diverse perspectives? (104 responses)

Diversity: topics/programming, performances and presentations (30 responses, 28.8%)

- ▷ Foster great performances of diverse literature at conferences, and a breadth of literature and interest sessions.
- ▷ Keep presenting a variety of topics and stretch all of us.
- ▷ Ensure that the diverse perspectives are based on research and not simply anecdotal.
- ▷ Intentional programming
- ▷ Provide conferences that display diverse perspectives.
- ▷ Showcase varied groups at conferences
- ▷ Continue to welcome all and provide diverse concerts and sessions at the conferences
- ▷ Encourage global perspective on new works or multi-cultural programs.
- ▷ Offer sessions and performances at all Conferences that highlight diverse perspectives.
- ▷ In planning conferences, factor in variety in conference presentations and performers.
- ▷ It starts with making sure that everyone can see themselves on the stage or in front of the lectern. You can't change people, but you can change practices.

- ▷ More inclusivity in regards to presenters and conductors
- ▷ By always respecting diverse perspectives
- ▷ Continue to center POC speakers, panelists, board members as you have lately.
- ▷ We need to offer a diversity of perspectives and be respectful in doing so. The proof is in the doing.
- ▷ More sharing of diverse perspectives will lead to more respect.
- ▷ Diversity needs to be a part of every aspect of our profession. By seeing diverse perspectives as separate categories, i.e. multicultural or ethnic perspectives, we continue to attach "otherness" to them rather than pursuing inclusion. Inclusion means the homogenization of diversity.
- ▷ By having voices of diverse perspectives at the table for everyone to listen to and consider
- ▷ I'd imagine that we could have decades of conferences, tools, materials, and networking opportunities that are entirely for and made up of BIPOC. While yes, it is good to have all perspectives including those who've had a main platform for generations, many of those perspectives have been logged and documented for many years, while others are still underrepresented. Having decades of entirely BIPOC would still not be enough to equal the playing field, but it's a start.
- ▷ Continue to make diversity intentional. I'm very impressed and grateful for the conscious inclusivity fostered by our leadership.
- ▷ More conferences with different topics involving different music/performances from diverse cultures.
- ▷ An easy answer would be to monitor the diversity of perspectives in publications, conference presentations, and performances
- ▷ Hire diverse presenters as clinicians.
- ▷ At the very least keep including diverse perspectives on panels at conferences as that has been consistent and successful in the past few conferences.
- ▷ Invite choirs from historically black colleges/universities, Howard, Morehouse, etc.; present balanced concert offerings of both canon and repertoire that celebrates diversity.
- ▷ Be sure that all elements of your conferences and publications show diversity.
- ▷ Sessions dealing with diversity in the form of panels and/or audience participation.
- ▷ Diverse perspectives can be drawn together by rehearsing, hearing, programming and admiring choral music from multi cultures appropriate for singing by men's, women's, mixed choirs (with/without a wide variety of instruments) at a very large range of American colleges and universities.
- ▷ Keep discussing and allowing underrepresented voices to come to the table.
- ▷ Be as inclusive as possible. Include Music of the Jewish people. Music in worship rather than Church Music as a topic.

Genuine / authentic conversation, listening (21 responses, 20.2%)

- ▷ Through genuine conversation and ensuring more voices are represented. Diversity isn't just about people groups. It is also about the diversity within those groups and regionality.
- ▷ I'm not sure we can respectfully respond to diverse perspectives unless we first honor the ones who are proponents of them. Honoring one another really is the key I think. When you honor another it's gives space for serious discussion of these perspectives which have aspects that trouble you.
- ▷ I'm gonna be blunt about this: speaking as a white cis male, we white cis males need to just shut up and listen more. Often when we're called to task for not being inclusive, we have a whole host of rationalizations. We need to yield the floor and sit with the criticisms longer and let them sink in.
- ▷ Listening for what everybody has to say, yet avoiding Tokenism.
- ▷ Create rules and opportunities for respectful dialogue
- ▷ Have listening sessions and panels of people to speak.
- ▷ Facilitate conversations about difficult topics; particularly those relevant to choral music
- ▷ Model it. Perhaps plan roundtables or invite keynote speakers to speak directly to this issue.
- ▷ Perhaps sessions devoted to inclusion could be sponsored by the organization - not presented only if someone proposes it - with hired facilitators who could help people who don't know they need any help or don't think they need any help. Let's face it, we can all learn something about ourselves
- ▷ Again, it's about teaching.

- ▷ By being attuned to the subtle, built-in discrimination, and by actively pursuing the opinions and suggestions from marginalized communities
- ▷ Listen first, speak second, no matter what.
- ▷ Listen to the membership and create times for all to speak.
- ▷ We need as many conductors of diverse backgrounds to have a seat at the table and we need to listen to them.

Keep doing what you're doing (11 responses, 10.6%)

- ▷ Stay the course
- ▷ I think you're doing a great job of this already. Stop forcing it.
- ▷ I don't perceive that NCCO has ever had a culture of disrespect.
- ▷ Keep the discussion going
- ▷ I feel that you are already doing this
- ▷ Inclusivity is about giving different perspectives a voice at the table. Keep up that work.
- ▷ I think you already have.

Leadership (10 responses, 9.6%)

- ▷ Excellent question! Leadership must model this.
- ▷ I think we, as a profession, are (in general) moving away from the "mighty maestro" which her/his flock of followers. I think some of the folks at the forefront are about the music and the people around them rather than themselves.
- ▷ Explicitly demand it of the membership, and if people quit, let them go.
- ▷ By treating these perspectives not as something unusual, but as a regular part of everything we do. Work to eliminate the sense of tokenism.

Resources / Training (9 responses, 8.7%)

- ▷ Help conductors gain access to quality resources about repertoire and perspectives from many kinds of people. In particular, help us connect with people who can teach us these things, or help them develop teaching materials we can use. Include many types of choirs in concerts, without necessarily having to call it a "diversity concert" of any kind, to show that this will always happen.
- ▷ The key is knowledge, - constantly striving to know more about all musics and practices.

- ▷ To me this deals with ethics, compassion, and healthy human interactions at the foundation.
- ▷ Emphasize listening
- ▷ Be honest, stay transparent, work hard.
- ▷ Be respectful.
- ▷ Give them voice
- ▷ Engage in humble conversations.
- ▷ It starts with a few and grows from there. We must always be striving for this.

- ▷ Continue to focus on these aspects in a positive way.
- ▷ I feel like this culture already exists among conductors in higher ed.
- ▷ Again, the membership should drive this, but I feel NCCO has done well in establishing a culture of respect.
- ▷ Don't we already have that? I think there's way more respect in the choral world than in the world at large.

- ▷ If you create an advisory board with frequent meetings and activities, some of the best ideas will emerge there
- ▷ Have the officers demonstrate deeper listening.
- ▷ With kind and patient people involved in NCCO.
- ▷ It starts with leadership - if the leadership of the organization prioritizes that in both words and actions, the culture of the organization will follow.
- ▷ The exec board needs to diversify
- ▷ Representation in leadership

- ▷ Possible to fund researchers already established in this area to contribute research to the organization?
- ▷ By modeling those behaviors and offering qualified training.
- ▷ We must teach each other how to offer a critique or an opposing argument that doesn't feel like an attack on the individual. My university has offered several excellent workshops for faculty on encouraging exactly this. What about a non-judgemental session on THIS at a conference (not at 8:00 am on the last day, but not necessarily as a plenary session either.) Don't

schedule against it or make it right before/after a meal break.

- ▷ At the summit in August, I thought, let's do more training stuff. I know I want to be more inclusive, but I lack terminology and exposure sometimes. I loved hearing from an expert and from colleagues in different areas and with different experiences on this. There was a depth to that experience. How can you recreate that for members? A webinar will likely not cut it :)

Opportunities for community

- ▷ Meals together at conferences with varied tables; focused and easy conversations
- ▷ Interactive sessions that allow/encourage people who don't know each other to mingle and meet and share ideas. Conferences can get a little clique-y (not just NCCO, any conference can do this).
- ▷ Provide opportunities to students, faculty, members who meet the standards of the or-

Communication / outreach

- ▷ Continue sending out that message in all of your marketing materials.
- ▷ Continue reaching out to the most vulnerable members of our community. I think NCCO, ACDA and Chorus America all need to make

Changes to policy / mission, etc.

- ▷ Determine what is absolutely intolerable, exclude it, and treat all that remains as equally valuable.
- ▷ Depends-- are we talking about within the organization policies? Are we talking about within membership? We don't have control over people, but NCCO DOES have control of

Concerns

- ▷ While I think all of the priorities on the previous page are important, I think it is most important for an organization to focus on the very subject matter that it is about, i.e., choral music, which is in itself a beautiful thing that has the potential to bring unity, inclusivity, and diversity. As we can see in the results of our most recent national election, our nation is fairly divided, and not always in the ways that we might expect. For that reason, I think that a focus on choral music as such and the unity that it can bring to people may bring more inclusivity to

- ▷ Name the micro aggressions like "ethnic music" categorization, and topics/lectures that reinforce the false notion that bel canto is the best technique (instead of just one choice), e.g. that belting is dangerous.
- ▷ Help support scholarship that makes that music, scores, recordings and scholarly resources about it more available.
- ▷ Hearing sessions from those who have experienced this first hand in the choral community.

ganization opportunities to perform, mingle, interact, and learn from one another- both at the conferences and throughout the academic year(s).

- ▷ Foster small group discussions where you mix participants of different backgrounds and college/university socio-economic opportunities. Mediate the sessions so that all feel safe to share.

strides in making transgender singers and directors feel more welcome.

- ▷ All organizational pronouncements going forward must reflect the important societal dimension of the collegiate choral community.
- ▷ Be inviting and remain communicative.

policies and procedures. Radical changes (mission/vision statements, professional offerings, etc) could potentially help here.

- ▷ Representation! Writing out guiding principles will help too.
- ▷

the organization than perhaps a more explicitly political focus regarding some of these issues. Especially since the college/university environment tends toward the politically progressive/liberal, I think it can be helpful to ask at times whether the way things are presented allows those who are politically or otherwise conservative/traditional to feel welcomed and included.

- ▷ Hearing some of the webinars leads me to believe that we are throwing out the baby with the bath water. Add to the perspectives, not eliminate the old.

Not sure

- ▷ Unknown

N/A

- ▷ N/A

Quality / Excellence

- ▷ Excellence in all areas
- ▷ When significant works and organizations are involved, the superficiality that some may

perceive can be avoided and room for respect can be made. Respect cannot be forced, it must evolve from episodes of quality.

Other

- ▷ Establishing such a culture will require changes to the broader society. They are unlikely to hap-

pen independently within the microcosm of any individual institution.



In your opinion, what does it mean for NCCO to prioritize "excellence" in its work? (105 responses)

Excellence as Elitist / Eurocentric / Exclusive (16 responses, 15.2%)

- ▷ I fear it means exclusion for some, and I wonder what we're doing for "really good" ... it can be elitist to prioritize only when we can attain the highest level and can limit our view of what we are striving for.
- ▷ Those in power can show more vulnerability, so that it doesn't become all about choirs sounding perfect or being looked down on.
- ▷ I believe a narrowly defined and enforced sense of what is "excellent."
- ▷ Recognizing excellence in its specific context, rather than in some global sense.
- ▷ See previous note on this. We should all stop using that word for a good long time.
- ▷ 'Excellence' is a subjective term that has the capacity to negatively impact people in some spheres of society, especially those at the margins. What I deem 'excellent' another might disagree with. Rather than use this term globally, to represent many different aspects of our work, it should be used in specific terms and be clearly defined.
- ▷ Excellence without a predetermined Anglo-European prejudice
- ▷ Working to eliminate elitist attitudes and providing a space for different demonstrations of excellence is paramount.
- ▷ Make the rubrics clear, and have some measuring of excellence NOT be Eurocentric, but meeting a variety of style-genres in their own context of excellence.
- ▷ I think that the term "choral excellence" is pretty self-explanatory.
- ▷ As with the choral profession writ large, "excellence" = whiteness
- ▷ Honestly, it reads uncomfortably to me. Excellence has often been a code word for narrow and close-minded. It shouldn't be. True excellence allows for creativity of thought, not a narrow view. Even the guidelines for performance represent a specific point of view and limits creative thinking and truly excellent programming
- ▷ For me, this could be partly accomplished by finding ways to increasingly feature the excellent ideas and work of my colleagues who are not necessarily known as the "big names" in our profession - but who do incredibly high-quality work and who succeed brilliantly at institutions where success is not a foregone conclusion. When I go to an ACDA conference, I expect to see the same small group of headliners leading keynote addresses and honor choir rehearsals. I learn a lot from many of these individuals, but often their name rec-

ognition is a sort of self-propagating quality, and their success comes as much from finding themselves at a high-quality institution or organization as it does from some transcendent skill or understanding they possess.

- ▷ To be honest, it sounds exclusive rather than inclusive, so defining the term more fully might be useful.
- ▷ I find the word problematic, to be honest. For most people, the word seems to tend to mean

"what *I* think is good." This would be an excellent topic for discussion, actually, and such an extended conversation, well led, might go a long way toward a culture of inclusivity and respect.

- ▷ We already know this. Any rubric from a state choral assessment/festival will tell us.
- ▷ Currently it has been to only allow the top choral programs to perform at the conference.
- ▷

High Quality / Standards (12 responses, 11.4%)

- ▷ High quality performances, interest sessions, speakers
- ▷ Value high standards in all areas of performance, research, etc.
- ▷ Strive for the highest quality choral performances, research, choral literature, and education.
- ▷ Excellence is our first concern.
- ▷ Without it, why?
- ▷ High quality choral music making and choral music experiences.
- ▷ the highest standards in performance and research

- ▷ We strive for this in all that we do. The collegiate community will not be served by anything less.
- ▷ High-quality choirs and presenters at conferences; high-quality compositions and research in our publications.
- ▷ Set and maintain high standards in each area of emphasis
- ▷ High standards of artistic and academic work. Challenge the norm.
- ▷ It is central to everything we do.

Excellence and Improvement / Self-Actualization / Broader Growth (11 responses, 10.5%)

- ▷ Focus more on helping us to improve our craft. "Excellence is the best deterrent to racism or sexism." - Oprah Winfrey
- ▷ We all should strive for excellence in our work.
- ▷ Continually reassessing whether its goals for "excellence" are being met on the many fronts where excellence is possible and expected, keeping its members engaged and aware of these activities, and, in particular, seeking out the perspectives and suggestions of those not currently in the center of the organization.
- ▷ To consistently seek the needs of the organization and to attempt to meet those needs through the auspices of our experiences, expertise, and mission.
- ▷ To continue to explore how music is an essential part of what makes us human - and to seek to champion performances and research that digs deeply into how music creates both a path for self-discovery and a unique tool for creating community.

- ▷ That everyone is inspired to be their best selves and that this is supported for all. Not that there is just one standard of excellence it each one's own personal fulfillment
- ▷ I'm going to go philosophical/spiritual here: communication. There are many roads to this goal.
- ▷ It means that NCCO provides educational resources for its members and ways for conductors to learn from one another for the sake of raising the standard in our field.
- ▷ Choosing to work as hard as possible to achieve the highest level of excellent in all non-public areas (not just performance, that is a given for most of us.)
- ▷ Excellence is an attribute for which one strives. It can be evaluated and documented.
- ▷ Excellence is often only connected to outward achievement—awards, recognition—while most of our lives do not live in the plane, nor should they, of outer rewards.

Expansive view (more than just performance) (11 responses, 10.5%)

- ▷ Excellence as a term is a little bit marbled, generic, and at the same time haughty. We

focus on artistry, pedagogy, advocacy, and other

specific areas, placing our work into those concentric circles.

- ▷ Up until now, it's meant gearing everything towards the highest-functioning choirs performing mostly music from the Western classical canon and its contemporary descendants and exemplars. In the future, we need to shift from excellence in performance towards excellence in pedagogy, regardless of the makeup of the performing group, and towards excellence in diversification of repertoire.
- ▷ Continue to educate ourselves in the culture of excellent work. This will necessarily have different meanings.
- ▷ Musically enriching and exciting performances and sessions
- ▷ Excellence in performance, research, and publication.
- ▷ Excellence is broad term, not a narrow one. I believe that everything I have seen at an NCCO conference has been excellent.
- ▷ One hopes for contextualized perspectives on excellence.
- ▷ Finest performances, new research and development, conversations about making music.
- ▷ Excellence is rigor in teaching, performance and research. It's not just about the highest level, it's about thoughtfulness and innovation. NCCO should be presenting those who are forging paths and making connections that are meaningful and discipline-defining.
- ▷ Excellence exists in many forms. We need to celebrate excellence in pedagogy, research, outreach, stewardship, mentorship, and service to community in addition to excellence in choral performance.
- ▷ Applying current research and creativity to choral music in widely varying scenarios.
- ▷ To provide affirming experiences in all of the 11 priority groups previously listed on this survey.

Excellence in performance (repertoire, quality of sound, conducting) (10 responses, 9.5%)

- ▷ Sing repertoire that has meaning. Sound good. Prize the accomplishment of conductors you did not previously know.
- ▷ Feature only the finest in choral performance at conferences, but from a variety of higher education vantage points (community college, two-year college, four-year baccalaureate institution, masters institution, doctoral institution). Publish only the finest scholarship from a diverse spectrum of choral topics.
- ▷ Maintaining a high level of musicianship in performances, but also offering opportunities to areas of higher education that may benefit from the information being provided and conferences and sessions throughout the year.
- ▷ performance excellence - excellence in selection of repertoires
- ▷ One thought here on performance: inquire if a specific choir has performed in the past 2 years on any type of regional or national conference program. I am seeing the same choirs at all of the conferences!! It may be worth also having choirs submit budgets. We want to be sure money is not getting in the way of people applying. Can we support choirs, in any way? Or, a nomination process for performance? Use the board members to help with this? These are initiatives we are looking at in ACDA East and I think they are very useful tools.
- ▷ Musical excellence
- ▷ Importance is placed on superior performance.
- ▷ Polished, professional-level choral performances of a diverse repertoire of high-quality music. Invited choirs demonstrate the best artistry and technical prowess that we have in the nation. All other priorities of the organization should point to that end. I view higher education choral music-making as one step removed from professional choral music-making. Similar to college-level sports and their professional counterparts.
- ▷ I tend to read this as "excellence in performance" for invited choirs. So I guess the goal here must be to define excellence in ways that don't discriminate against choirs that don't sing senza vibrato, for example.
- ▷ The highest caliber performance for ensembles as well as individual singers (in the ensemble context) and of course, conductors!
- ▷ Excellence in performance, provided through a conductors' excellence in musicianship, who trains her/his choral ensembles in rehearsals through achieving excellent pitch, duration, timbre, balance, and intensity; and with expressive nuances: dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato, that will offer inspiring, insightful, enriching, profoundly beautiful concerts, to inspire their listeners, and themselves!

- ▷ We should choose the finest choirs from around the choirs and the most well-thought,

Diversity and Excellence (9 responses, 8.6%)

- ▷ In my opinion, there is no excellence without diversity. Therefore, I think NCCO needs to continue to diversify its board, membership, and offerings, including conference offerings
- ▷ We want excellence in our ability to connect people. That means prioritizing diversity and creating activities in which conference members interact and get to know each other.
- ▷ There are excellent performers and scholars in all areas; seek them out and involve them.
- ▷ It is a complicated question, because it depends on the culture or background. I think it is great that we are starting to include non-European cultures when we think about this question.
- ▷ All things are related so my previous comment for encouraging respect for diversity holds true here. This needs to be intentional in programing and in outreach.
- ▷ I believe rigor, consistency, and quality in the context of resources available is an expanded definition of excellence. Prioritizing excellence in this context will enhance the diversity and quality of our interactions with one another.
- ▷ Broaden the choral world's perspectives and knowledge base by accepting more tonal styles

Focus on unique needs of choral music

- ▷ Focus on the unique needs/perspectives/role of collegiate/university choral instruction.
- ▷ It can be good to focus not as much on excellence itself (which has come under scrutiny recently precisely because it can be elitist and non-inclusive) as it is on the specific excellence found in choral music – the musical and human beauty of the unity of voices singing together. What we are trying to achieve on the broadest level is not being better than other choirs (though the competitive aspect can be motivating, and I do think that choosing choirs based on performance quality is still reasonable), but each choir sounding as beautiful as it can so that our field as a whole makes the world

Conference specific

- ▷ Excellence in the quality or venues, performances and sessions
- ▷ Choose outstanding scholarly work for sessions, exceptional performances of historic and new

well-written, important scholarship for inclusion in our journals.

and repertoires into the choral canon, then seek to learn how each style and repertoire defines "excellence" for itself.

- ▷ It is a critical component but in the implementation and application it must be consistently fair and considerate of different perspectives and be willing to help conductors to attain the goal.
- ▷ As I get to know other collegiate directors in my region, I am constantly impressed by the knowledge and skill they bring to the table, and many times I have thought to myself "if this person were at X school, they would easily be a national presence in our profession." Some of the best and most innovative ideas in our field are found in exceptional individuals who thrive in challenging situations. I'd like to see NCCO continue to find and feature these little-known superstars of our profession - directors who might never have a choir appear at an ACDA or NCCO conference due to circumstances beyond their control, but who nevertheless are able to create top-quality choral experiences for their students.

more beautiful and brings people together in the way that only choral music can. Even if the word "excellence" can't simply be changed to "beauty," perhaps the language underneath the priority on the previous page could say something more particular to choral music and the achievement of beauty.

- ▷ It means that at some central level, NCCO is uncompromising in promoting excellence in choral creativity, performance and scholarship, through targeted projects, notwithstanding popularity contests elsewhere. Conductors should find it an indispensable resource for the best in the art.

music, commission a new work for every conference, and feature inspiring keynote speakers.

- ▷ Stress quality rep in all areas; showcase deeply musical performances in all areas; keep the

bar high while providing education on ways to improve choral ensembles

- ▷ The content and quality of the conference
- ▷ Prioritizing excellence seems to refer to who is chosen for performance/presentation.

How do we define?

- ▷ I struggle with term excellence generally. Do you mean the pursuit (i.e. process) or the result (i.e. product)? Or both? I think the term must be clearly defined to the membership (what defines "excellence" in this organization?)
- ▷ This is a tricky issue. I think the first step is to define what we mean by "excellence." Excellent work at a small program with a limited budget? Excellent work at a large, well-funded program with grad students? Excellent work at a junior college? Excellence within a certain context or "universal" excellence? Excellence of process or excellence of end-product? Etc.
- ▷ I'm hesitant to use the word "excellence" because the definition of the word varies by culture and power.
- ▷ The term "excellence" could be defined in a different way depending on the level of inclusivity and diversity NCCO is willing to achieve. The Western, Whiteness-focused version of excellence in many ways means that entire genres of

- ▷ Conferences present the best in performance, research and study - without consideration of race or gender

choral music will be used as tokens rather than new bases for programming. What if excellence for choral music in various areas of the world are different than what we perceive? How does "excellence" shift then? NCCO should prioritize redefining excellence in order to move forward.

- ▷ In the past I felt it meant primarily excellence in performance. But it does seem that efforts are being made to ensure that excellence is reflected in all aspects of the organization's offerings.
- ▷ I think the definition of "excellence" in performance is evolving. That is a conversation in ACDA right now. We need to think more broadly than in the past and extend boundaries in performance beyond the western art music context.
- ▷ Define different tiers of excellence, not only defined by performance.

Excellence as situational

- ▷ I think we all strive for excellence, but we're all in different places. And our students are, too.
- ▷ Excellence is subjective according to the different goals of our programs. I think as long as NCCO is putting effort towards mass content of quality topics/resources, it can allow members to curate what is useful to them.

- ▷ Excellence can be differently judged in different contexts
- ▷ This is difficult because excellence can look very different, depending on the setting. I think promoting, supporting, and lifting-up excellent work at various types of institutions is incredibly important.

Excellence as antithetical to IDEA

- ▷ Focus on excellence and achievement, not ethnicity, gender, and sexual preference.
- ▷ On some level prioritizing excellence means under prioritizing inclusion. We know this very well from the example of professional symphony orchestras.

- ▷ Focus upon musical excellence and stop trying to be yet another social justice activist group.
- ▷ That's going to be as defined by the majority and not necessarily inclusive. One must face this.

Excellence in teaching/pedagogy

- ▷ Excellence in teaching approaches should be valued, and in artistic risk-taking.
- ▷ Excellence in its work is getting everyone to their highest level. Not every ensemble can do Hindemith and that's okay. But a beginning

ensemble can do great things. That means excellence in pedagogy.

- ▷ Personally I think that it should be placed on what we can do to help our students experience a more diverse repertoire.

- ▷ Excellence is more about process, so focusing on excellent teaching and leading is key.

Not a priority

- ▷ I do not think this should be a priority.
- ▷ Again, you can't force issues and agendas on a busy public that's really not interested. I'm sure there are specific organizations for that if it's your priority.
- ▷ I think this is not something NCCO should have as a major focus now. The world doesn't need elitism and a focus on excellence. Everyone needs help and encouragement right now.

Not sure

- ▷ Not sure.
- ▷ NA
- ▷ unknown

Other

- ▷ Canon and social awareness.



From NAC International Perspectives, Women and Global Solidarity:

Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

What do you believe NCCO can start doing immediately to move toward being a more anti-racist organization? (99 responses)

Guiding principles / Governance / Structural Change / Leadership (18 responses, 18.2%)

- ▷ Actively pursue integration, inclusion, equity, yet avoiding Tokenism.
- ▷ Persist in this mission, even when it is not a hot priority item, in the future.
- ▷ Challenge membership to celebrate a variety of communal music making, even if it's not Bach.
- ▷ Ask: is the organizational structure inclusive? How do we find diverse viewpoints and bring them to the table? And how do we in the current structure react/listen to new ways of doing things?
- ▷ Make sure it's not just people in high-level academic positions who are in leadership, since those people are more likely to be privileged and favored by the current system. Go beyond traditional ways of networking that will reach those without existing connections.
- ▷ Expand the leadership to include voices from other perspectives.
- ▷ Identify potential organizational leadership candidates who can clearly articulate the character of the organization both to the choral community and to the public at large.
- ▷ Perhaps on the National Board we can have reps for 1) BIPOC, 2) LGBTQ, etc in addition to regional reps.
- ▷ I like seeing more shared governance, so thanks for the surveys. I completely believe that you all read and heed them! Is the executive and national board equally representative of gender and race/ethnicity? I would think that is an important step - get your stakeholders to represent the membership communities you are hoping to attract.
- ▷ Involve those in our profession who are most respected. Have them help design programs that reach underserved populations and more importantly, help with the communication and

outreach. They can't be figureheads but instead facilitators.

- ▷ The Executive Board should review the constitution and bylaws with an anti-racist lens and make proposed changes to the National Board. Also, the planning committees for NCCO9 should involve as diverse a membership as possible.
- ▷ Create the advisory board, in full integration with the administration, and develop targeted projects to feature different ethnicities on their terms, but not in isolation. A constant dialogue with the heretofore power centers must exist.
- ▷ Call out our biases as part of our sessions. Dominick has started this work by publishing data on races of officers, choirs, etc; continue to be honest about this while engaging clinicians

and choirs that can show excellence in different ways.

- ▷ Ensure the board reflects our choral representation fairly and work from there. Welcome under-represented segments and give them a seat.
- ▷ Ask people of color to be a part of our organizations hierarchy.
- ▷ Representation in leadership
- ▷ Build an Advisory Board with all people being represented.
- ▷ Boldly call out those that display racists speech or actions.
- ▷ Lead by example, walk-the-walk, you don't have to talk it. NCCO members are some of the most inclusive, open-minded people I have ever met in my profession.

Involve / invite / listen to non-white people / Representation (17 responses, 17.2%)

- ▷ Prioritize answers to this question from non-white people. Invite us to listen to Philip Ewell and/or Kofi Agawu.
- ▷ *Brng more diverse voices into the conversation.* Every official NCCO committee or working group needs a more diverse group of voices doing the talking.
- ▷ Explore specific invitations to ensembles that may not normally go through the regular audition process.
- ▷ Invite HBCU colleges. Ask them what they want to see at our conferences that would be useful.
- ▷ Be transparent. Acknowledge biases and work from there.
- ▷ Keeping a diverse group of people engaged at all levels of the organization to consider and revise the working machinery of the organization and, again, actively inviting those who have felt unwelcome to join and participate.
- ▷ Engage as many people from as many different backgrounds as are interested in being a part of the choral music world. Invite any and all to share their musics and themselves to grow and build a better community of choral musicians on our planet.
- ▷ Again, stress inclusivity and model thru inclusion of non-white presenters and conductors
- ▷ I think promoting works by composers of color and women and non-binary backgrounds is an important start
- ▷ Invite collegiate directors of Gospel, Mariachi, Black Church Music, Jazz, and Pop/Soul/R&B to sit in positions of power.
- ▷ Encourage diversity of presenters, interest session topics, repertoire at conferences.
- ▷ Value all people for who they are, not their labels or categories.
- ▷ Seek to have diversity in officers and planning groups. It's also about religious group. Include music of diverse religious groups, both sacred and secular.
- ▷ Continuing to provide opportunities and resources, presented by BIPOC that help bring this topic to the fore among our membership. NCCO is a great source of information for me, and I see this organization as a leader for not only BIPOC, but LGBTQ+ and women in our field, as well.
- ▷ In our NCCO Conferences, as one topic - gather together with several varied races in somewhat smaller ensembles with varied whites to talk/ask/explain to ourselves, and most importantly how we might begin to accomplish this in Amercian society at large.
- ▷ Start with representation - in leadership demographics, membership demographics, and communications from the organization to the members at large.
- ▷ By inviting/hosting predominantly non-white collegiate choirs as featured guest artists. It's important that NCCO shows that they are moving away from the traditional Euro-centric hierarchy of choral sounds by valuing choirs that predominantly perform in a non-white-dominated style.

Policy (9 responses, 9.1%)

- ▷ Examine policy.
- ▷ Change policies, procedures.
- ▷ Conquer elitism, rewrite the guidelines for submissions to perform at conferences.
- ▷ By continuing a policy of non-discrimination.
- ▷ Help establish new audition descriptions and procedures that eliminate bias.
- ▷ The very act of moving toward intentional diversity, equity and inclusivity will require changing systems, structures, policies and practices, the given definition of anti-racism. Changing attitudes will take time.
- ▷ NCCO cannot do everything to solve the problems of systemic racism, but it can do some things that keep in balance its original mandate; i.e., the canon of choral repertoire. We can expand on the canon to include works by underrepresented composers not earlier included.
- ▷ Consider a multi-component audition process, for example, that does not favor the white, western art music tradition.
- ▷ Work on anti-racist policies in all aspects of the organization

Conferences / Programming (9 responses, 9.1%)

- ▷ In your next national conference, have the focus be on anti-racism.
- ▷ Rethink how and what NCCO offers in the terms of professional development.
- ▷ Intentional programming
- ▷ Focus more on actual choral music. As an underrepresented person in the field, I am only interested in this being a professional choral organization.
- ▷ See previous answers about representation and inclusion at conferences and NCCO sponsored workshops. This could even happen outside of conferences in a virtual format
- ▷ I am a member of this group because of the music making that occurs. Keep the focus there and you are already breaking down barriers.
- ▷ Again, discourage conductors from programming "impressive" canonic repertoire.
- ▷ Commission BIPOC composers. Encourage scholarship from BIPOC scholars.

Dialogue / Discussion / Conversation (7 responses, 7.1%)

- ▷ Engage in uncomfortable discussions.
- ▷ By helping members understand that what they may think of as normal is, to some, racist.
- ▷ Admitting that we are racist. Work together to change.
- ▷ Talk about it openly at the conference
- ▷ Continue to have open and direct conversations about race among our colleagues. This is incredibly valuable.
- ▷ Foster small group discussions where you mix participants of different backgrounds and college/university socio-economic opportunities. Mediate the sessions so that all feel safe to share. Have each small group come up with ideas for identifying and eliminating racism. You may want to have a series of videos and written narratives regarding the issues face individuals and groups that suffer from the effects of racism.
- ▷ Listen. Ease up on the strict rules and strong statements from a few.

Continue efforts / follow-up on your work / on the right track (7 responses, 7.1%)

- ▷ Make sure you follow-up on what you've been doing, and keep the conversation going and expanding.
- ▷ I think, from my sequestered viewpoint, ncco has already begun to move toward being a more anti-racist organization.
- ▷ Addressing the issue, seeking feedback from membership—already in progress
- ▷ I think we are on the right track.
- ▷ The answer is right there in the statement: shared equity between people of different races, orientations, faiths and cultures. From my viewpoint, I do believe NCCO is trying to foster this.
- ▷ Just keep providing diverse opportunities to engage with topics, repertoire, conductor exchange of ideas, programs, and allow members to traverse these difficult waters through conversation and interaction.
- ▷ It seems that simply building community and having the conversation about these things is the place to start in examining this question, which it seems that NCCO is making every effort to do.

Never sensed racism (6 responses, 6.1%)

- ▷ I have never sensed a whit of racism in this fine organization.
- ▷ I don't feel NCCO is racist.
- ▷ I don't believe that NCCO is a racist organization. Continue to be open to all performances, literature and research.
- ▷ This question infers that NCCO is racist. I object strongly to this characterization.
- ▷ I have never felt that NCCO was a racist organization, but I realize actively becoming anti-racist is another step. But I don't really know how to achieve that.
- ▷ I don't feel we are. If this is going to be a political organization, then we are missing the point.

Power (4 responses, 4.0%)

- ▷ Define power first. This statement makes it sound like the ultimate goal is that anyone, regardless of race, creed, etc. might have authority over another. What is "power" in our profession and in the architecture of our leadership and how can it be distributed to ensure that diverse voices can be heard and diverse bodies can serve and be served.
- ▷ Share with the membership your plans to redistribute and equitably share power.
- ▷ What kind of power does NCCO have that needs to be redistributed and shared equitably? We are a volunteer organization of college choir directors. What kind of overt racism needs to be confronted here? I must admit to being completely flummoxed by this entire survey.
- ▷ To answer this question, it would be helpful to know what NCCO is supposed to be designed to "do." Is there actual power to be had, outside of organizational politics? If it is only the latter, then diversify the leadership. Perhaps for one year, make a commitment only to nominate officers from marginalized groups. If there is actual power (i.e., someone's tenure could depend on acceptance to a presentation position at a conference), then this is a much more complex answer.

Support / Funding

- ▷ Provide fellowships for memberships and conference attendance for BIPOC.
- ▷ Spend money on commissions and scholarships.
- ▷ This requires research and careful consideration, but also requires that NCCO "put its money where its mouth is" by funding these choirs' travel and hotel fees.

Involving students of color

- ▷ Help us develop ways to succeed in getting more students if color involved in our ensembles.
- ▷ Mentoring graduate studies for people of color, particularly black people in America's music education and conducting programs.
- ▷ Investing in school/youth choral programs that would raise future members ready to carry the organization forward with equity.

Specific ideas / suggestions

- ▷ This is just one idea. I have already mentioned that many excellent professors do not receive support for conference attendance (or it is laughable - I could have \$150 per year.) The same is even more true for supporting ensemble travel. Consequently, no audition recordings are submitted by choirs and programs that really have something to offer. Since we are all now used to better living through technology, why not make it known that if a choir is selected by blind audition to perform, a few places will be held for choirs who must perform via live streaming. The same could be true of presentations.

Individual responsibility

- ▷ I think we all need to acknowledge our own inherent bias. I know I have begun to engage in that process myself and it's a hard thing to do, but we must be honest and true to ourselves first to overcome the ignorant attitudes of others instead of just pretending it's not there or stating "I don't associate with those people or think that way" as that's not enough. It never has been enough and likely never will be but we must be intentional in word and act. It doesn't mean folks are intentionally racist but if you haven't experienced racism yourself you

simply don't know. You may have witnessed and decried racist acts but as a white man I just don't know what it is to be black, meaning I don't worry about getting killed by the police or murdered while out jogging, these issues are beyond systemic and it makes me ill.

- ▷ NCCO will always be the sum of its individual members. Racism is an individual problem and will only be solved by individual efforts. Trying to "move toward being a more anti-racist organization" is the wrong goal.

Not sure

- ▷ unknown
- ▷ I don't know specifically, but I'm listening!
- ▷ I don't have enough knowledge to answer this question.
- ▷ I have no idea. I feel like my college choir is the most diverse group on our entire campus, because members are selected based on

their abilities and nothing else. But perhaps it requires more concerted efforts for professional organizations like NCCO to be purposeful in attempts to work towards what can sometimes be rather nebulous goals.

- ▷ Very little comes to mind.
- ▷ I really don't know.

N/A

- ▷ N/A

- ▷ NA

Other

- ▷ Ask a different and better question.
- ▷ NCCO is not really a major player in this. Seems like it would be more meaningful a question if NCCO had any real influence in faculty hiring, compensation, tenure, and promotion. A particular vanity of our profession is that some of us confuse our role in improving the lives of individuals and beautifying our communities with changing the world fundamentally. Perhaps consciously encouraging mutual regard and personal humility at the individual level

would be a good step. How are these things rewarded? Are they rewarded?

- ▷ Based on this form and communications from the board this year, it appears this is perhaps the most important values of the organization. I'm not sure a survey is the best place to offer substantive answers to this question.
- ▷ See previous responses as they are all framed with this in mind. Bravo for calling this out so boldly.



Through your observations and experiences, please list ways in which NCCO has colluded or been complicit with discrimination, prejudice, bias, etc. (78 responses)

None, none observed (18 responses, 23.1%)

- ▷ None (5)
- ▷ none observed

- ▷ I am pleased to say I haven't witnessed any instances.

- ▷ None observed or experienced.
- ▷ I do not have any significant observations/experiences of this personally, but it is good for the organization to ask so that those who have are able to express them either anonymously or personally.
- ▷ I have not felt this.
- ▷ Not observed
- ▷ I have never seen anything from NCCO that I felt was inappropriate in any way.
- ▷ None that I can tell.
- ▷ I haven't witnessed it.
- ▷ I have not ever witnessed anything related to this topic that I know of and as a former executive board member I sure hope I haven't been complicit. I agree the question needs to be posited as there are very likely some hurt feelings out there in our membership if we actually consider our larger learned behaviors as a society. That being said, our conferences and

publications are intentionally competitive so if members have serious concerns, perhaps after being politely rejected from an opportunity to express their viewpoints through performance, presentation, or publication for example, there needs to be some context. I guess maybe we're not entirely inclusive when you think about it, however if we became a "come one, come all" organization in terms of the standards for performance, presentation, and publication people would likely disengage from the organization.

- ▷ I think NCCO has not necessarily done this anymore than any other professional organizations in the arts.
- ▷ I really have not seen any observations or experiences regarding this question in any NCCO conferences.
- ▷ I haven't seen any. I am a brown, Jewish, Gay man and have never felt discriminated against by NCCO.

Not sure, I don't know, unaware of any (13 responses, 16.7%)

- ▷ I do not know.
- ▷ Not sure
- ▷ Honestly, I haven't participated actively enough in the organization to feel I can give you an accurate answer.
- ▷ I am unaware of negative collusion and/or complicity.
- ▷ I have much more experience with ACDA, so a lot of my comments relate to both. I don't know of any specific answers to this question.
- ▷ I don't feel close enough to the organizational structure to answer this.

- ▷ I don't have enough experience with NCCO to comment on this.
- ▷ Beyond the clear and appropriate bias toward excellence in collegiate choral music in all its facets, I am unaware of collusion or complicity regarding discrimination.
- ▷ Not aware of any
- ▷ I'm not aware of any actions that fit this.
- ▷ I don't know of any. Maybe I've had blinders on?
- ▷ I do not know personally of any instance.
- ▷ unknown

N/A, no basis or experience to assess (11 responses, 14.1%)

- ▷ N/A (2)
- ▷ No basis to assess.
- ▷ My experience with NCCO isn't long-standing enough to notice any blatant infractions.
- ▷ No experience to draw from here.
- ▷ I am not qualified or inclined to point fingers.
- ▷ Not applicable in my short tenure as a member.

- ▷ Not enough experiences to comment.
- ▷ I can't answer this. I have not been close enough to the core9& the group.
- ▷ Not enough experience with NCCO to know.
- ▷ I can't answer that since I have not been close enough to the core.

Lack of diversity (9 responses, 11.5%)

- ▷ There's a very obvious if unspoken "old guard/new guard" thing going on between the founding members (mostly older white men, including me) and the younger generation of higher ed choral directors. Things are moving in the right direction, but we have to let the new folks do the planning, instead of having the older

folks doing the planning *on behalf of* those not in the conversation.

- ▷ I don't blame NCCO per se, but rather the systemic bias toward white male collegiate choral directors. Last time I looked around at an NCCO conference, there were comparatively few women in attendance.

- ▷ Until recently, the board and leadership were very white. Glad to see this changing. Same concerns re: repertoire.
- ▷ As a liberal woman, I frequently experience bias/discrimination in our male-dominated field. However, it is not productive for me to complain and cry about it - I continue to strive for excellence and let my work speak for itself. This survey is probably the most offensive thing I've encountered thus far in NCCO.
- ▷ I am a white woman. I have experienced all of the negatives that go with that. So, yes, I would like for under-represented populations to have more representation, but at the same time I

feel that some of my white male colleagues are being cancelled.

- ▷ No bias--just my perspective on the leadership (which is not extensive) is that it has been more white male.
- ▷ White men have been at the top of choral music in all "high" areas of choral music (primarily professional and collegiate). That ranking has perpetuated itself.
- ▷ There have been too few choirs from HBCU universities/colleges in the past
- ▷ Not making an effort to diversify the organization. Not (yet) addressing racism in membership.

Elitism / Canon (6 responses, 7.7%)

- ▷ I would probably say by holding a narrow focus on the Western canon as "gospel"--but efforts are being made to broaden the organization's perspective, for sure. These should be continued and expanded.
- ▷ Not just NCCO, but ACDA and other conferences have become conferences for the elite and wealthy. If ensembles are selected by a panel of blind adjudicators, then discrimination, prejudice, and bias should be more or less eliminated, provided the adjudicators from varied institutions and cultural backgrounds themselves.
- ▷ Not challenging the narrative. Promoting the "canon." Not calling out publishers. Offering the same people who already have power and privilege in our field the opportunities for leadership.
- ▷ It is my observation that our organization's leadership is constructed of professors from the

top, most elite and selective institutions. This is not a negative observation, just one to note when identifying individuals to lead. Perhaps it will strengthen our institution if we make an intentional effort to engage conductor/teachers in leadership roles from a variety of tertiary backgrounds (community colleges, small private schools, small state schools, etc).

- ▷ We focus too much on elitism in performance and token leadership roles. Do not get me wrong, we all enjoy a high quality performance, but I must admit that I have enjoyed many more musical experiences that came from the heart.
- ▷ NCCO has inherited rather a modus operandi that reflects Western European attitudes in Classical music. It is history, and now you will be open to innovation.

Active steps

- ▷ I have not attended the conventions, so cannot speak to those. However, I note that the organization has identified a shift in its membership and programming overtime that indicates a conscious attention to addressing these issues (per emails this year).
- ▷ I think distancing from ACDA and their practices is a start. Let's get more women and people of color on the board.
- ▷ It appears to me that the organization is taking important and positive steps in the right direction in this regard. We are all late to the table, but I sensed that NCCO's current agenda will yield highly positive results. You must not let this slip below a top priority.

- ▷ That this organization is addressing antiracism head-on and continuing to do so is an important step in enacting change. Collegiate conductors have a vast amount of privilege we can leverage toward antiracism not only in NCCO, but in the profession and in our local contexts.

Positive atmosphere, inclusion

- ▷ I have experienced a total inclusion atmosphere whenever I attended.
- ▷ I can't think of anything specific. It's choirs. I feel like the organization has included many diverse voices in our work over the years.

Policy / Structure

- ▷ The guidelines for submission to perform at conferences.
- ▷ I have not observed or experienced this regarding personal demographics. I have observed some presumption of liberal political stances.
- ▷ I have observed a prejudice toward established, "named" choral programs and faculty, but I'm not sure that's the facet this survey seeks to address.
- ▷ Program guidelines

Exclusion

- ▷ Making the conference a comfortable place for those already established in the field, those who know each other, those who already have a lot in common. It's hard to break into that as a newcomer.
- ▷ I often see the same people (regardless of race, gender, etc.) leading workshops/sessions/holding leadership positions. There is a wealth of talent in our organization that is not represented by the same faces.
- ▷ My perception of NCCO is that it is exclusive. Changing that perception would be incredibly impactful.

Systemic bias

- ▷ Well, it's higher ed, so we've really all bought into this system. I think now we are kind of like the Murdoch sons -- we know something needs to change, but we tend to prefer slow change because it's not so jarring. It's not that it's right, but it is what we tend to do now.
- ▷ I'm clarifying here that I am a white, heterosexual male in America, so what I'm saying is for me as well. Being complicit in this field means not doing all that I've mentioned above. By not reaching into the systemic issues plaguing the current inequalities, NCCO and every organization like it will continue to ask these questions. It's time to make *real, significant* risks to show that race, gender, and other qualifiers should be catalysts to make *permanent* changes over the coming decades.

Other

- ▷ I think a survey is not the ideal format for answering this question, as it eliminates the possibility of dialogue.
- ▷ Why is this particular organization so concerned about this? It's *choir*, not an organization for social justice. While the two share some correlation, the latter should not overtake the former.
- ▷ Choirs have tended to be white and sing music by white composers. But in this sense, this reflects me and my programming as well.
- ▷ Conductors and scholars have to be open and accepting to colleagues whose work area and topics are different from our own. That is how we learn and grow. NCCO has not intentionally denigrated research sectors in the past, nor will it ever do so.
- ▷ I'm sure it's no more than society at large.
- ▷ I prefer not to share at this time and instead focus my critique on next steps. If you would like to engage with me on this, I am happy to do this via phone.

Visioning for the future: how do you hope NCCO will look five years from now? What changes will have occurred? (86 responses)

Inclusivity / Community (28 responses, 32.6%)

- ▷ I believe we will have come through today's challenges with a greater sense of community in singing, hopefully having moved the pendulum slightly away from the cult of celebrity towards our focus on education and diversity of artistry.
- ▷ Open, inclusive, welcoming, and continued work in diversity and access.
- ▷ I wanna see more directors from HBCUs and more directors from community colleges. If we have made NCCO relevant and accessible to those two groups, we will have come along way.
- ▷ I hope it will continue in its attempts to have membership and offerings reflect the diversity of our professional constituency, and that statistics reflect this trend.
- ▷ Comments after sessions by individuals of color will never include, "He/She was so articulate."
- ▷ I would love to see NCCO become more vibrant, more welcoming to all collegiate colleagues (which means reaching out).
- ▷ More involvement from two year, community, 4-year colleges and universities.
- ▷ I hope it will be very inclusive of collegiate choirs with different abilities. I hope repertoire not currently seen as worthy of performance in a college setting will be more respected and valued. I hope the newer voices in the field will be welcomed, whether or not these people are seen to have high status
- ▷ More inclusion of smaller, non-tier 1 institution members.
- ▷ Conferences will feature colleges and universities from across the Carnegie rankings.
- ▷ A larger and more diverse membership that will include more conductors from small colleges
- ▷ Continue to focus on/advocate for collegiate choral work, but include a bigger umbrella of leadership and membership.
- ▷ Diverse! And more inclusive.
- ▷ Just more opportunities for all types of higher ed through sessions, concerts, leadership (large, small, HBCU, private, public)
- ▷ My hope is that honest strides are made to include conductors/teachers that don't currently feel wanted by NCCO.
- ▷ I hope that it continues to be an organization that helps college and university choir directors to do their best work and that it becomes an even more communal organization.
- ▷ A broader, more inclusive membership (in attendees and performers and speakers) which works hand-in-hand in re-establishing the very highest levels of scholarship and repertoire.
- ▷ Hopefully larger and more diverse. Representative of all sizes and levels of programs. An organization that champions innovation and excellence, but never at the expense of its members or prospective members.
- ▷ More joy. A real sense that everyone is seen
- ▷ Our profession will include more marginalized people, repertoire
- ▷ I imagine our focus on inclusion will create more focus on diversity, however it's difficult to implement those kind of sea-changes in such a short time period.
- ▷ In five years, NCCO should see the fruits of investing in those who have not been supported in the past. More people will flock to NCCO because they know they will not only be accepted, but brought to the front. More choirs will see NCCO not as a daring organization, but a new basis for investing in I.D.E.A.
- ▷ More inclusiveness of directors and groups from all socio-economic backgrounds. Valuing the singers creating the performance more than we do the score or conductor.
- ▷ Have a younger, more diverse membership.
- ▷ I hope that it will be a place where a myriad of ideas are welcomed. To be fair, I saw a move toward that this summer. This survey is great, and I applaud the effort. I thank you for asking and hope that you will receive what might seem like a negative review in the spirit in which it was offered. I am not negative about the organization. There are fine people, but it seems as if we would benefit by having more variation in experience and points of view.
- ▷ Board will have found willing under-represented members and be working well collaboratively to express a wider scope of the choral experience.
- ▷ Do not be competitive but be inclusive.

- ▷ Like the students we're conducting at ALL of our institutions.
- ▷ A radical shift. A diverse community. Sessions and topics that are applicable to everyone.

Reputation / Impact (11 responses, 12.8%)

- ▷ NCCO would be more treasured by Higher Ed conductors.
- ▷ I hope that it continues to be an organization that helps college and university choir directors to do their best work and that it becomes an even more communal organization.
- ▷ I feel like NCCO is growing and establishing itself more permanently from ACDA. I like that and hope it keeps doing so.
- ▷ Broader appeal
- ▷ Clearly, NCCO should be an exemplar of diversity, equity, inclusion, and excellence. We should look back in five years and wonder how we had not reached that level by 2020.
- ▷ It will be a prominent collegiate choral organization with excellence as one of its primary goals through diverse performances, research, pedagogy and repertoire.
- ▷ You will have an advisory board on diversity, grants for creation, performance and research targeted for diverse project profiles, an ever-more prestigious journal, conferences that address the most innovative choral topics of

Affirming BIPOC and LGTBQIA+ mentorship structures. A celebration of a global and culturally affirming choral canon. Redefined excellence.

the day but also in-depth scholarship of choral repertoires, and a rich professional network of collegiate conductors assisting each other.

- ▷ I hope that NCCO will act as a leader directing the change we so desperately need in our profession.
- ▷ I love NCCO. My only hope is that we continue to hear from great choirs that we haven't heard from. And I hope some of them are from traditionally under represented groups and HBCU's.
- ▷ In my opinion, NCCO is redundant, bordering on irrelevance and is now grasping for attention. While NCCO is not entirely "subsidiary" to ACDA (see earlier response), it certainly operates in overlapping constituencies. The difference is NCCO is more focused, serving a smaller, more elite (gasp!) community. In five years, I think NCCO will look largely the same. That's ok.
- ▷ With the present leadership, I believe NCCO will be more recognized by the entire choral community.

Diversity of Repertoire / Performance Ensembles (10 responses, 11.6%)

- ▷ More energetic and diverse programming and sessions
- ▷ Sessions or performances featuring music composed by women or anyone of color will cease being a novelty. White choirs who perform a spiritual on their program will do so because of its pedagogical and historical quality and the term "cultural appropriation" will not be heard. Black choirs who perform the Mozart Requiem will be lauded for their artistry rather than compared to a Gospel Choir.
- ▷ Greater emphasis on non-Western traditional musics, performers, sessions.
- ▷ More diversity in membership, racially and musically.
- ▷ The choral canon is more inclusive of all cultures but maintains the repertoire that has become accepted over 600 years of choral evolution.
- ▷ I'll go to a conference and not know any of the repertoire that's performed.

- ▷ Non-genre biased communication and broader genre inclusion in performances and topics.
- ▷ You will have an advisory board on diversity, grants for creation, performance and research targeted for diverse project profiles, an ever-more prestigious journal, conferences that address the most innovative choral topics of the day but also in-depth scholarship of choral repertoires, and a rich professional network of collegiate conductors assisting each other.
- ▷ Concerts that reflect a thoughtful, more inclusive revision of the choral canon, but without tossing the traditional canon entirely.
- ▷ A radical shift. A diverse community. Sessions and topics that are applicable to everyone. Affirming BIPOC and LGTBQIA+ mentorship structures. A celebration of a global and culturally affirming choral canon. Redefined excellence.

Size / Membership / Attendance (9 responses, 10.5%)

- ▷ Hopefully larger
- ▷ Bigger, stronger, more visible. I think NCCO is on that path right now.
- ▷ Better attended conferences
- ▷ The membership will be larger.
- ▷ A larger and more diverse membership that will include more conductors from small colleges
- ▷ We'll have several new members, whom I look forward to meeting.
- ▷ Hopefully larger and more diverse. Representative of all sizes and levels of programs.

An organization that champions innovation and excellence, but never at the expense of its members or prospective members.

- ▷ I'm not sure it will look much different than it does now and as I really consider we do have a lot of work to do in terms of engaging a more ethnically diverse membership. I'm not exactly certain how to do this but when I truly reflect upon attendance at our conferences, for example, there's much work to be done.
- ▷ Have a younger, more diverse membership.

Founding Goals / Criticism of IDEA / Preservation of canon (7 responses, 8.1%)

- ▷ The founding goals and objectives will still be central.
- ▷ Go back to music making and worry less about "topics of the day."
- ▷ I hope NCCO will look more like a professional choral organization - not a social activist organization.
- ▷ The choral canon is more inclusive of all cultures but maintains the repertoire that has become accepted over 600 years of choral evolution.
- ▷ I really hope that NCCO does not decide that they need to jump on the social justice bandwagon and abandon their primary mission of serving college choral directors. I want everyone to have access to our organization and I want to learn and grow. I don't want to have my art form used as a bludgeon against me.
- ▷ I would like to see NCCO focus on its area of specialty, choral music, and desist from trying

to be a social justice activist group. The world already has groups which specialize in that area. NCCO cannot possibly be all things to all people.

- ▷ Social/gender/sexuality/race etc. kept in its proper perspective, not as the purpose of the organization.
- ▷ An importance of Preserving the Western Choral Tradition. Rare at NCCO have I heard much Renaissance music for example, except from my own performance years ago. I realize that full Baroque/Classic Chor/Orch performances and not likely to be performed. But, I would like to see more Romantic 19th c. music performed as well as choral music from the early 20th century. Where has Britten gone?. I am happy with 21st century repertoire, since I enjoy composing SATB TTBB SSAA compositions and arrangements. If 12 college choruses perform, it would good for us to hear good a wonderful variety within each chorus.

Guiding Purpose / Values / Change Agent (7 responses, 8.1%)

- ▷ I hope that NCCO will act as a leader directing the change we so desperately need in our profession.
- ▷ Decentering performance could give us more time for those difficult discussions.
- ▷ I envision in will come out of the pandemic with a renewed purpose and vision.
- ▷ Figure out the specific distinctives of NCCO and develop them consistently; how is it different than ACDA? Why should it exist? What are its greatest gifts to American choral singing? Is it necessary?
- ▷ I hope in 5 years that diversity, equity, and inclusion will be more naturally considered part of being an excellent organization, rather than a separate category or box to tick.

- ▷ In five years, NCCO should see the fruits of investing in those who have not been supported in the past. More people will flock to NCCO because they know they will not only be accepted, but brought to the front. More choristers will see NCCO not as a daring organization, but a new basis for investing in I.D.E.A.
- ▷ Diverse, robust, strong. Prominence of conferences and publications
- ▷ A radical shift. A diverse community. Sessions and topics that are applicable to everyone. Affirming BIPOC and LGTBQIA+ mentorship structures. A celebration of a global and culturally affirming choral canon. Redefined excellence.

Focus on Choral Music / Quality (6 responses, 7.0%)

- ▷ Focus on performance of quality repertoire
- ▷ Keep a narrow focus (Collegiate Choral Directors)
- ▷ Continue to focus on/advocate for collegiate choral work, but include a bigger umbrella of leadership and membership.
- ▷ I would hope we keep focusing on highlighting quality and helping all members to raise the

level of their educational structures and artistic endeavors.

- ▷ I hope they continue to find specific needs of collegiate choral conductors/students. Finding ways to bring college choirs together to collaborate. Exchange program?
- ▷ Renewed focus on choral music and choral conducting in higher education.

Pedagogy / Teaching

- ▷ I would love to see NCCO have conversations with our music ed colleagues to talk about how our pedagogy could be updated.
- ▷ Perhaps there will be more focus on teaching music that's outside the conductor's comfort

zone. I have tended to think of our conferences as primarily academic -- in a great way, in a way I wish some peer organizations were -- but maybe we can start to include a greater hands-on, pedagogical bent.

Programming / Offerings

- ▷ I hope that NCCO continues to offer a face to face conference every other year.
- ▷ That performance and scholarship remain at the forefront of our goals.

- ▷ At least one conference with outstanding warm weather. :-)
- ▷ More frequent points of contact. (Although somewhat indirect, I do think can help address issues of equity and diversity.)

Curriculum

- ▷ Tackling coursework in higher education would be amazing. How about a joint conference with

curriculum-centered organizations, for example?

Professional Development / Support / Advocacy

- ▷ Guidance and support for continued professional development for collegiate director-teachers.
- ▷ Advocating for change where needed while preserving the core of the choral art so that future generations can have their lives enriched by choral music as much as it has done so for current members.
- ▷ Building concrete ways to support the growth and development of choral programs in all

levels of academia, so that even with reduced numbers of available students in schools, we can create a higher level of involvement. Beyond advocacy bumper stickers we need to show how what we do is deep teaching and learning, development of understanding, unequalled depth of experience, and creation of more human humans.

Scholarship / Research

- ▷ I hope it continues to become a scholarly organization.
- ▷ I'd like to see NCCO's scholarly work, now that Choral Scholar is combined with American Choral Review, have the same level of visibility as Choral Journal through ACDA. This might seem formidable, but can be attainable.
- ▷ That performance and scholarship remain at the forefront of our goals.

- ▷ A broader, more inclusive membership (in attendees and performers and speakers) which works hand-in-hand in re-establishing the very highest levels of scholarship and repertoire.
- ▷ Diverse, robust, strong. Prominence of conferences and publications

Collaboration / Partner organizations

- ▷ Personally, I would like to see more collaboration with ACDA. At the time of NCCO's founding, it seemed evident that a number of ACDA members were disgruntled and felt they were not getting enough press/performance opportunities, etc. there and so spun off into an organization that served their more narrow needs. I was a charter member not because I felt like that but because as a collegiate conductor, I felt it was important to stay connected and not to

contribute to a split, so belonged to both. They should not be at odds, yet it still feels to me at times that some of the members I speak with are at odds with ACDA. Each organization has things it does especially well and we can comfortably co-exist in the future, I hope.

- ▷ Tackling coursework in higher education would be amazing. How about a joint conference with curriculum-centered organizations, for example?

No opinion, unsure

- ▷ No opinion on this at the moment.
- ▷ Nothing to suggest
- ▷ Not sure.

- ▷ NA
- ▷ unknown

Other

- ▷ I'm bad at long-range planning/visioning.
- ▷ I hope NCCO will still exist. Colleges across the country are slashing budgets which will

make it more difficult for individuals to join and travel to conferences, and more difficult for ensembles to travel.



Anything else you wish to share? (62 responses)

Keep up the good work

- ▷ Keep up the fine work!

- ▷ Stay on the cutting edge, diversity, equality, and excellence in choral music.

No

- ▷ N/A
- ▷ No
- ▷ no
- ▷ Nothing at this time!
- ▷ No thanks!

- ▷ Nothing at this time.
- ▷ Not that I can think of.
- ▷ NA
- ▷ Not at this time. I need to be more a part of discussions regarding change to answer.

Positive: Thanks / gratitude / excitement / appreciation

- ▷ Kudos to NCCO for asking these questions!
- ▷ Thanks for your work and service to move the organization forward during this tender time.
- ▷ I hope you will continue these efforts, and know that you are moving us all forward. Thank you.
- ▷ Thanks for sending this out.
- ▷ I am grateful to the executive board and the national board and all those who assist them for their valuable contributions to the life of our

profession and the gift of their time, as well as for the opportunity to complete this survey.

- ▷ Thank you for reaching out to us!
- ▷ Thanks for being there! :-)
- ▷ I am really thrilled that NCCO is digging this deep. None of my answers should be regarding as angry.
- ▷ I have tremendous respect and appreciation for all your efforts in recent years. The energy is positive and inspiring.

- ▷ I very much appreciate your work during COVID and BLM. NCCO has been thoughtful and proactive, and it is much appreciated.
- ▷ Very proud of the current leadership & efforts in positive directions.
- ▷ The leadership should be commended for all you are doing, including this questionnaire, to face down the societal injustices that have robbed so many of dignity and a sense of full participation in the brotherhood of human kind. Choral music is a means toward that end. Use it.
- ▷ I really appreciate that you asked these questions, and I'm really grateful for all of the (unpaid! volunteer!) work you all do on our behalf. I really believe in the potential of this organization, and I trust the leadership's judgement as we go forward. I remain incredibly fond of and grateful for all of you.
- ▷ Thanks to everyone who has created so much over many years. It's a great organization fundamentally
- ▷ Very pleased and impressed by this questionnaire. Comments are not meant to be negative.
- ▷ Thank you for your work.
- ▷ I applaud this survey -- its existence, its focus.
- ▷ Just my gratitude
- ▷ Thanks for these efforts.
- ▷ Thank you for your work!
- ▷ I am very happy to have belong to NCCO for a very long time. I look forward to hearing and observing many enriching new trends, wonderful new and old repertoire, and continuing enrichment with my choral colleague friends, for at least five more years!
- ▷ The fact that this survey was so thoughtful is encouraging for the future of the organization. It shows that the NCCO leadership is making efforts to improve its inclusivity, not just say that they are doing so.
- ▷ Thank you all for opening the door for this.

Positive: Offer to be more involved

- ▷ I have rotated through my state involvement in ACDA serving as R&S chair, President and Vice President as well as working on two Southern

Division conferences. I would be happy to help NCCO should you want me to help.

Advice, concern, caution

- ▷ Beware of mission drift.
- ▷ Please focus more on issues related to our craft, or I will be forced to terminate my membership.
- ▷ Diversity is a valuable and valid goal. Let us also identify and celebrate the good work that has gone before and should be preserved in the currently dominant culture.
- ▷ I love this organization. I really do. Please stick to music and less about changing our politics. I am a middle of the road person when it comes to politics and I want less of it in my life and certainly in the music making process. Stick to the amazing things you are doing at conferences!
- ▷ Please don't ignore the treasures of earlier music at the altar of that which is current or popular.
- ▷ If it helps offer any perspective, I am a left-leaning Biden voter who comes from the bluest of blue states. I support gay marriage, transgender rights, equal rights regardless of race, etc. I just feel that these issues, while indeed relevant to our profession, should not be the primary focus of *any* professional organization for choral conductors.
- ▷ The racial essentialism is too much. I know this is done with good intentions, but it's become divisive. There seems to be no room for diversity of thought. I am happy that we are supportive of each other and becoming a more diverse family! But, let's get to the choral music - what brings conductors together. Another forum on race is not what we need.

Negative: General

- ▷ I have received nothing useful from this organization in the last two years - it feels like a farce.
- ▷ I do not plan to join regardless of what NCCO does.
- ▷ This survey is just more of the same.

Specific ideas: Membership

- ▷ Dividing membership into geographical areas does not work. Each state needs to have a single person to help coordinate and promote NCCO within the state.
- ▷ More opportunities for young professors to participate in the leadership.
- ▷ I am incredibly grateful for this organization and all the opportunities it provides to mem-

Specific ideas: Resources

- ▷ The Institute for Composer Diversity is implementing searchable database of choral repertoire by composers from underrepresented groups including those who identify in the LGBTQIA2S+ community, those of underrepresented cultural and ethnic heritages, and women. This will be a great resource for NCCO membership. It cannot be used alone, but must be used in tandem with training on appropriate ways of programming music in ways respectful to its creators. Contact me for ways that college programs can get involved with this. choral@composerdiversity.com.

Difficult to respond

- ▷ It is hard to answer many of the questions, at this time. I feel disconnected from my own institution, colleagues, and fellow musicians with the onset of covid-19 regulations and fears.
- ▷ I'm sorry that I didn't offer more responses for the substantive questions on your survey at the

Industry representative specific

- ▷ Thank you for accepting ads in your program, I personally love mingling and not having to be tied to a booth, this is different from other conferences for obvious reasons.
- ▷ Other
- ▷ I am sorry, I ran out of time and had to cut my responses short. Gotta go!
- ▷ Please know, I apologize for sounding judgmental. I believe in what you are doing in addressing the changes needed and my greatest desire is not to ever harm another person, but to protect everyone I can.
- ▷ Congratulations on the survey and on your self-awareness.
- ▷ To expand on an earlier answer - I know that NCCO is an independent organization, but it does feel a bit like a subsidiary organization of ACDA, and I'm not sure this is a bad thing or necessarily needs to change.

bers, and non-members alike. If we consider the concept of "membership" itself are we perhaps putting up barriers to inclusion? I realize that question could create a huge paradigm shift in terms of how organizations operate though it's a question worth considering.

- ▷ I would love to see NCCO create a document and resources that help faculty of color in the work place. Maybe creating a document that encourages universities to make their climate survey public for the general public and potential candidates. Create a document that FOC can go to and bring to their employers if they are feeling overworked, underpaid, and discriminated against.
- ▷ As a first step, everyone (in the world!) should read "Invisible Women; Data bias in a world designed for men"; and other books which look at the biases against people of color, etc.

end. I will admit that I, like millions of others, am simply exhausted physically, mentally and emotionally right now. I just don't have enough of me left now to offer much.

- ▷ After 38 years as a collegiate choral conductor, and 55+ years as a choir member, I am much like my choir library—full of great old music!
- ▷ Less importantly, the ranking system on the previous page was cumbersome
- ▷ I hope that intentionality will make a difference in our organization. What we need is more BIPOC conductors at the college level, and NCCO cannot really help with that. I do not believe the organization (or our journal/conferences) is inherently racist and any particular way. I do believe in conserving the great tradition of choral singing in the Western tradition, while including world music, non-classical styles, and modern/extended choral techniques. As long as the choirs we present are excellent at what they do, I will continue to attend conferences when I can.

APPENDIX B Guiding Principles Data

Note: Bold face and color indicate the **Top 3** and **Bottom 3**.

ACCESS

NCCO is available to individuals with any and all abilities.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
31	19	9	5	13	9	9	7	13	9	21

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 31	Bottom 3 Score	= 43
Lowest Priority Score	= 21	Polarization Score	= 16
Top 3 Score	= 59		

ADVOCACY

NCCO serves as a voice for the choral field and choral music in higher education.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
59	16	13	9	16	9	15	3	11	4	1

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 59	Bottom 3 Score	= 16
Lowest Priority Score	= 1	Polarization Score	= 72
Top 3 Score	= 88		

COMMUNITY

NCCO actively works to foster an ecosystem of connected individuals.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
32	27	18	12	14	16	16	8	4	6	2

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 32	Bottom 3 Score	= 12
Lowest Priority Score	= 2	Polarization Score	= 65
Top 3 Score	= 77		

COMPOSITION

NCCO works to actively foster the creation of new choral music.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	16	23	13	10	15	11	6	10	18	17

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 10	Bottom 3 Score	= 45
Lowest Priority Score	= 17	Polarization Score	= 4
Top 3 Score	= 49		

DIVERSITY

NCCO respects and values the unique perspectives and experiences of all members.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
44	14	16	12	14	15	15	11	3	12	3

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 44	Bottom 3 Score	= 18
Lowest Priority Score	= 3	Polarization Score	= 56
Top 3 Score	= 74		

EDUCATION/PEDAGOGY

NCCO exists to serve the needs of choral educators and students.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
45	32	19	11	12	11	17	6	5	3	2

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 45	Bottom 3 Score	= 10
Lowest Priority Score	= 2	Polarization Score	= 86
Top 3 Score	= 96		

EQUITY

NCCO ensures that all members have the opportunity to fully participate in its activities.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
36	21	11	10	16	16	14	3	8	13	8

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 36	Bottom 3 Score	= 29
Lowest Priority Score	= 8	Polarization Score	= 39
Top 3 Score	= 68		

EXCELLENCE

NCCO strives for the highest levels of achievement possible in all areas.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
50	14	18	17	8	6	6	8	9	6	15

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 50	Bottom 3 Score	= 30
Lowest Priority Score	= 15	Polarization Score	= 52
Top 3 Score	= 82		

INCLUSIVITY

NCCO ensures that all feel welcomed and valued.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
46	14	13	11	14	16	7	13	8	3	12

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 46	Bottom 3 Score	= 23
Lowest Priority Score	= 12	Polarization Score	= 50
Top 3 Score	= 73		

PERFORMANCE

NCCO serves as a venue and amplifier for choral performance.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
32	26	24	22	9	7	10	9	13	6	5

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 32	Bottom 3 Score	= 24
Lowest Priority Score	= 5	Polarization Score	= 58
Top 3 Score	= 82		

RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP

NCCO prioritizes the discovery of new knowledges and inquiries.

Respondents to indicate this principle as priority #...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
23	27	26	20	13	9	17	12	5	7	2

SUMMARY

Highest Priority Score	= 23	Bottom 3 Score	= 14
Lowest Priority Score	= 2	Polarization Score	= 62
Top 3 Score	= 76		

Compiled and analyzed by Dominick DiOrio
Designed by Miguel Felipe & Dominick DiOrio

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