

Safe Space Commitment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Safe Space?

A safe and equitable space is one that centers the needs and desires of its employees, residents, visitors and community members inclusive of race, gender, religion, ability, income, and sexual identity. We acknowledge that historically, access to public spaces did not include Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). This is why it is necessary to ensure that this coalition of partners agree to make our shared spaces a place where everyone can feel safe and welcomed.

About the Safe Space Commitment & Requirements

What is the Safe Space Commitment?

The Safe Space Commitment is a guiding document that outlines the needs for safe outdoor or public spaces for BIPOC. Organizations that sign onto the commitment are expected to uphold the principles and values in the commitment document.

What's required of my organization as a participant?

We understand that this work is a journey, not a checklist. Organizations (and individuals) are at different places along this meandering path. We want to practice what we preach and create an inclusive community. We offer three levels of participation for organizations, and one for individuals, starting with entry level and all the way up to long term, sustained commitment for antiracism work at the institutional level.

How do I sign up to participate in the Safe Space Coalition?

Please visit the website at <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/safe-spaces>, read the agreement, review the participation tiers, and determine your organization's current level. You can then sign up via the online form (at the bottom of the agreement on the web page). There are no gatekeepers: we trust each organization to be honest about where they are in this journey. We created tiered levels because we recognize some organizations have been doing this work for some time while others are just starting out. We also believe the tiers can be inspirations.

Where can I find more information?

Please visit our website <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/safe-spaces>. You may also contact Eli Caref or Rosana Da Silva if you have any questions.

Whose initiative is this?

This initiative was borne out of the Diversity Equity Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) Subcommittee of the Hudson-Harbor Educators Work Group and the Citizen Advisory Committee of the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP) and the Billion Oyster Project's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. One of 28 estuaries of national significance, HEP brings partners together through work groups and committees to work collaboratively to develop and implement an Action Agenda that advances progress towards five long-term goals for the region - water quality, habitat and ecological health, public access and stewardship, port and maritime activities, and community engagement.

How Can I Get Involved?

I want to participate but I don't think I can get my organization to sign up. What can I do?

You can sign up as an individual.

How can I share best practices or recommend resources with the coalition?

We will be creating an online submission form for sharing resources (books, articles, videos, etc.). Submissions will be posted on the Coalition website. We are also considering creating a listserv so that participants can communicate and support each other as well as a regular e-newsletter that will showcase participants' work and stories. Please look out for notices in the near future.

Is there sample language for Safe Space signage?

We are asking participating organizations to download the agreement (available as a downloadable PDF on our website). We may develop something else (like a decal) in the future if resources become available.

How are organizations held accountable?

We want to create a community of organizations for sharing this journey and collective growth. This is why there is no oversight entity or a committee of people reviewing participating organizations. We hope organizations and representatives of organizations will hold each other accountable through regular communication and at the annual summit where participating organizations will share what they have accomplished and challenges they need to overcome.

We also hope to find resources to create an e-newsletter that can feature participating organizations on a regular basis. We believe this is another way to hold each other accountable.

Is there a cost to join?

There is no cost to join. However, all tiers require that your organization invest resources - both human and financial - toward implementing the DEIJ work (such as bystander training, implicit bias workshops, etc.).