Voice of Witness Racial Equity Statement

For over a decade, Voice of Witness has been committed to our mission to advance human rights by amplifying the voices of people (“narrators”) impacted by and fighting against injustice. Through two key programs—our oral history book series and education program—we center and amplify these voices, teach ethics-driven storytelling, and partner with advocates to:

- support and build agency within narrator communities marginalized by race-, gender-, and class-based inequities;
- raise awareness and foster thoughtful, empathy-based critical inquiry and understanding of injustices;
- and inform long-term efforts to protect and advance human rights.

Racial equity is at the core of this mission. Voice of Witness (VOW) is committed to racial equity both internally through our organizational culture and processes, and externally through our collaborative programming and advocacy. We are committed to ongoing learning and collective transformation of oppressive systems and institutions that uphold inequities.

VOW prioritizes attention to racial equity and the centering of marginalized “narrator community” perspectives at every level of our work, including but not limited to the following internal and external processes:

- Recruitment for staff, board, advisory groups, contracting, and consultancies
- Developing partnerships with external organizations, with a focus on grassroots organizations that address the root causes of inequity and collaborate with narrator communities
- Ensuring narrator communities are primary stakeholders and integral co-creators of VOW’s work, including book development, educational resource creation, partnerships and trainings, events and panels, and outreach processes
- Ensuring that our core values of equity, inclusion, and justice are reflected and enacted through every policy
- Considering critical issues of implicit and/or unconscious bias and discrimination, and addressing any such issues with transparency and accountability; conducting ongoing staff trainings and meetings to learn about and discuss issues of equity and access
- Operationalizing policies, programs, and activities with intentional efforts to identify and avoid discrimination and barriers to access
- Collecting the following data when appropriate in order to evaluate the impact of our equity goals: population served by race, national origin, and income level, which includes communities of color, Indigenous communities, immigrant and refugee communities, and communities that have primary languages other than English
- Soliciting feedback from narrator communities at every level of programming and using these evaluations in the development and improvement of our policies and work

Voice of Witness is committed to continuous learning and the integration of racial equity into all aspects of our operations and programming, which will allow us to better serve our narrator communities and carry out our mission of amplifying voices impacted by—and fighting against—injustice.