



Dear colleagues and community members,

As a collective of employees across departments at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (MCA), we are excited to share our intent to form our union, MCA Workers United (MCAWU). Following the MCA's vision for artists and audiences, as workers we too are pursuing a creative and diverse future as exemplified in a just, safe, and equitable workplace. The museum's mission—to create a sense of community through providing a place to discuss and contemplate art, culture, and issues of our day—aligns with our vision to imagine a more fair distribution of power, and is why we, the undersigned workers, are forming our union with AFSCME Council 31.

Our organizing is informed by the experiences we share as workers at the MCA, no matter the department, division, or role in which we work. While we understand the challenges all museums face, measures to balance the budget while also aiming to return to pre-pandemic attendance numbers have caused a vicious cycle of staff burnout and turnover. We are overworked in a number of ways: through near-constant exhibition turnovers, hosting in-person programming on par with a pre-pandemic calendar, tight publication deadlines, and more. We are frequently required to work outside our job responsibilities, and often on evenings and weekends, to compensate for the staff shortage. In short, we are doing more (exhibitions, programs, publications) with less (staffing and funding).

We believe there is a better way. We are a part of a legacy of MCA workers who have advocated for ourselves and been brave enough to call for change. The next step in this process is forming our union so that we can be protected in our efforts and collectively bargain around our own working conditions. We are part of a growing movement of cultural workers in and around Chicago and across the country who are ensuring that we have a seat at the table. We demand a voice in the decisions that are made for the future and well being of the museum. We firmly believe that all employees of the Museum of Contemporary Art deserve:

- A democratic voice in our jobs and in the way the museum functions, to determine our own futures as workers within the institution.
- Wages reflective of the labor we perform for the institution, that are adequate to support ourselves and our families, that are competitive within our fields, and that keep pace with the rising inflation and cost of living in Chicago.
- A guarantee that our benefits will not be decreased, including sick leave, paid time off, and health insurance, and expanded where possible, including equitable benefits for both full- and part-time workers, and overtime and comp time for extra hours worked.
- Layoff and workplace protections, in light of COVID-era layoffs and more recent departmental restructures.
- Transparency and clear policies from museum leadership, particularly around compensation, and opportunities for professional development and promotion.
- A fair process to resolve problems at work, jointly where possible and with an independent third party when necessary.
- A work environment that fosters employee growth, supports personal and professional development and provides opportunities for advancement.
- A welcoming space for all, inclusive of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, youth, disability, and more, and the distribution of resources to reflect that value in our programming.
- The right to speak freely about matters of importance without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

Our union is the framework to ensure accountability from leadership. With the right to bargain collectively, we can meet leadership across the table as co-equals to determine our future.

We call on MCA leadership to respond to our organizing in good faith. The law ensures that we are free to organize without interference, intimidation, or coercion by management, and we ask MCA leadership to respect it, and further, to refrain from wasting museum resources on anti-union lawyers or consultants.

Instead, we believe we can work alongside each other to improve the quality of our working environment and museum.

Finally, to our fellow workers: We want and need everyone's voice to help shape MCAWU. Together, we are all the union. We encourage every worker to join and support our efforts, which stem from our deep care for each other and the MCA.

In solidarity,  
Museum of Contemporary Art Workers United (MCAWU)

**Amy Babinec**  
Tour Manager

**Diego Beltran**  
Preparator Assistant

**Llewyn Blossfeld**  
Visitor Experience Assistant

**Lloyd-Princeton Cangé**  
Visitor Experience Associate

**Iris Colburn**  
Curatorial Associate

**Erica Erdmann**  
Exhibition Project Manager

**Sean Gannon**  
Preparator Assistant

**Rebecca Grant**  
Visitor Experience Associate

**Thomas Guenther**  
Exhibition Preparator

**Sandy Guttman**  
Performance and Programs  
Project Manager

**Serena Hocharoen**  
Visitor Experience Associate

**Adair Huang**  
Individual Giving Assistant

**Jane Jefferies**  
Preparator Assistant

**Nolan Jimbo**  
Assistant Curator

**Ari Karafiol**  
TCA Apprentice

**Biz Knapp**  
Sales Supervisor

**Wyatt Lasky**  
Exhibition Preparator

**Abreihona Lenihan**  
Teaching Assistant

**Miguel Limon**  
TCA Lead Artist

**Rafael Loza**  
Audio Visual Technician

**Anwar Mahdi**  
Sales Associate

**Victor Mendoza-Garcia**  
Development Services  
Coordinator

**Angèle Nyberg**  
Teaching Assistant

**Amanda Owens**  
Membership and Annual Fund  
Coordinator

**Gioia Sabatinelli**  
Visitor Experience Associate

**Alicia Sandoval Vadillo**  
Lead Educator

**Rachael Shelton**  
Preparator Assistant

**Jasmine Smith**  
Sales Associate

**Hua Song**  
Visitor Experience Assistant

**Olive Stefanski**  
TCA Lead Artist

**Eric Strom**  
Sales Associate

**Iona Woolmington**  
Collections Preparator



Scan this code to stand with us and sign your union membership card today!

