EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE: REPORT ON ANTI-RACISM INITIATIVES
JULY 2021
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INTRODUCTION

Dear friends and colleagues:

This is a season unlike any other, in a world that is pushing against boundaries imposed not simply by the pandemic but by societal structures.

Here at the Festival, we are listening to calls for change and taking them to heart. What better way to emerge from the cocoon of pandemic than beautifully changed?

In May of 2020 the world was rocked by the murder of George Floyd. The protests that followed forced a reckoning across society. The conversation intensified in Canada with the death of Joyce Echaquan in a Quebec hospital in September of 2020.

Like other arts organizations and corporations, the Festival issued a statement condemning racism, and in it we acknowledged the role the Festival, as an institution, has played in upholding systemic racism.

They were bold words, and important, but not enough. Real change is what is required. And so we dug deeper into a course of self-examination that we had begun back in 2005, when, with the programming of D'Janet Sears’s Harlem Duet for the 2006 season, we realized the mountain of work that needed to be done to diversify the Festival, the acting company and our audience.

We didn’t do a good enough job in the years that followed that production. While our company grew more diverse, we didn’t change the way we worked. Micro and macro aggressions were common but overlooked. The needs and practices of IBPOC artists were not honoured, but rather disappeared into “our” way of doing things.

In 2019, we engaged an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion consultant, DiversiPro, to guide us in the development of a plan that would bring about true inclusion throughout the Festival. This was the same company that had worked with us in 2005-06, so they were not only familiar with the Festival, but also fully aware of how we had succeeded with and where we had abandoned our past commitments to change. Earlier this year, DiversiPro prepared a report providing insight in to the Festival’s cultural competency together with a series of recommendations.

To better understand the experience of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black and People of Colour within and outside the organization, the Festival asked a group of artists and staff to form an Anti-Racism Committee in the summer of 2020. Within a few short months, the ARC had written and presented us with a report detailing their lived experience. In October we began an in-depth analysis of that report with a small group of staff working in tandem with the ARC and with members of the leadership team. Their purpose was to work toward implementing the ARC’s...
feedback, and to prepare a summary report. We are grateful to the members of the ARC for their work and the spirit of generosity and care that they brought to it.

We’ve used the image of a sling shot before in speaking about how the events of the summer of 2020 accelerated our anti-racism efforts, and it is an accurate description. But it is vital to note that bringing about real change takes time and prolonged effort. There is not a single target that must be hit. Rather, we must come together to harmoniously change the way we work.

We fully recognize that as leaders at the Festival over many years, we are both responsible and accountable for the failures that have transpired. We have had many months to examine and re-examine our actions and inactions. We apologize deeply for the harm we have caused and allowed to happen.

Our hearts are in this commitment to change. We know that it will enhance the quality of work for which we have gained renown. We hope that all of you will join us in committing to make the Stratford Festival a better place, one in which each and every one of us feels welcome and truly able to bring our whole selves to our work and collegial relationships. We also understand that you may need some time to process this information and to adapt or come to terms with it.

Kindness and understanding are at the centre of where we want to be. There are going to be some bumpy paths to manoeuver along the way, some truths to be reckoned with. Those of you from non-marginalized communities may find some acknowledgments difficult; there may be changes you have trouble embracing immediately. And that’s OK. Self-examination is difficult, as is change. Please know that this process is not about blame or shame, but about taking responsibility for what has happened and ensuring we make every effort not to repeat past wrongs as we turn towards a better future. Those of you from marginalized communities may feel some things don’t go far enough. Our door is open to you to hear the change you feel is required. We want to provide all of you with the resources you need to thrive.

Below and attached you will find descriptions of the preliminary actions we are taking to set the course for the future. We hope you find our action plan heartening. If you have questions or concerns about any of this, please feel free to reach out to your supervisor, to Human Resources, or to us. You will also have an opportunity to take part in a town hall and in anti-racism and inclusion training that will provide you with advice and support on this journey. We are here to support you all as we embark on this change.

And so to the excitement of the work!
We have placed a priority on implementing improvements designed to support the creation of the 2021 season and to begin to lay the foundation for the future.

In making these initial changes, we are committing to changing our culture and creating an environment where staff and artists can do their very best work, and where we are engaged in an ongoing process of listening and shifting our practices based on the feedback we receive. These initial steps will set the course for the entire Festival community serving as a catalyst to inspire continued evolution.

We are moving ahead with a number of tactics that will shape the framework for the future and support the work in the forthcoming months. These actions will ultimately expand the Festival, broadening opportunities and building in transparency and accountability.

With the theme Metamorphosis, the 2021 season playbill sets the stage for change. The productions will embody our hope for a transition from lockdown to a new beginning, imbued with much needed social and political change. They examine souls kept apart by social convention, family feuds or racism. Souls that yearn for community, understanding and the union of love. Souls that emerge transformed from their trials into a brave new world of freedom.

These actions will ultimately expand the Festival, broadening opportunities and building in transparency and accountability.
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Board of Governors

The Festival’s Board has prioritized EDI and anti-racism, supporting the leadership team in these efforts and ensuring resources are dedicated to building a long-term plan and initiating action steps. In addition to committing to anti-racism and anti-oppression training, the Festival’s Board has taken steps to diversify its composition, making it a priority of the Nominating Committee. The latest additions to the Board bring exceptional experience and broad perspectives to the governance of the Festival.

EDI Department

The Festival is establishing an EDI department which will be led by a Director of EDI together with support staff. Recruitment for this department is underway.

Anti-Racism Committee

The Anti-Racism Committee (ARC) has been contracted through to the end of September to advise on the development of the EDI and anti-racism plan and provide leadership and support in the implementation of some of the key action items. The EDI Director will assemble a permanent Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-racism (IDEA) Council in the fall to build on the work of the ARC.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Training

In an effort to increase cultural competency across the organization, anti-racism and anti-oppression training will be delivered to all Festival staff and artists in the spring and summer of 2021. Artist and social justice educator Rania El Mugammar will facilitate the training. Last summer, more than 100 staff members participated in Robin Lacambra’s Sharing Privilege course. At the same time, we are exploring how cultural competency training will be embedded in administrative and artistic practices going forward.

Artistic Perspectives

To expand the perspectives contributing to the selection of plays, artists and new works, the Festival has deepened its resources within the Directors Office. In addition to ted witzel who serves as Artistic Associate, Research & Development, Esther Jun has joined the Festival as an Artistic Associate, Planning. The Festival has hired four Associates to expand the circle of artistic perspectives: Carmen Aguirre, Mūkonzi Mūsyoki and Kamana Ntibarikure in New Play Development, and Marcel Stewart in Casting.
First Nations, Inuit and Métis Advisory Circle

The Festival is supporting the creation of a First Nation, Inuit and Métis Advisory Circle. The Circle will advise the Festival’s artistic leadership on developing and producing Indigenous-led work, and will help to build and strengthen the Festival’s relationship with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities across Turtle Island. Consulting Elder Liz Stevens (of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation) has been engaged to aid the work of the Circle and provide advice and guidance to the Festival.

Artist Development

Formal training and development are essential to the Festival and are delivered through the Birmingham Conservatory and Langham Directors’ Workshop. Stephen Ouimette led the Birmingham Conservatory from 2016 to 2021 stewarding the development of its participants. Now Janine Pearson will guide the Birmingham Conservatory, drawing on the participating artists’ talent, commitment and creativity and ultimately shaping the future of theatre at the Festival. Janine who served as Head of Coaching at the Festival for 25 years, brings her vast experience to this role. Janine has brought together a circle of advisors and associates, including senior artists and mentors from equity-seeking groups, to reconceive the development of artists and storytellers.

Artistic Associate Esther Jun has taken over as leader of the Langham Workshop, replacing Martha Henry who led the Workshop from 2017 to 2020. Esther was herself a participant in the Workshop in 2016. Under Esther’s leadership, the Workshop’s ambition is to seek the most promising directing talent and provide them with fertile ground to explore, play and hone their craft. It will prioritize building the capacity of early and mid-career directors from equity-seeking groups and theatre makers whose talent, energy, commitment and creativity will shape the future of theatre, both at the Festival and across the globe.

At the same time, a training program for designers is in development and we plan to pilot a virtual experience in the fall of 2021.

ARTISTIC PROCESS

Pre-Rehearsal Orientation

As we welcome artists back this season, we do so with a new program called Pre-Rehearsal Orientation (PRO) – a multi-day orientation session prior to the start of rehearsals for each production. In addition to delivering anti-racism and anti-oppression training and an overview of the Festival’s policies and procedures, the orientation session allows time for the teams to get to know one another and to take part in developing a community agreement that will shape the work plan through the rehearsal period. The teams will also participate in a post-rehearsal feedback session once productions have opened. For artists and staff who are not directly involved in the rehearsal process, we will be conducting a half-day orientation session.
Company Handbook

The Company Handbook, an introductory guide for staff and artists, has been overhauled based on feedback from artists and the ARC, with elements of the orientation session being incorporated into the Handbook, which is now available in digital form.

Casting by Consent

In the Festival’s large-cast repertory model, there have often been roles (known as “as cast”) that are unassigned until the rehearsal process begins, which has also been the point at which actors learn about the director’s specific concepts for the production. The former “as cast” system has been replaced by a “casting by consent” approach in order to increase agency, transparency and dialogue among artists. The Festival and Canadian Actors’ Equity Association have committed to ongoing discussions to support this evolution.

Modified Rehearsal Week

In 2021, we are piloting a modified rehearsal week with the six plays we are producing, reducing the work-week from six days to five and a half days to support artist health and well-being.

Cultural Competency

While we have curated a season of plays and cabarets that explore the human condition, the key to the universal is always in the particular. The content and setting of the stories we are sharing may provoke the need for a particular cultural competency. With the help of the artistic associates, and inspired by the ARC, we are building a process for our creative and production teams to consider production elements through the lens of cultural competency and harm reduction, beginning with this season’s plays. Cultural consultants and other resources will be made available as needed.

The Laboratory and New Play Development

Our commitments to culture change must be grounded in the work on our stages in the coming years. The Lab and New Play Development teams have commissioned more than 10 new large-scale projects by IBPOC artists, as well as supporting several more smaller-scale digital explorations led by equity-seeking artists.

The Lab is committed to continuing its work of looking “Beyond the Western Canon” begun in 2019. Another round of explorations is planned for Fall-Winter 2021 to identify large-scale works from outside the Eurocentric tradition. We’ve continued our relationships with many of the projects and artists surfaced in the first of these explorations.

The Lab remains a vital space for us to build competencies and explore new ways of working. Projects that require cultural adaptations by the Festival will be supported with developmental workshops to generate
learning outside of the pressures of a production process, including provisions for cultural consultation and accessibility support.

_Affinity Groups_

Informal affinity groups have formed in recent years including A Coming Together and the Queer-Straight Alliance. The Festival commits to supporting these groups and exploring other affinity groups.

**AUDIENCE AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**Box Office / Patron Experience**

Recognizing that seating capacity is extremely limited in 2021, the Festival is taking action to encourage accessibility of the theatregoing experience. The Festival has introduced a “pay what you will” pricing scheme allowing ticket buyers to select the price within a specified range. At the same time, accessibility to the productions will be greatly enhanced with productions being filmed and streamed through Stratfest@Home.

We have set aside tickets at each performance of R+J for patrons who are blind or have low vision and we have designated two performances of _The Rez Sisters_ and two performances of _Serving Elizabeth_ for outreach to Indigenous and Black communities respectively.

To support audiences attending _The Rez Sisters_, a healing room will be made available following each performance.

**Education**

We know that our work in supporting learning and engagement for people of all ages with a particular focus on young people is fundamental to the success of EDI work. Work to transform our educational processes and programs will be ongoing, but in 2021, we have made a number of changes. We are providing “pay what you will” pricing schemes and other financial access programs to our events and programs. We have been developing new partnerships with organizations that focus on supporting youth from equity-seeking groups, which will include a free-of-charge virtual program for youth delivered in collaboration with DAREarts this July. We have also established a new Teaching Artist Advisory Committee to work alongside our Student and Teacher Advisory Committees to ensure the pedagogy and curricula we employ are relevant and dynamic to all communities.

**STAFF, PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS**

**Unions and Collectives**

We know that the labour unions and collectives – International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Canadian Actors’ Equity Association, Associated Designers of Canada and the Toronto Musicians’ Association
– value equity, diversity and inclusion. We have started discussions with the unions and collectives to reinforce our commitments and ensure our collective agreements uphold these shared values.

**Recruitment**

In an effort to heighten awareness about employment opportunities, the Festival has updated the language in its job postings and broadened its recruitment efforts to encourage candidates from equity-seeking groups. Salary ranges will be included in all job postings.

**Management Objectives**

For management staff, EDI objectives have been incorporated into performance goals and assessments.

**HR Policies**

HR policies are being reviewed, with a particular focus on the discrimination and harassment policy.

**Contract Templates**

Contract templates are being revised to emphasize anti-racism and anti-oppression as core elements of the Festival’s commitment to a safe workplace for everyone.

**Mental Health Support**

The Festival uses the services of an employee assistance program (EAP) providing mental health support to eligible staff. We have requested IBPOC councillors be made available through this service. We have also assembled a list of mental health resources to augment the employee assistance program and to support those who are not eligible for EAP.

**Holidays**

Eligible staff have access to three float days that were traditionally made available in late December. Going forward these float days can be used at any time of year to celebrate cultural or religious holidays.

**External Suppliers and Partners**

The Festival engages with a number of external suppliers and partners. The Festival is starting to broaden its list of suppliers in an effort to encourage opportunity for those from equity-seeking groups. For partners responding to requests for proposals, they are required to include their commitment to EDI and anti-racism.
SOME BACKGROUND ON THE REPORTS

The DiversiPro Report

In 2019 and 2020, DiversiPro undertook a course of research to assess the culture of the Festival through an equity, diversity and inclusion lens. It included: an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Survey with staff, artists, managers and board members; interviews and focus groups; policy and procedure reviews; a baseline assessment of leaders, managers and staff; and evidence-based research. It was an important step towards developing an equity, diversity and inclusivity strategy that would bring about transformative change for the organization. With the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in June of 2020, the Festival asked DiversiPro to re-focus its work on systemic racism and its impact, including an in-depth review of discrimination and harassment policies. In its report, DiversiPro presented 25 recommendations in the key areas of Leadership, Human Capital, Workplace Culture, Stakeholder Connections, Marketing and Programs/Services – all with an aim of changing the organizational culture for the better.

The ARC Final Report

In June of 2020 the Festival hired a group of 14 staff and artists to form an Anti-Racism Committee to examine life at the Festival from a non-white perspective. Their paid work was conducted via interviews, as they examined seven of the Festival’s departments – Human Resources, the Acting Company, the Directors’ Office, Stage Management, Production & Design, Marketing & Publicity, and Education. Their work was very much conducted in response to the DiversiPro report, as a less corporate, personal snapshot of the workplace. It doesn’t include metrics and studies; but rather is a candid, personal account intended to provide the rationale for change as we move forward. An initial report was presented to us in the fall of 2020 and we formed a group we informally called the Parallel ARC to read the findings. This group came together with the ARC as the Mega ARC to examine the report line by line and put in place actions to allow us to improve the way we work. The attached summary is written by the Mega ARC. The content may be triggering to those from marginalized communities and we have resources available to support you. Those not from marginalized communities may find the content upsetting. The ARC asks that you sit with your discomfort and we urge you to examine your reactions with an open heart. Our goal is to move forward in creating a healthy atmosphere for all of us to work in: inclusion is about everyone. Change is already underway and is being met with positive response. If you need help in processing the information, feel free to use our EAP resources, or to reach out to HR or your supervisor.
SCENE CHANGES:
The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

DECEMBER 2020
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LAND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The Stratford festival is located on territories governed by treaties of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant of 1701, made between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an agreement to set violence aside and peacefully share and care for the land in the Great Lakes Basin, and the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827, an agreement made by 18 Anishinaabek Chiefs and the Canada Company, an agency of the British Crown.

As an organization and a company of artists, the Stratford Festival is in a process of learning how to be better treaty partners. The Festival honours the ancestral guardians of this land and its waterways: the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, and the Neutrals.

Today many Indigenous peoples continue to call this land home and act as its stewards, and this responsibility extends to all peoples, to share and care for this land for generations to come.
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

“The past several days at the Stratford Festival have been important ones in which our Black colleagues have told us painful truths. They have pointed out how a traditional power structure that largely excludes the young and marginalized has made honest discussion – the honest exchange of ideas – very difficult, if not impossible. I have been a part of this. And it must change. We must change....

“To do so will require that honesty and humanity permeate not just our house, administrative offices – and our audiences. What hope do we have to change the world for the better through art if we cannot change ourselves?”

Message from Artistic Director Antoni Cimolino, Stratford Festival – June 11, 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2020, during the Black Lives Matter protests that swept North American cities and towns – and elsewhere around the world – leaders of prominent Canadian arts organizations were among the many who spoke out against the systemic racism and White supremacy that have caused exclusion and harm to Canadians who are Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC). The Stratford Festival was one of those organizations.

The Festival’s artistic director not only acknowledged the theatre’s role in maintaining White supremacy; he pledged to change it.

DiversiPro Inc, a Toronto-based consulting company who had guided and supported the Festival on its Diversity and Inclusion plan 13 years earlier, was engaged to help the Festival make another big leap forward. In fact, this work had already started before the racial and social justice movement swept across the continent but had been on hold for a few months because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
MANDATE

At the start of this review project, it was clear that the Stratford Festival wanted to undergo a transformative change to become an organization that is more inclusive – through its policies, programs, plans and practices - and diverse in the broadest sense, in order to serve an audience that is reflective of the Canada of today and the Canada of the future.

It was envisioned that the new equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) plan would emerge from and include the following components: an assessment of the current workplace culture; a review of the current audience and marketing initiatives; intercultural competence and anti-bias training for staff, artists and volunteers. The expectation was that any new EDI plan would complement the key pillars of the Festival’s current Strategic Plan, namely:

- **Organization:** An organizational culture that is inclusive, progressive, safe and environmentally sensitive.

- **Works:** Investment in activities designed to encourage experimentation, diversifying programs and opening its doors to a broad community of artists.

- **Audiences:** Attracting patrons from diverse backgrounds and building meaningful relationships through marketing, advancement and on-site experiences.

In June 2020, the racial and social justice movement took centre-stage in the conversations among Festival leadership and artists. The Festival’s leaders renewed the mandate, continuing the multi-layered approach to the project, but with greater emphasis on systemic racism and its impact on individuals from the IBPOC communities and the Festival itself.

The diversity and inclusion survey was already administered across the organization in January to gather demographic data as well as perceptions of inclusion and belonging at the Festival.

An assessment of how members of the Festival community are “making sense of cultural differences” – their level of intercultural competence -- would continue.

However, the human resources policy and practice review was changed to focus specifically on one policy -- Discrimination and Harassment -- and related procedures.

And while the interviews continued as originally planned, there was now a greater focus on issues affecting Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (IBPOC) artists and employees.

In July 2020, the Festival formed the Anti-Racism (ARC) consisting of staff, artists, administrators with direct experience of the Festival. Working independently from DiversiPro, the ARC was charged with identifying opportunities to stem and interrupt racism at the Festival. While the work of DiversiPro and ARC ran on parallel tracks, they did intersect particularly around policy renewal and development.
Finally, the Festival postponed any research into its current and potential audiences. The stakeholders involved in this study were all internal.

Using the Six Cylinders™ Framework, the final report was expected to present recommendations for a plan to address the issues identified in the review, with the goal of making the Festival a more inclusive and anti-racist organization.

**PROCESS**

Focusing on inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism (IDEA), DiversiPro’s activities included an online Equity, Diversity and Inclusion survey; interviews and focus groups with members of the Company, including Board members, artists, managers and others; an assessment of how the Company is “making sense” of cultural differences – their level of intercultural competence -- and a review of the Festival’s discrimination and harassment policy to identify gaps and weaknesses.

**TERMINOLOGY**

IBPOC refers to Indigenous, Black and People of Colour.

White supremacy is rooted in the ideology that White people are a superior group. Often reflected in attitudes and choices that show “a preference for whiteness”, White supremacy exists in many organizational cultures, workplace policies, practices and business decisions that exclude Black, Indigenous and People of Colour from professional, educational, and other opportunities.

Systemic racism refers to the systems that create and maintain racial inequality in workplaces, institutions, and society in general, or a lack of declared policies, practices and acceptable behaviours that become their own ‘systems’, allowing racism to flourish. These systems are often policies, practices and behaviours that seem neutral, except to the people hurt by them; they are accepted as part of ‘the way we do things here’, and even the people that carry them out are often unaware of the impact.
Diversity & Inclusion: While Diversity refers to the identities and differences among people in an organization, Inclusion refers to the deliberate policies and practices an organization puts in place to create inclusive environments for all its stakeholders.

Intercultural Competence is the capability of individuals or teams to shift cultural perspectives and, if the occasion calls for it, change behaviours appropriately to effectively engage with cultural differences.

Company: Refers to all of the Festival’s internal constituents encompassing the artists, staff, Board and volunteers.

“If the people in power are all going to be white, cisgendered, middle-aged people, nothing is going to change... This goes to casting, producing...everyone in the Director’s office.”

An artist, Stratford Festival

FINDINGS IN BRIEF

Across stakeholder groups, there is broad consensus on initiatives and actions - some recently taken - that are cause for hope and pride. Interviewees readily mentioned:

• The Lab
• The Conservatory/Training of diverse Actors
• Hiring of diverse Actors
• The 2 live-streamed Panels with Black and Indigenous Artists
• The Release of an Anti-Racism Statement
• Supporting Black Lives Matter
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- The Queer-Straight Alliance/Gay-Straight Alliance
- The artistic director’s work on Gender and Sexuality issues
- Relaxed performances; ASL interpretation
- Specific plays such as The Breathing Hole, Nathan the Wise, Rez Sisters, Komagata Maru, To Kill a Mockingbird
- Outreach and alliances with local Indigenous community
- The Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

There’s also respect for the efforts that senior leaders have made to respond to the frankly voiced concerns of the artists and staff in the Black and Indigenous panels. The artistic director’s messages during the height of the Black Lives Matter protests have been praised for being bold, and the commitments made for being specific.

The not-so-good news is also clear: most of the positively reviewed initiatives of earlier years have not been sustained, even some recent initiatives are seen as sporadic or “token” efforts, and none of it is supported by an overall plan for change.

Worse, these positive steps are seen by many IBPOC contributors as exceptions within the broader context of a normalized “preference for whiteness” -- systems that have racist outcomes often invisible to those outside the groups hurt by them.

IBPOC Company members interviewed revealed that they are regularly faced with systemic racism – procedures, practices and behaviours that hinder their ability to flourish, that underestimate the Festival’s audiences and impede the Festival’s competitiveness. They say the Festival’s “preference for whiteness” effectively blocks or overlooks the potential of IBPOC artists and audiences and consequently, the Festival itself. Among other consequences, IBPOC contributors feel they have to leave their intercultural knowledge and perspectives behind and ‘act White’ to fit in – a feat that’s impossible on some levels.
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

We have made 25 recommendations based on our findings. We have organized these recommendations into the key areas of DiversiPro’s Six Cylinders™ Framework to illustrate the need for a holistic approach to creating a more inclusive performing arts organization. We have also provided a timeframe in which the activities should be conducted.

The key areas – Leadership, Human Capital, Workplace Culture, Stakeholder Connections, Marketing and Programs/Services - must be addressed for the Stratford Festival to implement inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism strategies for greatest impact within the organization and in the wider community which it serves.

We have recommended several initiatives we believe the Festival leaders – management and Board – must take, including striking an Implementation Team to develop a strategic plan to implement the recommendations in this report. We have also recommended anti-racism and intercultural competence development and training for the Company.

We have recommended the Festival collect disaggregated data of the Company based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, etc. and review all its programming and workplace policies, practices and procedures using an anti-racist and inclusion lens.

To assist in the process of changing the organizational culture of the Festival we have recommended the hiring of a Diversity and Inclusion Director and the establishment of a permanent Inclusion Diversity Equity and Anti-racism (IDEA) Council to address issues of racism and to help create a safe space in the Company.
REVIEW MANDATE

At the start of this project, it was clear that the Stratford Festival wanted to undergo a transformative change to become an organization that is more inclusive – through its policies, programs, plans and practices - and diverse in the broadest sense, in order to serve an audience that is reflective of the Canada of today and the Canada of the future.

It was envisioned that the new equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) plan would emerge from and include the following components: an assessment of the current workplace culture; a review of the current audience and marketing initiatives; intercultural competence and anti-bias training for staff, artists and volunteers. The expectation was that any new EDI plan would complement the key pillars of the Festival’s current Strategic Plan, namely:

• **Organization**: An organizational culture that is inclusive, progressive, safe and environmentally sensitive.

• **Works**: Investment in activities designed to encourage experimentation, diversifying programs and opening its doors to a broad community of artists.

• **Audiences**: Attracting patrons from diverse backgrounds and building meaningful relationships through marketing, advancement and on-site experiences.
REVIEW PROCESS

DiversiPro took a layered approach in conducting this independent Review. The detailed Action Plan and Workflow with deliverables included the following:

1. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Survey.** Conduct an online demographic survey of as many of the Festival’s full time, part time, casual, and contract employees as possible (who were employed during January-March), to find out about their knowledge of and experience with equity, diversity and inclusion at the Festival.

2. **Interviews and Focus Groups.** Conduct in-depth interviews with current employees – across all levels and in all departments, including unionized and non-unionized Employees, Artists, Union Leaders, Executive and Board Members.

3. **Policy and Procedure Review - Discrimination & Harassment**

4. **Baseline Assessment- of Leaders, Managers and Staff.** Using the Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI) to acquire a baseline assessment of how the Leadership Team, the Management Team and other members of the wider staff are engaging with and making sense of cultural differences.

5. **Evidence-based Approach.** Conduct and apply evidence-based and anti-racist organizational change research of the Festival to inform analyses and conclusions reached in this Report.

6. **Framework for Transformative Change.** Utilize the lens of the Six Cylinders™ Framework to create practical and transformative change responding to the findings. Focusing on 6 key drivers of equity, diversity and inclusion, the Six Cylinders™ Framework helps organizations to identify and manage actionable strategies for anti-racist, diversity, inclusion, and intercultural competence change.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In conducting this Review, we adhered to the following Guiding Principles:

1. The Stratford Festival is committed to disrupting and addressing all forms of racism (institutional, systemic and individual) within its organization and workplace that adversely and disproportionately impact Indigenous, racialized and other members of the Company.

2. DiversiPro will embark upon its work with the recognition from the Festival that it is fully committed to addressing the issues of diversity, inclusion and racism.

3. DiversiPro will, throughout the Review process, conduct the process in good faith, in an independent, balanced, fair, unbiased manner and free of arbitrariness and any form of discrimination.

4. DiversiPro will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Festival and its representatives and be available to assist the organization in addressing any issues or challenges throughout the Review process.

5. DiversiPro will ensure a high standard of professionalism throughout the Review and work tirelessly to meeting all established deadlines agreed to with the Festival.
In 2006 and the half-decade that followed, the Stratford Festival focused its attention on making its plays and artists more diverse. Since then, it has achieved some success on that front.

There are Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC) artists appearing onstage, some in prominent roles historically reserved for White actors. A very small number of plays written, directed by or starring IBPOC artists have been staged each season.

The question facing the Festival today is no longer one about mere diversity on its stages. It's not about adding some different faces to a White organization and making limited and sporadic efforts to include outsiders.

The racial and social justice movement of 2020 has opened the public’s eyes to the harmful impacts of systemic racism, making bigger and more systemic change necessary in all sectors, including the theatre.

The Festival’s Black artists in particular feel traumatized by the systemic racism and police brutality that killed American George Floyd and continues to kill or harm Black and Indigenous Canadians and Americans.

“I’ve seen it, I’ve felt it, I’ve been on the end of it, except I didn’t have a cell phone then and there was no one to call, or no one to see it.” Artist, Stratford Festival

Black and Indigenous artists are not the only ones hurt by exclusionary systems and behaviours. In this review we also heard examples of how 2SLGBTQ+ members and others are affected. While the major focus of this review is on racism, some of those findings are also included below in the summaries of findings from the 4 research activities.
FINDINGS SUMMARIZED

After an examination of relevant policies and practices, confidential survey results from 333 members of the Festival community, statements from 78 individuals via one-on-one interviews or focus groups, an intercultural competence baseline assessment of 161 members of the Festival’s senior leadership team, managers and other staff, and a review of current findings and practices in Canadian, American and UK theatres, the DiversiPro consulting team concluded the following:

While the Festival has made efforts at diversity and inclusion – most notably in 2020, but also in its choice of plays and artists in recent seasons -- there is overwhelming evidence of the need for the Festival to transform its organizational culture, policies and practices, making it an anti-racist and truly inclusive community for all its stakeholders.

The nature of privilege is such that dominant group members do not, by definition and circumstance, have a lived experience (and subsequent perspectives) similar to those of racialized and marginalized groups, and those who hold formal power experience an organization very differently from those who don’t.

The volume of racism that IBPOC artists and employees say they’ve encountered within the city of Stratford and within the Festival itself means they have had a very different experience from others. It, and their world experience outside of the Festival, have shaped their views of the Festival very differently.

While Board members and many in leadership roles at the Festival seem genuinely committed to creating room for others and to make them feel more welcome in an existing space, IBPOC members see the need for much bigger change. They talk about dismantling what’s not working in order to rebuild the Festival in a way that truly includes their values and participation.

It is a subtle but important difference. The latter approach acknowledges everyone’s right to be co-authors in the creation of a collective identity. The former assumes that one group already has ownership of that identity, and as such, possesses the inherent right to bring ‘others’ in, or leave them out.

How to resolve the conflict between these two views is a challenge for the Festival. It offers both risk and new opportunities for growth.
DiversiPro’s information-gathering revealed that the current state of the Festival is made possible by:

- Differences in life experience and gaps in knowledge and understanding between management/leadership and artists and employees – particularly, but not only, IBPOC groups
- Assumptions that “whiteness” is what Stratford audiences and leaders want and a hesitation and discomfort in testing the limits of White audiences and sponsors based on real financial concerns
- Systems - procedures and practices, some unsupported by policy -- that can lead to racist outcomes
- The absence of systems to prevent racism
- Policies and procedures that need improvement/updating
- The Festival’s history and location.

SUMMARY OF EACH ACTIVITY

High-level summaries of the findings from each of the four major information-gathering activities in this Review are provided below.

The Equity Diversity Inclusion survey reveals that IBPOC respondents generally have a higher level of education and superior linguistic and intercultural knowledge compared to White respondents. They are more likely to have lived in another culture or country, and understand the relationship between perceptions of difference and power at the Festival.

Between January and February 2020, 333 responses were received; this was just before the COVID-19 pandemic and a few months before the racial and social justice movement began. Three hundred and thirty-three (333) responses is 39% of the total number invited to take the survey and represents more than double the level required (15%) in order to get a set of statistically significant responses.

The EDI survey presents a picture of the Festival’s demographic makeup and reveals how employees, artists and leaders perceive diversity and inclusion in the organization. The survey offers one way of looking at both the gaps and strengths in the Festival’s workforce.
For example, the artist group, particularly IBPOC members, bring to the Festival differences not only in race, but also education, cultural backgrounds and skills. They also have sharply different views on how cultural differences can affect team collaboration and power-sharing.

KEY FINDINGS OF SURVEY

Diversity among the Festival’s Contributors

- No volunteers, Board members, or managers identify as IBPOC in the survey findings
- 70% of volunteer respondents are between the ages of 66 and 75
- The gender divide is roughly equal in all categories
- Artists show significantly more diversity (in race, sexual orientation, and disability status) than any of the other demographics.

Education

- Notably, IBPOC respondents showed higher levels of education completed than their non-IBPOC colleagues: 59% of IBPOC respondents have a university degree, compared to 35% in the total survey population, and 34% of non-IBPOC respondents.
- IBPOC respondents are more likely to have a post-graduate degree: 18% of non-IBPOC respondents have a Masters’ degree or above, compared to 24% of IBPOC respondents.

Intercultural Competence

For respondents who do not identify as IBPOC, only 24% report being able to speak a second language “well enough to conduct a conversation.” Within this group, French (76%), Spanish (9%) and Italian (7%) are the most commonly listed second language.

- For respondents who identify as IBPOC, about two-thirds (65%) report being able to speak a second language, with French as the most commonly noted language.
Overall, most respondents report never having lived (64%) or worked (66%) in another country or culture.

Notably, however, this number changes significantly for IBPOC respondents: 65% report having lived (71% having worked) in another country or culture. This is compared to non-IBPOC respondents: only 34% have lived (and 31% have worked) in another country or culture.

Inclusion

When asked how welcoming and accepting the Festival is of individuals “regardless of gender, ethnic, racial, geographic, economic class, age, disability status, sexual orientation, differences in life-style or other identity markers,” most respondents replied positively. Three-quarters of IBPOC respondents (75%), 84% of 2SLGBTQ+ respondents, and 90% of all respondents agreed, to some degree, that this was the case.

However, when asked if individuals feel “valued, respected and included throughout the Festival” 51% of respondents in the IDI Assessment either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

These two responses may appear contradictory; however, the first question is a response to how individuals – the diversity of differences – are welcomed and accepted at the Festival; the second question is a response to how these differences are valued or leveraged throughout the organization.

One senior leader at the Festival recognizes this paradox:

“I think there is better representation certainly within the acting company, but I’m not sure that we’re doing enough, asking about what they need to feel comfortable in the organization.”
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

Awareness and Understanding

Further, understanding the nuances of history and diversity informs the way individuals behave towards one another in the workplace, which in turn contributes to a sense of belonging and inclusion.

The survey asked respondents 13 questions to explore more deeply what it means to truly understand diversity and inclusion, rather than simply paying it lip service. Multiple choice answers were offered to the question “Overall, staff and artists at the Stratford Festival are”: (Short list included here)

- Free of prejudice towards other groups
- Aware of what they need to personally do to make all people feel included
- Aware of how to handle uncertainty and possible discomfort of working with people of other cultures
- Aware of what they can learn from working with people of other cultures
- Comfortable among people of a different culture even when they aren’t very familiar with that culture
- Understand that people of different cultures may have different views on how to collaborate and work on a team
- Understand why past discrimination against various groups has reduced the level of trust for some people in the workplace or community today

Responses in this category reveal a staggering divide in perception: when it came to staff understanding of cultural awareness, IBPOC respondents showed overwhelming disagreement with, or ambivalence towards, the statements listed. Almost two-thirds of respondents either disagreed, to some degree, with the statement that staff “understand that people of different cultures may have different views on how to collaborate and work on a team,” or felt neutral about it.

- A significant 64% of IBPOC respondents disagreed, to some degree, with the statement that staff “understand how perceptions of differences in power may make it difficult to work with people of other cultures,” compared to only 13% of all respondents.
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

- In general, it appears, IBPOC respondents are not at all confident that staff at the Festival understand or appreciate the nuances of intercultural interactions or the power dynamics inherent within them.

Cross-Cultural and Interpersonal Interaction

- Responses were slightly more positive, with smaller disparities, when respondents were asked about staff interpersonal skills: the ability to read body language, to listen effectively, to work as a team cross-culturally, and so on. That said, there were still some categories (“making people of other cultures feel comfortable in their presence,” and “can work effectively on a cross-cultural team”) with significant disparities.

KEY FINDINGS OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with 78 members of different groups at the Festival. As decided when the project mandate was revised, no external interviews (e.g. potential audiences) were conducted. Stories shared by the majority of interviewees, many of them Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (IBPOC) revealed both respect and hopes for the Festival on the one hand, and varying levels of frustration on the other.

Though the following issues were identified by the mainly IBPOC artist interviewees, some concerns were echoed by non-IBPOC participants from the employee group:

- White Supremacy Influences Choice of Programming, Language - Certain plays/content are seen as ‘the norm’ (e.g. Shakespeare) in a White supremacist society

- IBPOC and diverse Artists are ‘streamed’ into certain roles – denied sufficient opportunities to audition for roles not traditionally associated with their race, etc. means they get boxed out of future such roles, too.

- Lack of Commitment and Dedication to IBPOC and Diversity – commitment and dedication that are backed by action

- Lack of consistency – seasonal gains aren’t built on, resulting in tokenization in actors and plays
• Artists are deeply frustrated at not being heard over the years – “It feels like the Festival has very recently made good strides, but this comes after a long time of not listening or acting”. “Artists want transformative, not performative, action.”

• Lack of Transparency in the hiring and auditioning processes

• Lack of Representation at all levels – right through from Administration to make-up and hair

• IBPOC Artists do not feel protected - within both the organization and within the city of Stratford which is “very White, very racist”, there are symbols such as Confederate flags and lawn jockeys, and racists behaviours towards IBPOC (particularly Black people).

• 2SLGBTQ+ artists do not feel protected – within both the organization and the city of Stratford

• Lack of connection with 2SLGBTQ+ community - the need to “truly connect with the LGBT community” both inside and outside the Festival

• Artists and staff lack the Privilege to be their Authentic Selves - IBPOC artists often feel they have to act, speak, or think ‘whiter’ in order to be accepted or accommodated

• Some people are Defensive and Resistant to change – notably “White directors unwilling or unable to address issues that are hurtful/improper to IBPOC artists”; “most directors don’t even know what (their) actor has to offer and what their story could bring to the their character”

• The Persistent Myth of No Talent Pool of IBPOC/Diverse Creators prevents real efforts to find them

• Colour-Blind Casting vs. Colour-Inclusive Casting - the former denies the artist’s race; the latter embraces it as part of telling the story

• Perceptions of Audiences influence Organizational Choices – Catering to primarily White audiences’ traditional expectations instead of a) challenging audiences to expand thinking and b) reaching out and building diverse audiences. - - The fear that bringing in too much ‘difference’ will alienate audiences, yet the
Festival has seen lots of success with ‘diverse’ content (e.g. the Breathing Hole)

- Lack of sufficient insiders to consult on Appropriateness of a Play or Scene – “and just generally to help construct a new Festival reality”; not enough effort to draw on existing contacts in Indigenous communities – giving them space to help shape the future of the festival

- Artists have to expend invisible labour and energy to fight against/put up with racism or ignorance – in scripts, from directors, donors: “when a donor comes into the room … and says a racist thing to one of the cast members” and the leadership witnesses it yet says nothing

- Mental health damage inflicted on artists - “for actors that are portraying their own oppression throughout their season... that’s not being recognized.”

- Precarious work and power dynamics have an impact - “It’s harder to speak up when you’re dependent on the Festival for what little you have.”

A number of interviewees acknowledged seasonal efforts to include a few plays that reflect diversity.

However, they stress that this change isn’t consistent: IBPOC plays and artists come and go, while the organization continues as a White theatre festival.

A negative impact of inconsistent, seasonal programming of IBPOC plays is that IBPOC talent doesn’t get sufficiently developed and IBPOC audiences come to the Festival once but don’t get cultivated as either ongoing patrons or donors.

Interviewees noted that the Festival’s very survival depends on its relevance to an increasingly diverse population.

What would that look like? Among other things, it would mean having a diverse team at all levels of the organization. Transformative change means the Festival has to diversify the playbill, board composition, leadership, management and supervisory roles, and staffing. It has to see its potential audiences more inclusively, and market to, and provide services to them, effectively. It has to review every one of its policies and make changes where needed.

One example given by the artists is that a more diverse director group would be able to better understand how to get the best performances from IBPOC, 2SLGBTQ+ and other artists.
The Festival’s IBPOC artists say their talents and full participation are hindered or blocked in an organization where directors and crews are used to dealing with White, cisgender artists. The overall standard is White, the definition of the “classics” is restricted to “colonizer” stories and the language of White supremacy.

In interviews and focus groups, both IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ artists cited racism, homophobia or other themes inherent in certain plays. It requires them to invest extra energy and work to give their best or push back against these issues.

An Indigenous artist notes: “These plays were ... written without people like us in mind, so it’s been a lot of individual work for me to try and find myself in these works... and try to be respectful and understanding and at the same time not always feeling that respect and understanding back... for the extra work that we do…”

“...every single classical play that I’ve been in - without exception - there’s been the first day where people of colour look at each other and say ‘Is this the day we bring this up?’... There’s always something in the text...racism, homophobia, something.” IBPOC Artist, Stratford Festival.

Seemingly small matters such as services for Black hair, makeup and even the availability of skin-tone coloured undergarments are things IBPOC artists say they have to fight for.

The artists are calling for the Festival as a whole to be transformed, starting with a new definition of classical theatre, and continuing throughout all the Festival’s internal and external activities.
POLICY REVIEW

Discrimination and Harassment Policy review: In addition to an examination of written documents, meetings were held with HR representatives during the period of the assessment (August to November).

Level 1 considered what, if anything, is outstanding regarding legal compliance requirements. Non-compliant policies carry unnecessary risk and liability. They do not provide the foundation to build policies/procedures that are living documents that reflect the values of the organization and create tools for all stakeholders.

Level 2 assessed how the policy and procedures were built and reviewed where there are opportunities to enhance clarity, credibility and overall user-friendliness.

Our review revealed significant gaps, including omissions that leave either the complainants or the Festival at risk. The policy and some procedures are unclear and some aspects lack clear linkages between violations and consequences.
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

KEY FINDINGS OF POLICY REVIEW

Our review revealed significant gaps, including omissions that leave either the complainants or the Festival at risk. The policy and some procedures are unclear and some aspects lack clear linkages between violations and consequences.

- Sections of current discrimination and harassment policy and procedure, required by law, are missing.

- In general, the Festival’s written approach to conflict resolution is very basic, focusing on investigations and then lacking details. A written system of investigating that is legally appropriate and also sensitive to the industry is needed.

- The language of the policy and procedures needs to be re-imagined to meet the Festival community’s needs and boiler-plate language made more applicable to the Festival workplace.

Level 3 of the assessment deals with breathing life into the policy and procedure as a core aspect of creating and maintaining a culture of respect in the Festival workplace.

Communication with the Director of HR and in meetings with the Anti-Racism sub-committee enabled key discussion on how to re-imagine an approach to behavioural policies that can be Stratford-centric, intentionally connected to larger EDI commitments and a standard of excellence. Specifically:

- An openness from the Director of HR to not just “tweak” the Policy/Procedure, but rebuild it with the involvement of key leadership/employee/contract stakeholders.

- An exploration during the second sub-committee meeting to consider including the “to do’s” and not just the “don’t do’s” (i.e. what does respectful/civil behavioural look like and not just what harassment looks like). This allows a greater connection to the larger commitments to diversity and inclusion.

- An acknowledgement that the Policy needs to explicitly provide examples that are industry specific and incorporates the varying environments and circumstances.

- The ability to leverage the artistic creativity of Stratford to create a look and feel of the policy/accompanying materials that resembles the industry and will exude creditability and thoughtfulness.
LEVEL 3 | EXCELLENCE SUGGESTIONS

Considering the positive momentum and openness of the Stratford Festival, the following overall suggestions are made to help envision a new approach to a crucial policy and procedure.

1) Policy Suggestions:

• Reframe the Policy to be about “Respect” and embed core values language.

• Consider including the expectation of civility, which fills a missing gap between the expectation of respect and the experiences of discrimination/harassment.

• Create a robust “Glossary of Terms” that extends beyond the legal definitions and covers key equity, diversity and inclusion terminology. The sub-committee provided examples of language.

• Following our discussions with the Anti-Racism Committee (ARC), DiversiPro does not recommend creating a new term "cultural harassment." The term harassment is a legal term and it would likely be unnecessarily confusing. Instead, ensure all the concerns brought forward by the ARC are addressed through thorough explanations of language like harassment based on prohibited ground, examples used for the definitions and the overall approach of the policy to acknowledge Stratford's unique work environment.
2) Procedure Suggestions

- Re-imagine the procedure portion to be about conflict resolution and provide clear steps that are available to stakeholders and different stages of conflict such as mediation, facilitated conversations, coaching, education.

- Ensure investigation process is aligned with current best-practices and provide a detailed review of the chronological steps to enhance knowledge of the process from the point on onboarding.

Finally, while we have examined one policy and related procedures, it’s important that the Festival review other policies using an anti-racism and inclusion lens.

Ontario employers are mandated to have policies and procedures that encompass discrimination and harassment through legislation (Ontario Human Rights Code and Occupational Health and Safety Act) and through human rights case law.

In addition, a framework of well-crafted, compliant policies and procedures can help the Festival to become a safe place for individuals and groups and protect the organization.
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE CAPACITY

To disrupt systemic racism within the Festival, leaders must have the requisite skills and competencies, avoid being defensive about the experiences of those who have experienced racism, and take up the challenge, even though hard, to lead an inclusive, anti-racist organization.

To determine how individuals working at the Festival are engaging with cultural differences, the Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI) was administered to 161 members of the Company, including senior leaders and managers. The goal was to ascertain a) how these individuals are making sense of cultural differences and b) the implications for creating a more inclusive environment.

The IDI is a valid psychometric tool that measures how individuals, teams or an organization make sense of or bridge across cultural differences. The IDI identifies five Orientations along a Continuum:

- **Denial**: An orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but may not notice deeper cultural difference (e.g., conflict resolution styles) and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences.

- **Polarization**: A judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them”. This can take the form of:
  - **Defense**: An uncritical view toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices.
  - **Reversal**: An overly critical orientation toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices.

- **Minimization**: An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.

- **Acceptance**: An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one’s own and other cultures.

- **Adaptation**: An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.
KEY FINDINGS

Lack of Inclusion

It should be noted that most individuals in the Company who completed the IDI do not believe “everyone feels valued, respected and included throughout the Festival”

(See Figure 1 below)

It is important to explore the results of the IDI Profile of the 161 individuals who completed the assessment because it provides some insight into how the Company is collectively making sense of cultural differences and the challenges ahead.

In general, the Company (as represented by these 161 individuals) has overestimated its level of intercultural competence. It should be noted that it’s not uncommon for individuals to overestimate their level of intercultural competence.
The Company perceives itself as having the intercultural mindset of Acceptance – meaning they believe they are curious and nonjudgmental about differences. It is also their aspirational goal.

However, in practice, the IDI has assessed their level of intercultural competence as within Minimization – meaning they tend to focus on highlighting commonalities rather than exploring more deeply cultural differences when trying to make sense of, or engaging with, individuals whose culture is different from their own.

Despite its strength of treating everyone in “tolerant ways”, an orientation of Minimization is not an effective way of engaging with cultural differences because it ignores the unique differences of individuals and tends to consider these individuals as “just like us.” As a result, few efforts are made to account for cultural differences in developing policies, practices and procedures.

Within that overall profile of Minimization is a range of orientations. This range itself makes it challenging for the Company to arrive at a shared understanding and approach in bridging across cultural differences.

(See Figure 1 below)

**Percentage Developmental Orientation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimization</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polarization</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leaders’ Intercultural Competence

The IDI baseline assessment of 32 members of the Festival’s Management Team sheds light on their current capacity to value difference, identify systemic racism, correct behaviours and meaningfully contribute to transformative change.

As in the wider Company IDI assessment, their results revealed an overall profile of Minimization. In general, the prevailing collective mindset is to minimize differences and instead focus on commonalities to make sense of, and bridge, cultural differences.

While the ability to see commonalities among human beings is undoubtedly a strength, ignoring or minimizing differences in an organization that values inclusion is a significant weakness in those who have leadership roles.

A collective IDI profile of Minimization (71.9 per cent) among Festival leaders (Executive Management Team and the wider Senior Management Team) hinders their capacity to fully appreciate and understand the impact of current practices on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour and other marginalized groups. (See Figure 2 below)
This profile can, and must, evolve to enable leaders to lead the change required. (A reasonable expectation is for leaders of an inclusive organization to share a profile of Acceptance.)

Further, the range of orientations within the leadership group runs from the mindsets of Polarization and Minimization to Acceptance. This wide range of orientations indicates a second challenge for the Festival’s leadership: they may find it challenging to arrive at a shared goal and approach to bridge across cultural differences and if they do, it will most likely be from a mindset of minimizing differences.

The range of IDI Orientations, however, in the Executive Management Team offers an opportunity for successfully bridging across differences at the Festival because there are some individuals in that group who have the intercultural mindset of Adaptation – where differences are valued, and they are able to find mutually adaptive solutions to intercultural challenges. (See Figure 3 below)
As a result of the IDI baseline assessment of the Company, there is a demonstrated need for more focused learning and development (training) opportunities in understanding the impact of culture generally – for example, individual communication styles, nonverbal behavior, values, rituals, conflict strategies, negotiation patterns, decision styles, learning styles, thinking styles, or other dimensions of culture. It will also be beneficial for the Company to have greater awareness and understanding of the distinctive qualities of specific cultures.

Comments from Various Stakeholder Groups

We stress that while IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ artists are calling for transformative change from a White-centred, cisgender theatre culture to a truly inclusive one, they are not the only ones calling for change.

There was broad consensus across stake-holder groups on these issues of concern:

- Lack of IBPOC representation on the board, in senior leadership and across the organization
- The need for better, broader and ongoing outreach to diverse audiences and diverse artists/communities
- The need for better and broader outreach to young audiences
- Real and imagined resistance to change and difference among White audiences and donors
- The lack of open conversation and willingness to discuss/confront the issues at hand
- The lack of mentorship and financial investment in diversity
- The lack of proactive and transformative action, rather than reactive and performative actions
- The lack of a safe work environment, and the need to train everyone from directors to crew on how to engage with diversity (or instances of discrimination) appropriately and effectively.
All interview groups agreed that the Festival’s location -- in one of Canada’s least racially diverse cities -- is a key challenge for an organization that depends on diverse artists and also needs to attract diverse staff. While this isn’t likely to change, it means the Festival has to work harder to overcome certain pressing issues.

Stratford’s lack of racial diversity means there’s little availability of diverse candidates for staff jobs. One interviewee noted: “Who is going to move from Toronto to Stratford to work in the payroll department?”

While many interviewees expressed concern, IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ interviewees noted that the Festival’s location in a “very, very, White town” poses a direct hazard. They cite incidents of racism and homophobia that have left them feeling unsafe in Stratford.

Almost all groups interviewed, including Board members, believe there’s an urgent need to diversify the Board.

The lack of Board diversity diminishes the possibility of introducing varying points of view. But the Board plays an even bigger role: through their powerful networks, Board members help the Festival to identify and cultivate patrons, sponsors and funders. Board members also make individual donations to the Festival each year.

Board members and others cited examples of what can happen when board members from marginalised groups use their networks.

“There was a gay board member. I think he was the only other member of the board... And he hosted a fundraiser during the Sound of Music, which was one of the plays that year. He hosted an LGBT fundraiser-come-to-Stratford dinner in Stratford: a bit of a drag show as I recall with costumes from the archive. And there was a whole bunch of us that were introduced or reintroduced to the Stratford Festival through an outreach to the community like that. And I can imagine that you could do a series of those on your ethnic outreaches. Certainly, the LGBT community.”

Board member
“I deliberately invited the president of the Black Business and Professional Association and other members of the Black community to the RBC cocktail party and opening night at the Festival. When these people heard I was on the board, they became interested to consider the Festival.”

New Board member

Various members of the Company echoed concerns raised by IBPOC artists. They noted the important connection between what happens onstage and who attends performances:

“(The Festival needs) to address the word/concept ‘classical’ – what does it mean? What does the audience think it means? Who does it draw?”

“It feels like we’ve exhausted our white world of ticket buyers.”

They cited a range of other issues from the need for a health resource centre for Indigenous artists and crew to the current standards that IBPOC artists’ performances are measured against:

“Whose standards are ...being used to judge what’s good? [They’re] not allowed to sound like themselves – the goal is to sound white. [The Festival] is striving for consistency and that’s the opposite of diversity. You can look ‘different’ but you can’t sound Jamaican.” Director

Union representatives and some employees noted certain challenges in the workplace.

One observation they and others shared is that many employees may want to be inclusive, but often do not know how to talk about certain issues or even if they should. Meanwhile, some (especially new) artists do not know how far they can push the system; how assertive they can be; what questions they can ask; what services are available.

However, they acknowledge the lack of diversity in staffing as well as a deficit in the cultural knowledge and skill-set of staff as significant factors.
A union representative noted: “Our stage management team is not diverse in the least. That’s not to say that they’re not all excellent, but it’s certainly not diverse. The crew backstage is also not very diverse at all. I think there is one woman of color in the entire wig department and it’s an interesting issue that came up more than once [since] dealing with black hair is a very important issue. And there’s only one person that is capable of doing that at the moment.”

The senior leadership is itself concerned about the future of the Festival. They cite specific issues that range from the need for greater diversity in some areas to greater inclusion overall, and how certain current practices affect the Festival’s very survival in the changing demographics of Canada.

The following are only a few of the observations and concerns raised by senior leaders:

“Generally, the [mostly White] directors, decide who their designers are going to be, [their] choreographer and all the rest of it. And they’re generally choosing people that are like them. They’re also risk averse.”

Senior leaders recognize that the Festival is catering to (primarily older) White Canadians – a group that is rapidly being replaced by a modern, multi-racial population that traces its roots to different parts of the world (outside Europe). And Toronto, the biggest and most diverse city in Canada, is 90 minutes away, but represents only 16% of the Festival’s audience.

“I [worry that] the festival dies. If it’s not relevant to society...our audience is going to die out and we won’t be here for the next generation. I think the work that we do is really important for society. I think we’re telling stories that are universal, I think the experience of being in a theater is something that is more valuable than ever.” Senior leader

“I’m worried the Festival will be left behind, and will be seen as increasingly somebody else’s grandparents’ thing.” Senior leader
Across stakeholder groups, there is broad consensus on initiatives and actions - some recently taken - that are cause for hope and pride. Interviewees readily mentioned:

- The Lab
- The Conservatory/Training of diverse Actors
- Hiring of diverse Actors
- The 2 live-streamed Panels with Black and Indigenous Artists
- The Release of an Anti-Racism Statement
- Supporting Black Lives Matter
- The Queer-Straight Alliance/Gay-Straight Alliance
- The Artistic Director’s work on Gender and Sexuality issues
- Relaxed performances; ASL interpretation
- Specific plays such as The Breathing Hole, Nathan the Wise, Rez Sisters, Komagata Maru, To Kill a Mockingbird
- Outreach and alliances with local Indigenous community
- The Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

There’s also respect for the efforts that senior leaders have made to respond to the frankly voiced concerns of the artists and staff in the Black and Indigenous panels. The artistic director’s messages during the height of the Black Lives Matter protests have been praised for being bold, and the commitments made for being specific.
Underlying, and running through all the above positives and challenges identified in this section of the report, is the need to change the systems that make the wheels turn at the Festival. Not just the Festival’s policy and procedures for Discrimination and Harassment, but all the policies, procedures and practices that make it work.

Along with the positives, so many issues have been raised during the course of this review, and some of them so serious, that it’s clear that the scope of change needed at the Festival cannot be restricted to fixing and repairing isolated systems.

The Festival must look at all the internal and external systems that, either explicitly or implicitly, enable racism and other forms of oppression at the Festival.

**MANY OPPORTUNITIES**

Despite the challenges identified by this Review, there are tremendous opportunities available for the Festival. We offer the following as a way for the Festival to focus on the future.

**Do something bold**

The Festival demonstrated bold leadership in June 2020 when it issued public statements against racism and invited its artists to publicly share their experiences with racism in both the two live panels and on its social media channels.

2021 and 2022 are a perfect time to show the bold steps the Festival has taken in response. The playbill, board membership, community outreach, cadre of sponsors – all of these offer opportunities for the Festival to make a public impact and show serious change is taking place.

**The opportunity to create systems that respond to IBPOC concerns and prevent racist outcomes**

The artists have spoken, over and over, about how built-in and specific results of the way things are done at the Festival hinders and hurts them on a personal and professional level and blocks their capacity to fully contribute what they know. There is both need and opportunity to create/change systems that address the issues raised by artists.
“We didn’t realize how things that we were doing could give offence [or] would put people in a difficult situation. So, for instance, there’s been a lot of basic kind of trying to come to grips with language and understanding and being able to speak to each other, as there’s been an increasing amount of diversity within our company. The growing understanding has been like drinking water after this journey in the desert, when you didn’t even know you were in the desert.

“[It] has led to other understanding, and a yearning to do more; in other words, beginning to understand that you’ve been excluding or being insensitive to a certain group of people makes you begin to realize: ‘Wait a second, you know we have not been inclusive of trans artists here. Yeah, we probably use language that would be hurtful.’ Just that greater kind of understanding ... if you were a person in a wheelchair, how would you ever get around backstage?”

Artistic director

Build Awareness and Skills among White contributors

The interviews revealed that many White members of the Company are afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing. There’s an opportunity here to respond to their need for awareness-building on the issues IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ participants face and help to strengthen their own knowledge and skills.

Create the environment for people to have difficult conversations and learn from each other

“It’s very healthy to have people come in and say, well that’s not the experience I’ve had here that’s not how I see the world, or did you think about how this is impacting this segment of the population. It’s really healthy for decision making.” – Executive director

Continue building trust with different communities

“For the last five years we’ve been reaching out and speaking to indigenous artists about Shakespeare and building relationships and understanding there. So, we now commission a series of plays. The outreach this past year in terms of inviting curators to work with our company from different groups was part of that as well, working with artists out there….that’s been kind of critically important.” Artistic director
Expand and maintain intercultural skills being acquired

“An example I can think of right now is we’re doing the Rez Sisters this year, so we’re doing a vision display. We have a lot of indigenous artists with us, and we are talking about some cultural sensitivity training for the entire company. So even if you work in a stage crew, and you’re just building your sets and you live here, well, you’re going to be building the set for the Rez Sisters, and you are going to be exposed to so much ceremony, and you’re gonna maybe be in rehearsal with these artists, so we really need you to understand the background of these artists and this community.” Artistic director

Change what you can – seasonal staffing

“It’s very difficult to get diverse staff to move to Stratford. It’s easier to get the company and other seasonal staff to do so because it’s temporary. It should be easier to recruit a lighting designer and other temporary positions. The Festival should try to do so.” Board member

Build on the openness of Board Members to Change

Among Board interviewees, a strong awareness was expressed for the need to do more – to do better – even if they did not always know how to do so. There were some areas that they could not speak to directly – workplace culture, for example – as they are not involved at that level of the organization. That said, they spoke enthusiastically about their willingness to learn and grow, which is an important step. This attitude will help board members to truly hear (and act on) the issues that artists and others are bringing to the table.

Make the Board more diverse and inclusive

To make it more representative of, and connected with, large IBPOC and LGBTQ2S groups – enabling the board to expand and utilize available networks and access to new patrons, sponsorships and influence.

An appetite for proactive change within Managerial groups

Like the Board members in the previous section, managers noted the recent changes made to Festival practices with approval. And like the Board members, they noted the need to do better; to be proactive rather than reactive in attracting, retaining, valuing and appreciating diversity in the Festival.

Build on the pride in, and hope for, the Festival, as expressed across the Company

In the livestreamed panels of June 2020 and the interviews conducted for this Review, members of the Company expressed great pride in being associated with the Stratford Festival. In both panels, some expressed gratitude as well. One artist also noted that both the Festival and theatre in general have an important role to play in confronting racism and helping societies to heal.
SCENE CHANGES: The Way Forward for the Stratford Festival

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

A FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SYSTEMIC CHANGE

For the Festival to realize the true benefits of a diverse workforce, we offer the following strategic Framework based on DiversiPro’s Six Cylinders™. The Framework is designed to assist the Festival in managing, developing and implementing IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racist) initiatives and strategies. We believe “anti-racism” must also be considered when there is a desire to create diverse, equitable and inclusive environments; hence IDEA.

In order to make transformative IDEA systemic change, a holistic approach must be employed by the Stratford Festival. To achieve IDEA success, however, it cannot be seen as only a human resources matter – hiring individuals from certain designated groups. The Festival must consider IDEA principles as part of all aspects of the Company.
The Framework identifies six key areas within an organization where diversity can be leveraged for greatest impact inside and outside the organization. The six “Cylinders” are:
Rather than separate and stand-alone “Cylinders”, the Framework encourages each to interact and communicate with each other. The Framework also encourages the implementation of systems and measures to track performance. Our experience working with several organizations have demonstrated that ignoring or overlooking these areas will cause any IDEA initiative to have limited success or fail.

Ultimately the success of any organizational IDEA program is how individuals (or clients) “experience” the organization. We consider “clients” as being individuals served by the organization through its programs or services or those who work for the organization – its employees.

As in any framework, the Six Cylinders™ is a support structure that holds the many parts together. Customized to the Festival’s reality, the Framework should serve as a foundation for internal and external messaging of the Festival’s real and aspirational vision of inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism across the organization.

Beyond offering recommendations, we hope the Framework will inspire internal and external stakeholders and clearly demonstrate the Festival’s commitment to IDEA principles.
LEADERSHIP:

The decision-makers guiding the development and implementation of the organizational strategy, including senior leaders, senior managers and board directors and the leaders’ knowledge, skills, commitment, communication, and actions in support of transformative and systemic change to create a diversity and inclusive environment.

1. We recommend the Festival create an Implementation Team to develop a strategic plan to implement the recommendations in this Report. The Implementation Team should be composed of Senior Managers, Board members, artists, and other key members of the Company.
   (Timeframe: immediate)

2. We recommend intercultural competence assessment and anti-racism training for all Directors of the Board to assist in their personal development and aid in their fiduciary responsibilities to the Festival. The assessment should be conducted using a valid and reliable psychometric instrument.
   (Timeframe: immediate – 4 months)

3. Create a candidate database of IBPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities for Board membership.
   (Timeframe: 3-6 months)

4. As part of Board renewal and governance, set targets for representation of individuals from IBPOC communities.
   (Timeframe: 3-6 months)

5. Create a database of IBPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities for managerial and leadership roles.
   (Timeframe: 3-6 months)

6. Review the Festival’s Mission Statement to reflect its intention of creating an inclusive and anti-racist organization, on and off the stage. (This is also an opportunity for collaboration with IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+, artists and employees to renew the Festival’s mission.
   (Timeframe: immediate)
HUMAN CAPITAL:

The diverse set of people, including employees, suppliers, sub-contractors, volunteers, supporters, leaders, and board directors, who provide the organization with its resource base of skills, abilities, knowledge, perspectives and cultural competence; the formal systems and processes that make a diverse talent and knowledge base available to the organization; the full valuing and utilization of a diverse knowledge and talent base.

7. We recommend the Festival collect demographic disaggregated data based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, etc., of the Company. Based on this data, the Festival should develop and implement plans to increase representation of IBPOC individuals, with intentional emphasis on Black and Indigenous groups.

(Timeframe: immediate-6 months)

8. In addition to the four designated equity-seeking groups identified in Canada’s Employment Act, the Festival should consider adding 2SLGBTQ+, as a fifth equity-seeking group within the Company. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination.

(Timeframe: immediate – 6 months)

9. We recommend the development of a Data Collection Policy similar to the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy: “Count me in! Collecting human rights-based data.”

(Timeframe: Immediate)

10. Assess and review, using an anti-racist and inclusion lens, all relevant programming (on stage and off), including Artist Training, Youth Programs, etc.

(Timeframe: 4-6 months)

11. Review all employment and workplace policies, practices and procedures. Suggested changes to the current discrimination and harassment policy have already been made as part of this Review.

(Timeframe: 4 - 6 months)
WORKPLACE CULTURE:

The social-emotional and physical environment of the workplace; as well as the formal structures and systems created to drive the informal processes that make all members feel included, supported, and accepted, including a fully accessible physical space.

12. Hire a Diversity and Inclusion lead responsible for implementing the recommendations of this review. This individual should report directly to the Executive Director with a dotted line to the Artistic Director. The individual should be a racialized person and have the necessary competencies and lived experiences to do this work. The individual should also have expertise in implementing IDEA initiatives within complex organizations.

(Timeframe: immediate)

13. Establish a permanent Inclusion Diversity Equity and Anti-racism (IDEA) Council composed of a cross-section of artists, senior leaders, managers, Board members and other employees. The terms of reference and mandate of the IDEA Council should include engaging with the city of Stratford to address issues of racism and to create safety for IBPOC contributors and visitors. This Council should report annually to the Festival’s Board HR Committee through the Festival’s IDEA Director.

(Timeframe: 6-8 months)

14. Recognize racism and discrimination as a workplace health and safety hazard and provide necessary counselling to those affected.

(Timeframe: immediate)

15. Provide cultural competence training for all members of the Company, including front-of-House

(Timeframe: 5-12 months)
16. Echoing recommendations by the ARC, implement protocols designed to support culture change through the rehearsal and production process. Specifically introducing orientation sessions, room agreements, risk assessments and post mortems for all productions and layering in specific cultural competency orientation and training for production by and about representatives from equity-seeking groups.

(Timeframe: 3 to 6 months)

17. Conduct an assessment of the Festival’s physical plant ensuring its spaces are accessible and welcoming to the diverse and multi-faceted community it draws to its theatres

(Timeframe: 12 to 24 months)
STAKEHOLDER CONNECTIONS:

Relationships with the diverse stakeholder groups that hold the organization accountable for its actions, including the diverse set of communities in its region of operations, as well as actual and potential funders, investors, suppliers, employees, customers, and advocacy groups in the organizational field; knowledge of each community, partnerships with the communities, investment in the communities, two-way influencing, in-reach and out-reach.

18. Conduct research on attracting potential audience to include IBPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, under-40 and persons with disabilities
   (Timeframe: 8-12 months)

19. Hold annual, facilitated discussions with IBPOC members on the Festival’s progress in eliminating racism – this could be live-streamed, holding the Festival accountable to the public, while giving voice to IBPOC contributors
   (Timeframe: 8-12 months)

20. Renew the Festival’s school programs with specific outreach to schools with performing arts focus and diverse populations
   (Timeframe: 12-14 months)

21. Provide annual scholarships to outstanding IBPOC high school graduates in performing arts programs in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton (GTHA) area.
   (Timeframe 12-14 months)

22. Establish a summer internship program to expose outstanding IBPOC high school students to the various craft and artist roles at the Festival.
   (Timeframe 12-14 months)
MARKETING:
The process by which the organization develops strategies that will appeal to a diverse set of customers, clients, donors, and/or other key financial supporters for purposes of sales, communications, business development, and fundraising.

23. The Festival should review its current marketing strategy and donor outreach program for any gaps in engaging with members of the IBPOC communities and other equity-seeking groups.

(Timeframe: immediate)

24. Create and execute a robust internal and external communications plan, using traditional and social media platforms, about the many efforts the Festival is undertaking to create an inclusive, diverse, equitable and anti-racist environment for the Company and patrons.

(Timeframe: immediate)
PROGRAMS/SERVICES:

The nature of the products and/or services or programs that the organization provides and the extent to which products and services deliver high value to fulfil the needs of a diverse set of potential customers and clients.

25. The Festival should renew and expand its commitment to programs and productions as part of a plan that goes beyond the “classics” but also reflects the spirit and intention of the Festival. The aftermath of the racial and social justice movement is an opportune time to plan and stage more plays that tell IBPOC stories and engage IBPOC artists at all levels.

(Timeframe: 12 – 24 months)
ABOUT DIVERSIPRO

DiversiPro is an anti-racism, diversity and inclusion training and consulting firm based in Toronto. For nearly 20 years the firm has helped organizations build capacity and resilience to face challenges and leverage opportunities emerging from demographic changes and the fast-evolving social context.

DiversiPro’s services include strategic and operational planning, marketing, community development, and organizational development.

For two decades, DiversiPro and its Associates have worked with institutions, organizations and systems across Canada and around the world providing strategic and operational advice, planning, training and development, intercultural competence development, public engagement, management performance assessment, marketing and community development, and system reviews.

Research and assessment, professional learning, organizational development, and evaluation are the core activities in most of the company’s projects. DiversiPro focuses on helping organizations realize the tremendous potential of their diverse and culturally rich workforces, marketplaces, stakeholders and clients.

The Team that conducted the Stratford Festival Review included individuals with the following subject matter expertise: anti-racism and oppression, equity, diversity, inclusion, human rights, employment and human rights law, intercultural competence assessment and development and human resources.

The Review Team included:

Ingrid Brand  Hamlin Grange
Jessica Brown  MaryAnn Isbister
Gerard Etienne  Sara Luther
Ilaneet Goren  Cynthia Reyes
INTERIM ARC
SUMMARY
REPORT
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INTRODUCTION TO THE SUMMARY REPORT

This summary report is an invitation to all who work with the Stratford Festival to gain detailed insight into the anti-racism work that was undertaken at the Festival in the summer of 2020, and that continues through the summer of 2021 and beyond. It summarizes the 78-page report generated by the Anti-Racism Committee (ARC) and the subsequent learning and discussions from that process. It has been condensed for streamlined consumption and is intended as a tool for ongoing learning and action.

In the following summary report, we have highlighted some of the key issues identified through this process with the aim of providing a point of reference for the Festival community as to where we are now.

This work remains unfinished in part because it requires everyone working with the Stratford Festival to prioritize, engage and participate in it together with a tireless commitment to learn and take action as a collective. While it is still in process, we are sharing this summary at this point because we want to keep the Festival accountable and continue this work together with you all. We hope you read this report in full and talk about it with each other - we want it to incite further conversations and deeper dialogue.

Acknowledging that for some, there will be a lot of new or unfamiliar terms, we’ve included an appendix at the end titled “Notes and Definitions” to help guide you through this report.

Below is an overview of some of the key issues and overarching recommendations identified by the ARC. These issues are widespread across the Festival. We have clustered them by theme.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FESTIVAL STRUCTURE AND DIVERSIFICATION

• The Festival is hierarchical and deeply top-heavy. This makes it difficult for decision-makers to be held accountable when harm is caused.

• A lack of racial and cultural diversity is a pervasive issue felt across every area of the Festival and is essential to making change. The Company should be diversified with a particular focus on ensuring racialized individuals hold positions of leadership and Management including within the Board of Governors.
  – Placing higher value in long-term service prevents new and particularly IBPOC individuals from joining and growing as leaders at the Festival. There is a sense that many white Company Members feel threatened by the desire to change this. These changes in structure and hiring should prioritize and celebrate the values and perspectives of new, racialized people; it must not be tokenism.
  – We must also examine the tension between those who are saddened by the thought of losing a sense of tradition within the theatre and the need to abolish certain traditions altogether, because of the harm they cause. Upholding tradition cannot be an excuse for upholding racism, cultural harassment or other systems of oppression.
  – In Canada, there is a low level of per capita arts investment which makes philanthropy and sponsorship within the cultural sector fraught. Furthermore, the language and culture of volunteerism diminishes the Board Members’ responsibilities when they hold ultimate power.

• Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (EDI&AR) must be foundational to the Festival as we move forward.
  – The Festival must establish a permanent EDI&AR Team or Department in order to have an active and available resource for all.
  – The Festival should also engage a permanent Anti-Racism Committee as an additional safety channel.
  – In addition to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), make it a priority to retain IBPOC Counsellors and Therapists to support all racialized individuals who work with the Festival particularly during this time of change.
  – Other EDI&AR initiatives prior to 2021 (e.g. the work of DiversiPro, etc.) have focused heavily on the Festival’s administration;
a greater focus is required on the unique issues inherent to creative and production processes as well as a stronger bridge between the administrative and artistic work which are currently disconnected.

- It will be helpful for the Festival to have statistics and data to track and communicate progress on EDI&AR initiatives as we move forward.

- Existing training and mentorship programs must be reconstructed to become a way in which racialized candidates can obtain safe and meaningful training. These include the Assistant Designer program, the Michael Langham Workshop for Classical Direction (Langham), and The Birmingham Conservatory (The Conservatory).

POLICIES AND PROCESSES

- Racism and cultural harassment are health and safety hazards in the workplace. Implementing the Pathways to Cultural Belonging (PATH) which applies the usual Health and Safety Risk Assessments with a focus on race and culture in all artistic works could help mitigate potentially harmful issues that may arise in the creative or rehearsal process.

- The Festival should develop a clear charter of values, rights and responsibilities for the Company.

- The Festival needs to acknowledge that racialized Artists cannot be expected to double as cultural consultants without this being jointly agreed upon prior to the start of the creative process, as part of their contract, and with additional compensation for this particular work.

- HR policies are written and conveyed in an overly corporate way and feel inaccessible. They must be revised and offered in clear language and via multiple platforms. The Festival should also make it clear that everyone working with the company has a responsibility to read, understand and abide by these policies.

- The first day of rehearsal and the initial parts of the creative process must transform with the aim of making room for safe and healthy processes that consider everyone in order for Artists to bring their full selves to work and to the art they are making.

STRATFORD CULTURE - CITY AND FESTIVAL

- There is an emphasis on chain-of-command, perceptions of inaccessible leadership and a palpable atmosphere of fear at the Festival (e.g. fear of not being invited back, fear of rocking the boat, fear of deviating from tradition, fear of confrontation, etc.). Changing this is a precursor to any equity work.
• Returning to the workplace for IBPOC Company Members after the global events regarding systemic racism in 2020 will be challenging.

  – Everyone needs access to education regarding EDI&AR and we must agree on what values will be important to us as a Company going forward.

  – All Company Members must be held accountable for perpetuating past harm well before being re-engaged. Moving forward and maintaining better practices with respect include acknowledging past harm, taking responsibility and recourse and intervention from Senior Leadership.

• There is a culture of insular elitism that creates an environment where fewer risks are taken on newer talent, devaluing the experience people working here have outside of Stratford. People who are new to the Festival or who have shorter histories with the organization report that their ideas are dismissed and that they are treated as if their prior experience is invaluable.

• There is an empirical risk in being a racialized or marginalized person living in Stratford city. These risks include microaggressions and othering, harassment, violence and hate crimes. The Festival must be conscious of these and actively mitigate them when bringing marginalized and/or equity-seeking individuals into the Company.

KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:

• Reimagining, articulating and sharing the mission, vision and new core values of the Festival with EDI&AR as the foundation

• Reviewing and redeveloping recruitment strategies with the aim of diversifying the Company including Senior Leadership (Administrative and Artistic), Staff, Artists and the Board of Governors

• Hiring a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

• Establishing a permanent EDI&AR Committee

• Providing clear and consistent EDI&AR training for the Company

• Overhauling HR policies and how they are shared

• Reshaping rehearsal and creative processes
THE INITIATION AND WORK OF THE ARC

The ARC and the reports it produced came about because of the public exposure of the Festival’s predominantly white legacy and history in a climate of Anti-Black and Anti-Indigenous racism and cultural harassment all over Turtle Island. The Festival acknowledged its upholding of white supremacy and made a commitment to work to dismantle inequities that impact racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking Company Members in this community.

The Festival’s Artistic and Executive Directors, Antoni Cimolino and Anita Gaffney, invited 14 BIPOC individuals to form an interim committee to identify issues of systemic racism and cultural harassment with the aim of developing recommendations to eliminate this and help the Festival work towards a better understanding and responsibility to be an anti-racist institution. The ARC Members were financially compensated for this work, but it should be noted that their commitment to and engagement in this work came at a personal cost. We did not all know each other. It was not easy. At times we moved faster than the speed of trust because time was not on our side, and we caused harm to each other in this process. Many of these harms are still yet to be resolved.

The ARC’s particular strength is rooted in the breadth and depth of personal experiences with the Festival over the years, as well as the value of our lived experiences as racialized individuals. In addition to this, the ARC incorporated theoretical, activist and social justice frameworks related to anti-racism, anti-oppression and intercultural collaboration to support our analysis and recommendations. We also brought the following values to reflect both in our process and product: Creative Collaboration, Transparency and Accountability, Thoughtful Questioning, Integrity and Respect, Impatience and Patience.

The ARC first met on July 15, 2020, with seven weeks to provide our findings to the Festival Leadership. We met weekly as a collective and divided into sub-committees to help tackle the many conversations we all wanted to be a part of, understanding we all couldn’t contribute to every sub-committee. We met with invited Consultants, Lawyers, and other Company Members to help in our investigation. Given the breadth and depth of the work, we requested an extension in order to further these findings. In sharing our report in October 2020, we emphasized the following:

- The report highlighted glaring issues of systemic racism and cultural harassment, but not all areas of the Festival were examined due to constraints of time.

- Some issues had clear solutions; others will take longer to unearth and may evolve over time.
• All issues of systemic racism and cultural harassment must be addressed or this harm will continue, so should the Festival decide it does not have the time, resources, and drive needed to commit to this work, they should announce this publicly.

• The intention of the ARC in highlighting these issues is not to admonish or blame, but to help create a more equitable work environment which will, in turn, result in the creation of better art.

The ARC met with the HR Committee of the Board of Governors at the beginning of September 2020 to share our thoughts and concerns in this work and to begin much-needed dialogue with the perceived power at the top. It would be dishonest to say that we reported to the Board of Governors about our progress and recommendations. Instead, it was a meeting where much transparent, emotional and electric discussion was had and, in the end, one of the Board Members was able to clearly articulate what was needed, “We aren’t ready to make decisions, because we haven’t had the dialogue.” The ARC has not met again with the Board of Governors since September, but we look forward to further dialogue and action from this group.

BLACK LEADERS, CAUCUSES AND AFFINITY GROUPS

As the ARC struck out to outline the extent of the systemic institutional racism existing across the organization, the Black Members present felt it important to develop a picture of the effects of specifically anti-Black racism therein. Anti-Black racism does not always receive specific acknowledgement within the execution of this type of work, and many Black Company Members spoke of specific moments of trauma experienced over the years during the Black Like Me social media takeover and subsequent panel discussion livestream, as well as through the #InTheDressingRoom callout over social media in June of 2020.

The Black Members of the ARC decided to form a sub-committee to ascertain and catalogue those experiences in order to identify unifying systemic practices at the root of such harms. We began to examine specific anti-Black bias within the administration, casting, outreach, engagement and interaction between Black Employees with those in positions of authority. We invited several Company Members to speak with us regarding their experiences through their work at the Festival. Many examples of anti-Black racism became apparent. There have been no Black Artists in leadership positions in Administration or as Department Heads. There has been only one Black IATSE Member within the Festival’s ranks and never, as far as we can tell, in the Scene Shop, Lighting Crew, Sound, or Running Crews. In the last 10 years, there has never been a play by a Black Playwright and there have been only two Black-identifying Directors as part of the Festival’s season of plays.

For several reasons, two Black Members pulled back from their involvement with the work. As the representation on the ARC diminished,
and in the face of increasing workloads for the remaining Members within other sub-committees, the Black Leaders sub-committee was ultimately abandoned in favour of focusing on other work. The dissolution of the sub-committee must be in no way interpreted as a suggestion that there is little to no anti-Black bias or harm within the Festival’s practices or culture. As the anti-racist work at the Festival continues, the challenges specifically faced by Black Company Members must be considered and the work of the Black Leaders sub-committee reignited. Furthermore, we suggest that other BIPOC caucuses or affinity groups be established to look at specific issues faced by these groups and to come together to do this work collaboratively.

It is worth noting here that at the time of compiling the summary report, there remain a few Affinity Groups that include members of the ARC and the Parallel-ARC, but these groups were not in focus or created alongside the ARC like the Black Leaders group was which is why we do not discuss them in this report.

THE CREATION OF THE PARALLEL-ARC AND COLLABORATION WITH THE ARC

The ARC report was shared with the Senior Leadership (Michael Adams, Dave Auster, Anne Kircos, Simon Marsden, Rachel Smith-Spencer, Darryl Huras, Shelley Stevenson, Anita Gaffney and Antoni Cimolino). They recommended the formation of a working group - the Parallel-ARC - to review the report and respond to it.

The Members of the Parallel-ARC received and read the ARC reports in October 2020. The Parallel-ARC took the reports and tried to break them down by sub-committee and by issue, making notes on particular questions and areas requiring greater clarity from the ARC as well as a proposed plan of action for each issue.

With the original reports and these new documents, the ARC and the Parallel-ARC met virtually multiple times and for many hours a week throughout November and December with the aim of more deeply understanding the ARC report and collaboratively transforming the issues and recommendations identified into an action plan. Sometimes we met as a full group and other times we met in smaller sub-sections.

This process was difficult for all involved. It was at times uncomfortable, frustrating and confusing. The goals were not clear to everyone at the outset and we did not spend enough time at the beginning to map out a working process and shared values together. We ultimately began to do this: we spent time getting to know each other, creating a community agreement and articulating goals and, in doing so, began to engender greater trust and shared goals.

At the time of writing this summary, we have yet to complete discussions of the full ARC report. This process, however, has provided greater clarity on the core issues facing the Festival as well as some clear next steps which we are excited to share with the Company.
WHERE WE ARE NOW AND NEXT STEPS

To say that this work has been and continues to be messy and painful sounds both cliché and insufficient in describing the experience of those involved, but it bears repeating. There are certain challenges in doing this work at a PWI with the Festival’s particular history, structure and profile. Undertaking this during a pandemic has also meant that we have almost exclusively had to do this work collaboratively, but at a distance. In some ways, the pandemic has also provided more time for this work and a clear interruption of the “way things used to be”, one of the greatest challenges in changing systems of inequity.

In the following summary, you will read about key issues, recommendations and next steps (both short and long-term) currently being undertaken by the Festival. Some of these are already underway and others will be initiated later on in 2021 and into 2022. This work is very much in process.
SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT SUMMARIES

Below is a list of the key sub-committee reports the ARC created:

- Policies and Human Resources (HR)
- The Acting Company
- The Directors’ Office
- Stage Management
- Production and Design
- Marketing and Publicity (M&P)
- Education

The ARC did not have time to fully explore the following due to time constraints, but recommends the Festival undertake similar work in each area in 2021 so changes can be implemented in a fulsome and coordinated manner. These areas are each of vital importance to the Festival.

- Accommodations/Housing (which falls under the umbrella of HR)
- Advancement
- Audience Development (including Front-of-House, Call Centre, Retail, and Cafés and Catering)
- Board of Governors
- Facilities
- Finance
- Information Technology (IT)
- Pay Equity (which falls under the umbrella of HR)
- Volunteers (including the Friends of the Festival)

There are some issues that are addressed in multiple reports. In the interest of time, we have housed these under one sub-report summary rather than in all of the ones in which they appear (e.g. issues and recommendations regarding Wigs & Make-Up that appeared in the HR, Acting Company and Production & Design reports are included in the Production & Design summary.)
POLICIES AND HUMAN RESOURCES (HR)

This report included an analysis of current HR documents, policies and processes, and their accessibility (e.g. format, language, definitions, etc.) and application.

KEY ISSUES:

• **Harassment**: For years, racial, cultural, sexual, and workplace harassment has occurred at the Festival to varying degrees. In recent years, we have seen more reporting and action taken to combat harassment, but when it comes to racism and cultural harassment specifically, reporting or action has been uncommon despite the prevalence of this harm.

  – A lack of trust within the Festival persists; this is partly because some people who have perpetrated harm continue to be re-engaged without recourse or intervention from Festival Leadership. This devalues the trauma repeatedly experienced by racialized Company Members and continues a cycle of unsafe working conditions.

• **“Company”**: The term “Company” as it is currently used pertains only to the Actors which creates exclusion and a greater sense of division among the Festival community. The identification of “Staff” vs. “Employee” and how HR policies pertain to Artists who are self-employed is unclear.

• **Unions and Associations**: How Union and Association agreements intersect with the application of Festival values and policies including hiring, seniority, and EDI&AR is also unclear and contributes to preventing the diversification of the Festival.

• **Complaints Process**: There is confusion about how Health and Safety and HR reporting processes (including the whistleblower hotline) function at the Festival and, in particular, how these intersect with “Not in Our Space” from Canadian Actors’ Equity Association (CAEA).

  – Reporting processes can be long and often take place after a production has closed when, in fact, a resolution is required more quickly.

  – It is sometimes unclear whether HR has taken any action on behalf of those who have brought forth complaints.

  – Racism and cultural harassment require particular experience and expertise from those mediating a complaint in order to prevent further harm.

• **HR Documents**: The HR policy documents are cumbersome and inaccessible. They are not made clearly available to all. This means...
people don’t read or fully understand them.

– There are also no clear definitions for cultural harassment, insensitivity or microaggressions, so it’s possible this harm continues because those who perpetrate it are unclear on what is acceptable under the current HR policy. Perhaps they do not know when they have offended due to unconscious and conscious biases or a lack of training, or their actions are deliberate.

• Young Artists at the Festival: Young people engaging with the Festival as program participants and Artists are often exposed to harm and marginalization due to age in addition to other factors.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

• Acknowledgement and Accountability: Festival Leadership must acknowledge their complicity in the ongoing culture of harassment and should be involved in making change in order to ensure a consistent application of values and policies. Unclear policies contribute to creating an environment where this harm can take place.

– The Artistic and Executive Directors need to be engaged in the general wellness of all departments and each rehearsal process so that instances of racism and cultural harassment are not surprises, and can be addressed in real-time versus after a production has closed.

• Training: The Festival should develop and implement a training process that includes racism and cultural harassment as well as particular processes designed for the artistic process and the rehearsal hall.

• Make it a requirement that all current Artists participate in EDI&AR training, in some form, prior to returning to the rehearsal hall.

• Allot time within the rehearsal process for deeper conversations and working agreements related to EDI&AR and particular personal and cultural issues.

• Build in processes to ensure that everyone involved understands the function of the Health and Safety, HR reporting processes (including the Whistleblower Hotline) and, in particular, how these intersect with “Not in Our Space” (CAEA).

• Dissemination and communication must consider that if someone has experienced harm, reporting may be further traumatizing.

• When complaints are brought forward, consider how to provide quicker resolutions and temporary safety measures until the complaint has been resolved.

The Artistic and Executive Directors need to be engaged in the general wellness of all departments and each rehearsal process so that instances of racism and cultural harassment are not surprises, and can be addressed in real-time versus after a production has closed.
• **Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**: Hire a permanent EDI&AR Director outside of HR whose responsibilities include a focus on training and reporting and acting as a liaison and mediator for EDI&AR issues including cultural harassment.

• **Redefine “Company”**: include all those working with the Festival.

• **Update HR Policy Documents**: Provide clear and consistent language in all HR policies and associated documents to support greater accountability and shared responsibility.
  – Include a definition of cultural harassment along with clear examples. Self-employed Artists should be included when Staff and Employees are mentioned.
  – How Union and Association agreements intersect with the application of Festival values and policies including hiring, seniority and EDI&AR should be made clearer.
  – HR documents should be revised and provided via multiple platforms and learning modalities (e.g. video modules, reading, etc.).
  – A link should be included in every contract and the Festival must also reiterate the Employee’s responsibility to review and understand these documents annually.

• **Orientation at the Festival**: A robust and thorough welcoming process including a mentorship component should be developed not only for new people, but for those who are returning after some time.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

• Recruiting and orienting a Director of EDI&AR

• Revamping all policies to create relatable content and clear paths to resolution of workplace concerns
  – This will begin with key policies that guide workplace interaction (e.g. Harassment & Discrimination, Violence in the Workplace, Whistle Blower, Code of Conduct, Anti-Racism, etc.).
  – New platforms for interactive training and delivery of policy information will be explored and initiated over 2021 and 2022.
  – Cultural Harassment will be included in the policy and training content.
  – Safeguarding policies including training for Staff responsible (e.g. Childminders) for young people will be revised in collaboration with the Directors’ Office and Education.

• Updating orientation and training programs to incorporate new
policies and processes with an emphasis on introducing people to the culture of the Festival, and promoting the new Code of Conduct, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression values

- Including in the IATSE Joint Union-Management (JUM) meetings ongoing EDI&AR discussions to identify areas of collaboration on key recommendations brought forward
THE ACTING COMPANY

This report included an analysis of the personal experiences and ideas specifically around racialized Performing Artist engagement at the Festival with the aim of providing a safe, meaningful work experience that is equitable and free from racial harm.

Due to time constraints, the following issues were not fully explored and require further analysis:

• Festival Union Crews and problematic power structures

• The ways in which current coaching and intimacy practices inherently perpetuate systemic racism

• “Cast by Consent” (which has been undertaken outside of the work of the ARC, but with its support)

• Nepotism and the history of hiring and celebrating couples in a way that has disproportionately favoured white families

• Cultural values that can be hard to negotiate within the current system such as childcare and family

• The Conservatory in relation to the program being used as a tool for casting rather than training as well as the level of entitlement that the program can often engender in young, white men

KEY ISSUES:

• Casting and Artist Retention: Many IBPOC Actors are not given the same opportunities to develop professionally over time due to the lack of continuous support and investment from the Festival in the evolution of their artistic processes. This has led to feeling undervalued, marginalized, and tokenized by the Festival. White Artists seem to be granted much longer-term opportunities for cultivation and professional development, season after season.

• Directors: The Director holds hierarchical power and therefore sets the tenor and expectations for the work and creative process. The current rehearsal and production structures and timelines do not allow time for a Director to build genuine trust with an Actor because the value is on the work, rather than on the ensemble of people making the work.

• The Start of Rehearsals: Currently, the first day can be overwhelming by the sheer number of people observing the room, underwhelming because of the immediate focus on the script, and intimidating because of having to quickly get to know the group of strangers with whom you’re about to work.
  – This process can also inadvertently alienate racialized Artists that
are engaged for a production. The dynamics within the ensemble on the first day are the first encounter many have with the Festival’s hierarchy.

– There’s an overall sense that time is precious and that it is being wasted unless “we” get right down to work. There is often no space, there is often no air. (This issue and subsequent recommendations were echoed in The Directors’ Office, Stage Management, and Production and Design reports.)

- **Culturally-Specific Work and Cultural Harm**: Racism, harassment and harm endured by Performing Artists engaged in culturally-specific work must stop, especially as programming is further diversified. There is a lack of cultural understanding and cultural competency that is pervasive throughout Senior Leadership and Management at the Festival. (This issue and subsequent recommendations were echoed in The Directors’ Office, Stage Management, Production and Design, and M&P sub-reports.)

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **Amplify Racialized Actors**: Cast lead roles with priority given to BIPOC Artists; seek opportunities to engage them in M&P initiatives to build familiarity with the Festival audience; make timely offers to secure BIPOC Artists when contracting; ensure racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking Artists are not isolated to The Lab’s programming.

- **Season Planning**: Consult with current racialized Artists in season planning to signify the value they bring to the work; provide them with an early and integral voice particularly inside of productions that are driven by a singular directorial concept to ensure safe thematic interpretation of sociological, economic, and ethical perspectives.

- **Learn From and Continue to Build Relationships with Racialized Artists**: Interview those who have worked at the Festival, but not returned or who have rejected offers, to identify barriers for retaining IBPOC Artists.

  – The Festival currently attracts Artists trained in colonial ways of working, so a shift in programming in what stories are created and how they are shared will uphold Artists with diverse training and a broader range of racial, cultural and artistic values.

- **Value of Ensemble**: Shift the value to the ensemble so that the work can happen in a safe and healthy way, especially for racialized Performing Artists. Provide mindful resources that ensure suitable understudies for all IBPOC Artists to support this, especially when these Artists are working on culturally-specific works, or those in which their race, language, cultural or sacred practices are being presented on stage. If the priority is to make more work with cultural
specificity, then the framework for Actors to work within needs to support them the same way we support “classics” (e.g. If you’re doing a show with a specific language besides English, make sure there is an understudy in place who can also speak this language.)

- Make it a requirement that all current Staff and Artists participate in anti-racism training, in some form, prior to returning to the rehearsal hall.

- Have Directors undergo performance reviews and ensure that HR policies are equitably applied to them as well.

- Ensure that Directors are equipped to create a safe and healthy work environment through the creation of room agreements for each production which address: diverse values; conflict management; working with sensitive or triggering content; approaches to intimacy; building safety, trust, and respect between all Members of the Cast and Creative Teams; and an acknowledgment that hierarchies can and do exist and how the Director intends to negotiate this through an equal valuation of all participants in the creative process and rehearsal hall.

- Cultural competency and an openness to new ways of working is a must. The Festival must also consider that unique support (e.g. mentorship, allyship, etc.) and the interruption in traditional hierarchies will be required to support new, racialized, trans, non-binary, and women Directors in particular.

- Re-imagine the Beginning of the Rehearsal Process: Shift the focus of the first day of rehearsal from getting familiar with the text to getting familiar with each other.

  - Spend time creating a room agreement for the process.

  - Put the focus first on the people directly connected to each production, and introduce the entire Staff of the Festival at a later date.

  - Find an alternate time and way to learn about HR policies and procedures.

  - Implement a longer orientation and ensemble-building process for new people and each production’s Cast and Creative Members prior to the official start of rehearsals.

- Culturally-Specific Work and Cultural Harm: The content of these productions is sensitive, sacred in some cases, or asks for Artists to re-engage with trauma. These unique qualities should be reflected in production preparation timelines, schedules and budgets, as well as creative processes.

  Shift the focus of the first day of rehearsal from getting familiar with the text to getting familiar with each other.
KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:

• Hiring IBPOC Staff to date, this has included a Casting Associate, New Play Development (NPD) Associates and a Planning Associate, with a focus on artistic leadership, casting, dramaturgy, training and season planning

• Prioritizing casting IBPOC Artists

• Overhauling The Conservatory

• Implementing an orientation process before rehearsals begin (Pre-Rehearsal Orientation): a multi-day process for all Cast and Creative Teams

• As per the “Living Guideline to Production Processes” (see the Production & Design summary for details), entering into meaningful discussion of culturally-specific work in all Departments well before Actors enter the room

• Reviewing the pay scale to ensure fairness of compensation

• Providing mediation on past harm
THE DIRECTORS’ OFFICE

The Directors’ Office is a spaghetti-monster with a myriad of tentacles making it, in practice and concept, hard to assess comprehensively.

Issues, recommendations and key next steps related to the city of Stratford are captured in this sub-report because that’s where the Artistic and Executive Directors are situated, but we recognize that this issue is much more broad-reaching than that.

KEY ISSUES:

• **Making Change from the Inside**: Racialized Staff are often “the only ones” in their respective Departments and are not in positions of leadership. It is also, in some ways, harder to advocate for a revolution within one’s own space or to disrupt an ecosystem populated with individuals they have bonded with despite their heretofore-steadfast attachment to the status quo.

• **The Machine**: The Festival is not very nimble or adaptive in its structure and processes.

• **Artistic Planning**: The season planning process is insular, white and opaque. Directors and Designers are not given clarity on timelines and how marketing and other initiatives will intersect with their creative processes.

• **Directors**: The hierarchy embedded in traditional theatrical practices favours toxic personalities.
  
  – Stop the cycle of re-engaging individuals who present difficult, toxic and/or troubling behaviours and attitudes especially in repeated offense. This choice devalues the traumas that those individuals have caused, whether that be by way of racism, cultural harassment, sexual harassment, enacting prejudice, bullying or creating a toxic work environment.

  – Re-hiring these Artists sends a dismissive and dangerous signal to those who have reported violations of safety and sends the message that those who make complaints and offer up their lived traumas are not to be taken seriously.

  – This signals that there are no consequences for inappropriate and problematic actions for some and continues a cycle of unsafe working environments.

  – If these Artists are being rehired, the community deserves transparency about how the history of complaints have been addressed, and how the Festival will ensure everyone’s safety while working with them.
• **Behind-the-Scenes**: White hires as Creative Artists or behind-the-scenes are disproportionately high in comparison to IBPOC Artists. At the beginning of the ARC’s work, the Festival was simultaneously dealing with the pandemic and our new digital reality seemed to be, again, predominantly white. This was flagged by Artists in some of these digital projects and the Festival swiftly instituted processes to begin to level the playing field.

• **Fostering New Talent and New Work**: Young Playwrights are not always supported through development with a rush to commission or produce new work before it is ready. In diversifying work, the Festival must also beware of trauma plays and torture porn.

• **Langham and The Conservatory**: the pedagogical aspects of both programs need to be reconsidered with a focus on investing in new talent, engaging diverse practices and values, and more deeply connecting these to the work on our stages.

• **The Studio**: The perception that this is where BIPOC and non-European plays are relegated bears truth and should be addressed.

• **Nepotism**: Despite it not being an official policy, “couples hiring” disproportionately benefits white families.

• **Lateral Harm**: The ARC received confidential testimony of lateral harm which points to complex and multifold causes and suggests the institution’s history and culture of white supremacy might inadvertently be promoting that harm.

• **Funding**: The Festival’s reliance on ticket-buyers and donations rather than government funding makes it risk-averse.

• **The City**: We need to eradicate racism, cultural harassment and anti-2SLGBTQ+ incidents in town.

  – We need to improve relationships with the city of Stratford community.

  – We need to improve the quality of life for urbanites and racialized, marginalized and other equity-seeking individuals who come to live and work in Stratford.

  – The current political climate and what is perceived as the Festival’s reluctance to engage with the city of Stratford are two of several components at play.

  – The loss of economic power and slow decentralization of whiteness along with the false perception that our municipal government functions at the whims of the Festival further contribute to these issues.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Making Change from the Inside**: EDI&AR initiatives cannot be relegated to specific Departments (e.g., The Lab) or fall on the shoulders of the few BIPOC Company Members working with the Festival. Leadership and Staff must be diversified across the organization with EDI&AR as the foundation for every Department.

- **The Machine**: The Festival must become more nimble and adaptive particularly as it undertakes a greater commitment to culturally-specific work and the flexibility and uniqueness that will be required of each project.

- **Leadership Accessibility**: The Senior Leadership should explore new processes for accessibility, transparency and relationship-building such as weekly open office hours.

- **Artistic Planning**: This process must include racialized voices. Marketing initiatives should not come at the expense of the creative process; flexibility is key in giving Artists a clear sense of timelines from the beginning of the process.

- **Scheduling and Resources**: Schedule more time and devote more resources for culturally-specific shows.

- **Behind-the-Scenes**: New mechanisms for planning, recruitment, hiring and engagement must be implemented immediately and continue to be refined to diversify those working behind-the-scenes. The process needs to be ongoing; we cannot wait for it to be “complete” before implementing it.

- **Fostering New Talent and New Work**: Provide deep mentorship to BIPOC Artists new to directing and writing; widen the scope when commissioning to engage new Writers.

- **Langham**: The Festival must invest in new talent in the long-term; the program should also be a direct conduit for finding Directors for the Festival; recommendations from the Acting Company report can be applied to this program as well.

- **The Conservatory**: IBPOC Leaders are needed to ensure different practices and values are included; recommendations from the Acting Company report can be applied to this program as well.

- **The Studio**: This theatre is best for intimate work.
  - More IBPOC or culturally-specific productions should be produced on the Festival’s larger stages. Audiences will have the joy of seeing work they have never been exposed to before and it will provide those from racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking groups an opportunity to see work that reflects who they are.

More IBPOC or culturally-specific productions should be produced on the Festival’s larger stages. Audiences will have the joy of seeing work they have never been exposed to before and it will provide those from racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking groups an opportunity to see work that reflects who they are.
The Studio tends to sell out and creates a frustrating scenario of using that house for IBPOC or culturally-specific shows when that population is, on average, less economically advantaged than the white population.

- **Nepotism**: The Festival must consider how to better support racialized Artists and families in making their work and home in Stratford.

- **Lateral Harm**: Lateral harm perpetrated by racialized Company Members must be discussed, but doing so can be uniquely retraumatizing. The scarcity of racially and culturally-diverse representation at a PWI sustains isolation. Abuse engenders further abuse, so we must discuss this in order to break the cycle.

- **Funding**: The Festival should seek out an increase in government funding to support us in making change and taking greater risks on our own terms.

- **The City**: The Festival should be more involved in the city of Stratford by initiating community partnerships, providing greater access to residents to see our work, and by extending care beyond their work particularly for IBPOC Artists and Staff.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

- Adding specificity to the posting of job opportunities to broaden the field of candidates

- Hiring IBPOC Staff which to date have included a Casting Associate, New Play Development (NPD) Associate(s), and a Planning Associate, with a focus on artistic leadership, training and season planning (with Langham and The Conservatory training programs under their purview)

- Overhauling Langham:
  - To be used as a vetting system to familiarize the Festival with Directors before hiring them for Festival shows
  - With longer-term and more personalized mentorship led by an Artistic Leader from a racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking groups

- Commissioning more IBPOC Artists in NPD and the Meighen Forum with the specific goal of producing these projects here or around Canada

- Implementing a Pathways to Cultural Belonging (PATH) for each production in 2021

- As per the “Living Guideline to Production Processes” (see the Production & Design summary for details), entering into careful
discussion of culturally-specific work in all Departments well before Actors enter the room

- Hiring Cultural Consultants to support the productions in 2021 as needed
- Making EDI&AR training mandatory for all Directors
- Conducting reviews on Director complaints/feedback after the show
- Implementing “Cast by Consent” to increase communication in the creative planning process
STAGE MANAGEMENT

This report focused on gaining an understanding of the current role of the Stage Manager and identifying a better model. The aim is to create better systems of support for more diversified Stage Management Teams.

KEY ISSUES:

- **Diversify Stage Management**: There is an obvious lack of racial diversity in Stage Management. Having a more diverse Stage Management Team will help inspire trusting relationships and grow capacity for diverse Casts and Creative Teams.

- **Create Safe and Inclusive Working Environments**: Stage Management is constantly trying to foresee issues and solve them before they become tangible or harmful. However, the absence of cultural awareness and cultural competency training prevents this from happening particularly with regard to racism and cultural harassment.

- **Work Culture and Hierarchical Power**: As evidenced in other reports, the Director sets the culture for a creative process. This hierarchical structure can be problematic because it can mean that no one feels safe to speak up when harm is perpetrated. There appears to be instances of cultural harassment and oppression between Directors and Stage Managers and between Stage Managers and Actors.
  
  - Historically at the Festival, the Stage Manager has been thought of as a facilitator for coordination of the room and the Director’s vision with the understanding that they should not have an opinion. However, in actuality the Stage Manager is another Artist in the room with valuable knowledge; not only of the production in question and the technical aspects of the theatre, but also about how to support Artists’ safety in the room. In many cases, they are an untapped resource due to having been taught silence as appropriate conduct for their role.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Diversify Stage Management**: Hire more IBPOC Production Assistants, Stage Managers, Apprentice Stage Managers and Assistant Stage Managers and provide mentorship by current Stage Managers while encouraging the reception and implementation of new ideas and perspectives from these new hires.
  
  - Provide growth opportunities for new hires to become Stage Managers if they wish;

  - Create a welcoming and robust Festival mentorship program for new graduates in partnership with theatre schools and training programs.

Stage Management is constantly trying to foresee issues and solve them before they become tangible or harmful. However, the absence of cultural awareness and cultural competency training prevents this from happening particularly with regard to racism and cultural harassment.
• **Create Safe and Inclusive Working Environments:**
  
  – Provide EDI&AR training for all Stage Managers and Department Heads to foster greater equity, diversity and inclusion.

  – Provide ongoing EDI&AR training (e.g. unconscious and conscious bias, allyship, conflict management, etc.) to ensure everyone is working together with the same vocabulary, new values and toward shared goals.

  – Provide accessible educational materials for quick-reference particularly for those who find it more challenging to adapt (e.g. Language guides to support discontinuing the binary, exclusive uses of “Ladies and Gentlemen” with “Everybody” instead).

• **Work Culture and Hierarchy:** Dismantle the hierarchy and focus on the value of the ensemble, respecting and valuing the unique roles and responsibilities each person holds.

  – Continue to disrupt the hierarchical structures of the rehearsal hall to ensure Stage Managers are empowered with the resources and support to help advocate when there are issues related to power imbalance with Directors.

  – Consider how to implement EDI&AR consultation and mediation within the creative process to ensure that all spaces (including rehearsal halls, fitting rooms, dressing rooms and backstage areas) remain safe for all throughout the rehearsal and performance process.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

• Creating EDI&AR training specific for Stage Management Staff to be implemented in 2021 which will include a multi-level training plan for ongoing implementation in subsequent years

• Posting all Stage Management positions publicly which includes posting them more widely and recognizing the value that diversity and inclusion brings

• Engaging in ongoing conversations regarding a more robust mentorship program for anyone interested in pursuing Stage Management as a profession (e.g. partnerships with high schools, theatre schools and other training programs, etc.)

• Looking for opportunities to achieve EDI&AR goals within Pre-Rehearsal Orientation

• Utilizing opportunities such as the Directors’ Workshops as a growth opportunity for Assistant Stage Managers

• Establishing regular check-ins with the Director of EDI when they are hired to reinforce work on unconscious and conscious bias.
allyship and hierarchical structures

- Implementing the Pathways to Cultural Belonging (PATH) process for each production

- For weekly and daily schedules, prioritizing culturally-specific aspects (e.g. smudging, etc.) of a production in scheduling and with appropriate resources, eventually using the PATH framework

- Creating a transparent and respectful system to support BIPOC Actors with regard to scheduling wig fittings and haircuts

- Holding debriefs on productions: one when the show opens and one when the show closes
PRODUCTION AND DESIGN

The focus of this report was on the Production and Design processes and Departments at the Festival including Designers, Assistant Designers, Directors and Stage Managers, Crafts People, Technicians, Managers, and a variety of Unions and Associations. This sub-committee also generated a “Living Guideline for Production Processes,” to start the ball rolling for creating upcoming, new or culturally-specific work at the Festival.

KEY ISSUES:

• **Culture of Fear**: There is a particular culture and atmosphere within Production that can be othering, unwelcoming and sometimes unsafe for racialized members of our theatre community.
  
  – Currently, it maintains the standard that IBPOC Artists are not part of the system, and there is minimal mindful consideration of bringing our full cultural and racial identities to the spaces we work in.
  
  – There is a hierarchy and resistance to new ideas particularly in certain departments. The relationship and interactions with various Members of IATSE Locals 357 and 828 as well as the Props, Sewers, and Crafts associations, felt by various members in the racialized communities at the Festival, is one that reinforces problematic work practices and a culture of fear and cultural harassment and harm.

• **Lack of Diversity**: There is an obvious lack of racial diversity in Production Staff, Union and Association Members, and among Designers, Directors and Stage Managers. With the erroneous lens that white people are viewed as “neutral”, this results in harmful productions and work practices.

• **Production Processes**: The current production structure encourages and promotes a place filled with communication gaps and processes that happen in silos. Implement structures for greater collaboration, diverse ways of knowing and working and flexibility.

• **Cultural Competency**: There are concerns about further protocol and understanding amongst Production Staff and Creatives regarding intellectual property, public domain in the colonial structure and that of culturally-specific groups. Developing a deep understanding of what has cultural significance for certain communities is paramount.

• **Assistant Designers and Training the Future**: The Assistant Designers are an integral part of the production process. The Assistant Designer Program is unique, but currently offers no orientation or training plan for participants, does not prioritize fostering relationships with emerging BIPOC Designers and does not support Assistant Designers in becoming Designers if they wish.
• **Wigs and Make-Up**: This Department continues to fail many racialized Actors. Wigs that are specific to Black Actors remain a critical issue and cultural harassment manifests itself prevalently in this Department. BIPOC and primarily Black Actors are continuously required to “make do” which, for some, can result in deep internal conflict with issues of personal responsibility, representation, and identity. This leads to re-engagement with historical inequities and a direct reconnection with generational trauma.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

• **An Environment that Welcomes**: The Festival must work toward creating theatre in an environment that welcomes people from racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking communities to bring their full selves to this work.
  
  – Provide ongoing training for all and build in supports such as an EDI&AR Team or Department.

  – Give particular consideration for more intimate settings such as fitting rooms.

  – Learn from and continue to build relationships with BIPOC Artists: in order to identify barriers for retaining these Artists, interview those who have worked at the Festival, but not returned as well as those who have rejected offers.

  – As the Festival currently attracts Artists trained in colonial ways of working, a shift in programming in what stories are created and how they are shared will uphold IBPOC Artists with diverse training and a broader range of artistic values.

• **Make Production and Design Less Homogenous**: Without a wide range of perspectives and lived experiences, a diverse creative culture cannot be sustained. It is especially problematic when a Department as large as this one holds extensive creative responsibility. Encourage more diversity in the Department by implementing new hiring practices and prioritizing mentorship with IBPOC individuals, particularly if they are new to the Festival.

• **Foster a Robust Racialized Design Community**: Review and restructure the Assistant Designer Program whereby all design disciplines and methods of practice and ways of knowing are shared in order to prioritize a thoughtful approach to design education for racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking communities. Create opportunities for emerging IBPOC Designers to design on Festival stages.

• **Provide Training and Change Creative Processes**: Provide ongoing, specific and mandatory EDI&AR training for IATSE Locals 357 and 828, as well as the Props, Sewers, and Crafts Associations.
The Festival should engage with IATSE Locals to determine how to include this in collective bargaining agreements and how the costs for this training will be shared.

Integrate IATSE Technical Department Heads into the production process earlier so they can collaborate with Actors, Designers, Directors and Stage Managers. The investment of time, collaboration in storytelling and trust-building will only aid in creating an environment where people can feel safe and free to create more fully.

- **Provide Education in Cultural Competency**: To address this, when programming and season planning occurs, consider how to move toward decolonizing theatre design and production practices by engaging in a new process of core considerations for the entire process: from when the play is chosen to opening night. This process will demand more: more time, more resources, more considerations and dialogue. Implement Pathways to Cultural Belonging (PATH) and debriefs for each production process for every show.

- **Wigs and Make-Up**: The Festival must invest in the tools to support BIPOC Artists including providing robust training and diversifying those working in these departments. This department must know how to style, cut, and create wigs for people from all backgrounds, which means mandatory hiring of Wigs and Make-up Artists who know how to work with specificity and care for BIPOC Actors and who want to be trained to do so. Expand your stock and prioritize materials budget to create wigs for racialized bodies. Put the money where the need is. This is how equity is achieved.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

- Creating EDI&AR training specific for Production Staff to be implemented in 2021 which will include a multi-level training plan for ongoing implementation in subsequent years.

- Employing a new recruitment strategy for Designers and Assistant Designers which includes posting all positions, posting them more widely and recognizing the value that diversity and inclusion brings.

- Implementing the “Living Guideline to Production Processes” which includes:
  - sharing this with all Production Staff starting with Managers in the Department
  - honouring the desire for it to be a changing, evolving tool
  - using this Guideline during the season planning process in regards to scheduling and budgeting

- Re-imagining of the Assistant Designers Program which includes:
ongoing conversations with a Design Consultant to structure a five-year progressive learning experience that centres learning about designing in repertory at the Festival

- leveraging our internal training programs (The Langham Directors’ Workshop and The Birmingham Conservatory) to create more design opportunities

• Looking for opportunities within the Pre-Rehearsal Orientation to include more Production Staff in specific training, room agreements and discussions about shows and their cultural aspects

• Establishing regular check-ins with the Director of ED&I when they are hired to reinforce work on unconscious and conscious bias, allyship and hierarchical structures

• Implementing the Pathways to Cultural Belonging (PATH) process for each production

• Initiating conversations with various Unions and Associations to discuss partnering on EDI&AR initiatives (e.g. a Diversity Joint Union-Management Meeting, etc.)

• Holding debriefs on productions: have one when the show opens and one when the show closes

• Through training, improving the cultural competency of the Managers in the Production Department

  – In the short term, this will focus on improving our understanding of the concept of intellectual property rights in relation to culturally-diverse backgrounds and culturally-specific shows.

• Creating a transparent and respectful system to support BIPOC Actors with regard to all aspects of the Wigs & Make-Up process
MARKETING AND PUBLICITY (M&P)

The focus of this report was on how the unconscious and conscious bias of those working in the M&P Departments have inflicted harm on racialized individuals due to the systems and processes that have been enforced at the Festival. M&P is the face of the institution. It says, “this is who we are,” and, by default, sets the culture and vision of the Festival, internally and externally.

KEY ISSUES:

- **Departmental Culture and Composition**: The structure of these Departments is problematic: it is very hierarchical with little diversity.
  - It can be challenging to work in a PWI as a racialized person. Many Company Members have been at the Festival for a multitude of years making it hard to try new things and meaning the culture is one of conservatism rather than progress. This has contributed to a lack of retention of BIPOC M&P Staff.
  - Due to budget targets, scheduling pressures, and resource constraints, there is a tendency not to try new initiatives to broaden and diversify audiences. There is an emphasis on marketing and publicizing the “big shows” which historically have not included new shows or BIPOC Artists as leads.
  - There are currently no existing EDI&AR policies concerning M&P.

- **Representation**: There is often a lack of racial and cultural representation in marketing materials as well as limited discussion about cultural authenticity and problematic portrayals of racialized individuals.
  - The dynamics of billing and promoting shows with an almost exclusive focus on “Stratford stars” favours white Artists, which leaves little room for sensitive choices regarding BIPOC Artists who do get represented, and very often leads to tokenism.
  - The schedule for marketing shows and the tight turnaround time for media requests engenders stress among M&P Staff and Festival Artists. It has also meant that Creative Team Members are often required to approve marketing concepts well before the production’s vision has been fully realized.

- **New Audience Stewardship and Barriers to Access**: The Festival is not reaching new people who might want to come.
– M&P is not supporting cultural differences as meaningful and valuable to the Festival’s brand and ecology.

– Tickets are often expensive, particularly for racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking communities.

– There is a lack of racial and cultural diversity amongst the Festival’s audiences, Front-of-House and Box Office Staff as well as the Festival Volunteers. Due to time constraints, these work areas were not fully examined by the ARC, but it is worth noting that while these individuals typically demonstrate a high-level of commitment to and familiarity with the Festival, this sometimes leads to behaviours of entitlement, discomfort with change and possessiveness which can make others, and particularly IBPOC individuals, feel unwelcome.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

• Implement EDI&AR Training and Policies:
  – Provide training to M&P Staff regarding EDI&AR with a focus on cultural-specificity and racial diversity and inclusion.
  – Develop and implement a policy with respect to the M&P process for culturally-specific shows.

• Diversify M&P Staff, Culture and Processes:
  – Diversify the M&P Departments’ full-time Staff and include them in planning, implementing their new and valuable perspectives.
  – Demonstrate a valuation of cultural difference among the leadership of M&P.
  – Hire Photographers and Videographers who know how to represent people with different skin tones.
  – Implement a slower, more thoughtful process to engage Artists and audiences with an emphasis on welcoming new people, authentic and caring representation of BIPOC Artists, and implementing a more collaborative process within the Festival.
  – Engage Cultural Consultants as needed.
  – Be transparent with Artists about schedules and timelines.
  – Collaborate early with Directors, Designers and other Artists for their input on M&P aesthetics, Photographers and Videographers.
  – Consider how to promote racialized Artists and EDI&AR initiatives without tokenizing; consider diverse media outlets, sponsors’ employee databases, community organizations, international

Prioritize engaging new and diverse audiences through diverse media platforms, ongoing relationship-building with these communities and an emphasis on subsidized and free ticket models.
interest, and influential racialized individuals for support; expand media connections.

- **Prioritize New and Racialized Audiences:**
  - Prioritize engaging new and diverse audiences (e.g. IBPOC, youth, arts workers, low-income, etc.) through diverse media platforms, ongoing relationship-building with these communities and an emphasis on subsidized and free ticket models (e.g. Pay-What-You-Will, covering transportation costs, etc.).
  - Consider translation of marketing materials into different languages and hiring Front-of-House Staff, Box Office Staff, and Festival Volunteers who can engage with audiences in multiple languages.
  - Engage in partnership-building annually with the local community and BIPOC communities, offer community performances dedicated for culturally-specific groups, and other models such as touring and filming to ensure greater access to Festival productions. Fostering these relationships should not be solely based on one particular show during one particular season.
  - Include consumer products from IBPOC Artists and businesses at the Festival stores and engage in careful consideration to ensure that the merchandise sold does not cause cultural harm.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

- Adding EDI&AR goals into all full-time Staff performance plans
- Reviewing our processes for hiring and awarding contracts to third party providers, in consultation with HR, to facilitate diversification as roles in these Departments become available
- Adding EDI&AR goals to the plan for the audience work area that guides the externally focused initiatives for the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Allocating money in the overall budget for an "Innovation Fund" to support outreach initiatives
- Initiating marketing efforts to shine a light on a broader range of Artists who contribute their artistry to the Festival as a means of building audiences following them
- Arranging meetings with Directors for key Company Members to be briefed on creative direction earlier in the marketing process
- Identifying works in the season that require cultural consultation prior to developing marketing assets

Fostering these relationships should not be solely based on one particular show during one particular season.
• Working on a branding campaign to communicate our artistic vision that will feature a broad range of Artists

• Providing EDI&AR training for people in Marketing, Audience Development (Front of House, Call Centre, Retail and Cafes and Catering) and Communications Teams

• Piloting a Pay-What-You-Will model for the season (both for in-person and digital)
EDUCATION

The focus of this report was on the work of Education in relation to schools (Students and Teachers) and programming for youth outside of school contexts (e.g. summer camps, etc.).

KEY ISSUES:

• **Departmental Make-Up:** There is little diversity among the full-time Staff and there is no one in the Department that works full-time to represent and act as a liaison with racialized communities, which is especially problematic considering the youth demographic they serve.

• **Program Curriculum and Structure:**
  
  – Education programming is rooted in white supremacy and programs are offered only in English.
  
  – Most programs are performance-based.
  
  – Summer camp programs are made up of large class sizes and are not racially or culturally diverse with regard to the participants who typically take part, potentially alienating BIPOC youth.

• **Artistic Work for Young Audiences:** The youth and family shows do not typically include stories from different cultural communities, even if there is BIPOC representation among the Cast and Creative Team Members.

• **Teaching Artist Hiring and Support:** It is unclear how Teaching Artists are hired and retained for programs.
  
  – There are concerns about nepotism, transparency and lack of training.
  
  – It seems that new Teaching Artists are not engaged as often as they should be.

• **Marketing and Barriers to Access:**
  
  – Marketing is inaccessible with outdated images, a lack of racially and culturally-diverse representation and an inconsistent promotion of Teaching Artists.
  
  – Marketing is offered only in English.
  
  – There is an assumption that racialized people are in financial need by the way financial accessibility initiatives (e.g. bursaries, etc.) are communicated.
  
  – Financial accessibility initiatives are not publicized clearly or enough.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Make EDI&AR Foundational to Education:**
  - EDI&AR must play an integral part of the Festival’s strategic plan and act as the foundation for Education.
  - EDI&AR should be a formal part of goal-setting and Department meetings.
  - Data collection to track progress on EDI&AR initiatives should be clearly developed and implemented.
  - Education should consider faith-based and cultural holidays in developing and scheduling programming.
  - Professional Development for full-time Staff and Teaching Artists should be in place to ensure they can challenge pedagogical practices that can uphold white supremacy, engage in ongoing EDI&AR training in relation to teaching and learning (including inclusive language) and explore new ways of knowing and doing.

- **Review and Revise Program Curricula, Pedagogies and Structures:**
  - Replace old programs with new ones.
  - Rebalance program offerings to support anti-racism and include greater opportunities for individuals to learn and engage in behind-the-scenes work.
  - Re-create summer camps and programs to create inclusive, safe and positive learning environments for all and particularly for IBPOC youth.
  - Explore models with smaller class sizes, mentorship, diverse pedagogies and culturally-specific programming.
  - Set goals for enrollment of IBPOC youth participants and consider cancelling programs if these goals are not met.

- **Focus on Artistic Work for Young Audiences:** In collaboration with the Directors’ Office, Education should support the development of youth and family shows that cater to BIPOC communities.

- **Implement New Teaching Artist Recruitment, Hiring and Training Practices:**
  - Make clear how Company Members can participate as Teaching Artists including transparency of pay, opportunity, hiring and training to ensure robust BIPOC representation and engagement of new Teaching Artists.
  - Engage IBPOC Teaching Artists in program development and planning, particularly for ones with respect to fostering and engaging IBPOC communities.

Professional Development for full-time Staff and Teaching Artists should be in place to ensure they can challenge pedagogical practices that can uphold white supremacy, engage in ongoing EDI&AR training in relation to teaching and learning (including inclusive language) and explore new ways of knowing and doing.

Focus on Artistic Work for Young Audiences: In collaboration with the Directors’ Office, Education should support the development of youth and family shows that cater to BIPOC communities.
- However, respect the fact that not all racialized Artists are interested in engaging in this work.

- Recognize that some of this work requires a high-level of emotional labour and should be compensated accordingly.

- Implement formal feedback systems: a circular process for continuous growth and care for the programs, participants and those who create and lead them.

**Prioritize New and BIPOC Participants:**

- Explore how to better market programming through translation in different languages and a more accessible website with consistent racially and culturally-diverse representation.

- Engage in partnership-building with local and IBPOC communities.

- Consider alternate models for financial accessibility that do not racialize particular communities.

**KEY NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY IN 2021:**

- Considering how best to position Education at the Festival to ensure it is foundational to the work rather than operating in a disconnected manner

- Formally implementing EDI&AR into performance plans, goal-setting and Department meetings

- Partnership-building with two organizations that serve racialized, marginalized and/or equity-seeking youth

- Implementing a pilot Teaching Artist Advisory to work alongside the Teacher and Student Advisory Committees

- Including Education and Teaching Artists in company-wide EDI&AR training with ongoing and more education-specific training to be shared in 2022

- Creating tailored training and the opportunity for mentorship and applied learning for Teaching Artists participating in or leading Education programs in 2022

- Engaging in a curriculum, pedagogy and hiring review of all of our programs with the aim of establishing clearer hiring practices and a diversified slate of program offerings

- Expanding on the Pay-What-You-Will model piloted in 2020 to provide greater financial accessibility

- Expanding our data collection and feedback mechanisms to include participants of all ages as well as Teaching Artists
• Including faith-based and cultural holidays in developing and scheduling programming

• Working with the Marketing Department to make the educational components of the website more accessible with consistent representation from IBPOC communities

• Supporting NPD and artistic planning by providing reading lists and insight into potential youth and family productions
CONCLUSION

We compel every individual who is part of the Festival community to continue to learn and take action to ensure the Festival is not only free from racism and cultural harassment, but is, in fact, anti-racist. Making this summary report public is just one step we hope will aid all of us in holding the Festival accountable and taking collective responsibility. Working toward anti-racism cannot be undertaken solely by the racialized individuals in our community; it takes allies and accomplices. We invite you to seek out resources for further education and to help each other in this work - it will be ongoing and it is a process.

We acknowledge that this document is dense, but hope you continue to reflect on what has been shared by honouring these key elements: Creative Collaboration, Transparency and Accountability, Thoughtful Questioning, Integrity and Respect, Impatience and Patience.

If you have any immediate questions about this summary report, please contact: antiracism@stratfordfestival.ca. Please note that currently Members of both the ARC and the Parallel-ARC have access to this account and as those committees change so too will those who have access to this shared account.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (EDI&AR) must be foundational to the Festival as we move forward.
APPENDIX: NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

THE PEOPLE AND THE ORGANIZATION

• **ARC**: the Anti-Racism Committee that was formed in July, 2020 (initially comprised 14 members). This group was composed of racialized Artists, Artisans and Administrators. The individuals invited to form the ARC represented different disciplines and varying tenures with the Festival from a few months to over 10 years.

  – The members of the ARC included: C.J. Astronomo, Sadie Berlin, Miali Buscemi, Jessica Carmichael, Erica Croft, Alice Ferreyra, Esther Jun, Qasim Khan, Jani Lauzon, Samantha McCue, Thomas Olajide, Nitasha Rajoo, E.B. Smith and Joanna Yu.

• **Parallel-ARC**: the Anti-Racism working group that was formed in October, 2020 to work in collaboration with the ARC. This group was composed of white Staff or Artists in Management or leadership roles representing a wide range of work areas and varying tenures with the Festival from under a year to over 25.


• **“We”**: we have chosen to write this summary document as a collective. While we have chosen to speak as a collective and to use “we,” to reflect that we are unified in this work, we have a diversity of experiences and do not always agree. It is also worth noting that the ARC Members are an advisory committee and the majority of the Members are not employed full-time by the Festival, meaning they have little agency in decision-making.

• **the Festival**: the Stratford Festival (the theatre company and all those who work as a part of it)

• **Company**: as it is currently understood by the Festival, “Company” pertains only to the Actors which, as discovered and noted in these reports, creates exclusion and a greater sense of division among the Festival community. So, for the purposes of this document, we will use “Company” or “Company Members” to include all who work with the Festival (e.g. Volunteers, Administrators, Technicians, Front of House Staff, Designers, Actors, Designers, Stage Managers, etc.).
DEFINITIONS TO DISCUSS RACE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM

• Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism (EDI&AR):
  
  – **Equity** is about giving people what they need in order to make things fair. The difference between equality and equity must be emphasised. Although both promote fairness, equality achieves this through treating everyone the same regardless of need, while equity achieves this through treating people differently depending on need. In order to create true equality of opportunity, equity is needed to ensure that everyone has the same chance of getting there (*excerpts from Social Change UK*).

  – **Diversity** is the presence of a wide range of people with different backgrounds, abilities and attributes including ethnicity, race, colour, religion, age, gender and sexual orientation. (*Ontario Human Rights Commission*)

  – **Inclusion** is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values differences. (*Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion*)

  – **Diversity and Inclusion** are about capturing the uniqueness of the individual; creating an environment that values and respects individuals for their talents, skills, and abilities to the benefit of the collective. (*Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion*)

  – **Anti-Racism** is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably (*NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity*)

• Racialized, IBPOC, BIPOC:

  – Racialized expresses race as a social construct rather than as a description based on perceived biological traits in that it denotes that an ethnic or racialized identity has been ascribed rather than self-identified (*Ontario Human Rights Commission*). The definition of “racialized” is imperfect in that it does not denote the uniqueness of people, but instead clusters them together under one umbrella. We like that it reminds us that race is socially constructed, but we do not like that it is ascribed rather than self-identified.

  – Many are likely familiar with the acronyms IBPOC or BIPOC which stand for Indigenous, Black and People of Colour or Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. Language like this gets adopted quickly in the mainstream, but often the widespread adoption causes the original intention to be lost and the reinforcement of racism. We like that these terms are more about self-identification
and point to greater specificity, especially in prioritizing Black and/or Indigenous at the front of the acronym (a conscious choice, but again one that changes depending on who is using the acronym and the context in which it is employed). We do not like that both acronyms continue to use the umbrella “POC” to represent individuals from varied ethnic diversities and backgrounds.

- We could not reach full consensus on using either these acronyms or “racialized” and we, ourselves, are not fully satisfied, but in lieu of better options have chosen to use all three terms throughout this report as required. As social movements progress, so too will the language we use and we look forward to the changes to come.

• **Racism**: the prejudice, marginalization and/or oppression of racialized people based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people (*Anti-Defamation League*). Racism is both covert and overt - it shows up in daily life, everyday interactions and larger, structural systems.

- **Anti-Black Racism** is defined here as policies and practices rooted in Canadian institutions such as, education, health care, and justice that mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent. It seeks to highlight the unique nature of systemic racism on Black-Canadians and the history as well as experiences of slavery and colonization of people of Black-African descent in Canada. The term ‘Anti-Black Racism’ was first expressed by Dr. Akua Benjamin, a Ryerson Social Work Professor. It seeks to highlight the unique nature of systemic racism on Black-Canadians and the history as well as experiences of slavery and colonization of people of Black-African descent in Canada. (*Black Health Alliance Canada*)

- **Anti-Indigenous Racism** is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada. It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices. It is evident in discriminatory federal policies such as the Indian Act and the residential school system. It is manifest in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in provincial criminal justice and child welfare systems and in the acts of hostility and violence directed at Indigenous people. (*Toronto District School Board, Equity, Glossary of Terms*)

• **Cultural Harassment**: a form of harassment and a term the ARC created to encapsulate some specific examples of this. Cultural Harassment can occur as a result of both unconscious and conscious bias. It is based on the misuse of cultural references, terms, appropriation and colloquialisms that are harmful and perpetuate racism.
• **Microaggression**: a comment or action that subtly expresses prejudice toward a member of a marginalized group. Examples can include touching hair without permission, asking where a racialized person is “really from” or telling someone they “aren’t like other minorities”. *(Rania El Mugammar, Glossary Exploring the Language of Social Justice)*

• **White Privilege**: refers to the various social, political, and economic advantages white individuals experience in contrast to racialized people because of racism; these advantages can include both obvious and subtle differences in access to power, social status, experiences of prejudice, educational opportunities, and much more *(excerpt from Purdue University)*

• **White Supremacy**: a political, economic and cultural system in which conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, and relations of white dominance and racialized subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings *(David Gillborn, University of Birmingham)*

  – There is ongoing discussion as to whether “white” should be capitalized or lowercase when talking about race. One argument suggests it should be capitalized in order to call attention to how whiteness functions in our social and political institutions and our communities. There are also various historical, social and political arguments for why it is important not to capitalize “white” while capitalizing “Indigenous,” “Black” and “Brown,” for example. This choice points to the self-identification and reclamation of identity by racialized individuals as well as an effort to work against the systems of racism and white supremacy that created race as a construct for the benefit of white individuals. *(The Diversity Style Guide)* For these reasons, in this summary report, we have chosen not to capitalize “white”.

• **Predominantly White Institution (PWI)**: describes institutions or organizations in which the histories, legacies and majority of people who comprise them are white.

• **Emotional Labour and Trauma**: the labour of this work has been deeply emotional and re/traumatizing for many members of the ARC. We are highlighting this to articulate that the emotional labour that IBPOC/racialized individuals endure and take on in order to educate is also an ongoing health and safety concern.

  - Emotional Labour is the process of summoning certain feelings and ignoring others in order to provide a service or complete a job *(Arlie Russell Hochschild)*. It particularly impacts racialized people who have to exert more emotional labour to cope with racism and the harmful power dynamics which are constantly working to undermine them *(Darron Smith, University of Tennessee)*.
• **Lateral Harm**: describes the way people in positions of powerlessness (often as a result of years of oppression) covertly or overtly direct their dissatisfaction inward toward each other, toward themselves and toward those less powerful than themselves. *(Creative Spirits/ Canadian Aboriginal Human Resource Management resource)*