

SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM AND FOUNDATION, NEW YORK

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSION (DEAI) ACTION PLAN

August 2020—August 2022

We, the staff and leadership of the Guggenheim, are dedicating ourselves to creating paths that lead to a more inclusive and diverse institution. We must not only diversify our team, but also amplify the voices of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color (BIPOC) and broaden the scope of thought and perspectives within our museum. Communities across the country continue to experience trauma and anguish as the nation confronts hundreds of years of sustained injustices due to systemic racism. We aspire to center the voices of our BIPOC communities because, historically, they have been the most marginalized and disenfranchised. We must reflect the plurality of our culture and our global audience.

The actions outlined in this plan cannot dismantle the structural inequities within our society, or undo the ways in which institutions like ours have played in benefiting from such inequalities. However, the plan can and will address steps we are committed to taking as an institution to become a more equitable place. The current moment demands that we reconsider the fundamental role that art museums play within society at large: whom are these institutions for, what are they responsible for, and to whom should they be accountable? We are taking active steps toward antiracist work, which we embrace as colleagues and citizens in order to make sustainable change in our professional practices; exhibitions, collection development, research, and publishing; and public and educational programs. We are documenting these actions in hopes of nurturing mutual growth and accountability as a community.

Becoming a more equitable institution will be an ongoing process, and this document is the result of a specific group of people thinking together at a specific moment in time. We will endeavor to work continuously to eliminate structural barriers to access and opportunity, and to embed equity in all we do. Each department within our institution was involved in the thinking represented in this plan, and as such we stand behind it as a collective vision for action. It will evolve and develop over the next 24 months as we work toward accomplishing our goals together across every level of our organization. Our commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion as an institution will remain unwavering throughout.

Based on the contents of this action plan, we as an institution commit to the following vision of success:

- An equitable and inclusive professional environment for all staff
- A welcoming experience for all visitors
- Actively diversifying our museum and our field by supporting current, emerging, and future professionals who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color
- Programs and partnerships that amplify diverse voices and create shared authority
- Support from the board of trustees and senior leadership to realize these plans, including the necessary allocation of resources and prioritization of fundraising efforts
- Regular progress reports to the board and staff to ensure transparency, accountability, and collective feedback

In order to accomplish these goals, our plan enumerates actions and priorities that will be pursued over the next 24 months in the following areas:

1. Staffing and Culture
2. Board Diversification and Governance
3. Collection, Exhibitions, Research, and Publications
4. Audience Engagement

IMPLEMENTATION

Staffing and Culture

In November 2019, we engaged over two hundred staff members across the Guggenheim on a Listening Tour, with the aim of better understanding staff member perspectives and experiences vis-à-vis our organizational commitment to Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEAI). Our staff is our greatest asset, and we are deeply humbled that so many of them volunteered their voices and perspectives through this exercise, in service of our collective progress. This effort was conducted through a series of surveys, focus groups, and confidential one-on-one conversations with our DEAI consultant. The headline themes and trends that emerged suggest a story of “truth and hope.” On the “truth” side, staff members express clear concerns around their day-to-day experiences and that of their colleagues—especially across lines of race, class, age, gender, and sexuality—and want to see concrete changes and progress made across all levels of the organization. On the “hope” side, staff members express cautious optimism around the launch of our DEAI Initiative, as we seek to build a more diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive institution.

Key Outcome	Activity Commences
<p>Launch cross-departmental internal staff DEAI Committee to include perspectives from multiple levels of the institution; initial goals to include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch Connection Groups to allow staff of shared backgrounds and interests to come together, discuss relevant topics, and share resources ● Develop antiracism and culture statement for museum ● Create recommendations for committee work on annual basis 	July 2020
<p>Refine recruitment and hiring practices to increase diversity of candidate pool for all vacant positions at the museum</p>	In Progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand paid, year-round internship program and recruit first-generation college students, students receiving financial aid, and BIPOC students ● Hire cabinet-level position to advance the work of the DEAI Action Plan ● Train hiring managers and review hiring procedures to ensure biases are removed ● Promote job opportunities and internships with historically Black colleges and universities and other institutions 	
<p>Provide antiracism, cultural competency, and management training for all staff across all departments and levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch formal Learning and Development Curriculum for staff, based on four pillars: Antiracism and diversity, equity, access, and inclusion training; General management training; Speaker series; and External professional development 	<p>Fall 2020</p>
<p>Review and strengthen policies and procedures for timely reporting and resolution of staff complaints (e.g., racism, bias, discrimination, retaliation, and safety)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen employee relations function in the Human Resources department ● Enhance existing and develop new organizational structure and procedures to review grievances and complaints ● Publicly share revised policies with all staff, contractors, and vendors 	<p>Fall 2020</p>

Spearhead the launch of a staff-led Museum and Arts BIPOC Professional Network	Winter 2020/21
<p>Update performance appraisal process and promotional criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all staff receive an annual appraisal as well as professional development goals that support implementation of the DEAI Action Plan ● Improve technology used to conduct appraisals and upgrade current system 	Summer 2021

Board Diversification and Governance

Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation toward a sustainable future by adopting and practicing sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure the institution has adequate resources to advance its mission.

There are many best practices that can help to diversify nonprofit boards. They tend to center around three main areas: identification, prospect development, and utilization. These approaches help define the strategy and framework for achieving board diversification and are included in the process map below. Overall, it is important to recognize that diversification of its board demonstrates the Guggenheim’s commitment to DEAI and the items outlined in our action plan, and sets an example for the rest of the organization.

Key Outcome	Activity Commences
Endorse the DEAI Action Plan, having consulted with all departments across the museum	In Progress
<p>Launch DEAI Special Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversee and analyze progress of goals outlined in the museum's DEAI Action Plan ● Share semiannual report of activities with all staff 	In Progress
<p>Launch subcommittee of Governance and Nominating Committee to focus on creating a more diverse and representative board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set goals for diversifying board composition ● Reassess requirements for joining board ● Announce appointments on an ongoing basis 	In Progress
Special Committee overseeing the independent investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding the Basquiat exhibition will present a set of recommendations to the Executive Committee	Fall 2020

<p>Establish a subcommittee of the Art and Museum Committee to conduct review of exhibitions and collection history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examine exhibition history over the past 25 years and acquisitions history over the past 10 years through the lens of racial equity and diversity and draw lessons to take forward ● Present findings to board at May 2021 meeting 	<p>Fall 2020</p>
<p>Board to review hiring practices and develop appropriate reforms to ensure the recruiting, hiring, and retention of a more diverse team</p>	<p>Winter 2020/21</p>

Collection, Exhibitions, Research, and Publications

Though the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum had intermittently endeavored to look beyond the work of white European and North American artists since the 1950s, it was not until the 2010s that a number of concerted, strategic efforts were made to expand the purview of the Guggenheim’s interpretation and presentation of modern and contemporary art. These efforts sought to advance the acquisition and exhibition of works by artists who are not white and focused primarily on artists from non-Western regions, as well as Black and brown artists who have been traditionally underrepresented in the museum program.

During the course of that decade, the museum expanded its holdings of works by international artists of color. The development of this part of the collection was largely initiated under the auspices of the Asian Art Initiative (began 2006) and was extended in scope and depth by two major, externally funded programs: UBS MAP Global Arts Initiative (2012–18), which concentrated on South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa, and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative (began 2014). The curatorial development for the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, whose remit is to present transnational and cross-cultural histories of art from circa 1960 to the present, has further informed and inflected the Guggenheim’s strategic position as an institutional leader in global art history. These initiatives led to the establishment of affinity groups focused on strengthening the museum’s collection in complementary areas, including the Middle Eastern Circle in 2014, Latin American Circle in 2016, and Asian Art Circle in 2019.

Among the museum’s legacy affinity groups, efforts to present and acquire work by nonwhite artists have markedly increased in the last decade. Since 2010, nearly 50% of work presented and acquired at acquisitions meetings of the International Director’s Council, Photography Council, and Young Collectors Council is by people of color. Since 2017, those numbers have increased to over 75% of acquisitions. Since 2011, the

Photography Council has prioritized the work of Black artists of marginalized gender and sexual identities. Of artists whose works were purchased in whole or part using deaccession funds since 2010, 60% were artists of color. Since 2017, that proportion has been 100%.

In concert with these collecting efforts, the museum also began to introduce a more diverse roster of exhibitions. Seventeen solo exhibitions of BIPOC artists, ranging from retrospectives to focused presentations, have opened at the museum since 2010, constituting roughly 35% of the museum's monographic programming. By comparison, roughly 20% of the museum's solo exhibition programming was devoted to artists of color during the previous decade. Live programs, many organized in collaboration with Public Programs, Special Events, and Works & Process, have complemented these exhibitions, with the majority of performances since 2014 prominently featuring BIPOC artists.

Despite these recent efforts, more work needs to be done to balance the museum's collection and exhibitions. Though the museum has applied innovative global frameworks to its curatorial activities, resulting in greater regional and racial diversity of its artists, certain limitations in terms of marginalized nationalities, ethnicities, sexualities, and gender identities have persisted. For example, until recently there has not been a demonstrated commitment to East, West, Central, and Southern Africa within the scope of this work.

Artists of color also continue to be significantly underrepresented in the museum's holdings of US and European art. Historical works by Black artists constitute a notable gap in the museum's collection: the museum's holdings include six pieces dating from before 1980 by Black artists who worked primarily in the US or Europe, and four of them have been purchased since 2017. Works by Indigenous artists are also largely absent from the museum's holdings—an Indigenous art working group was formed in 2019 to consider this lack of representation, among other issues.

In addition to these and other exclusions in the scope of the collection, the museum has not yet demonstrated an adequate commitment to exhibiting the work of Black, Latinx (US based) and Latin American, and Indigenous artists, including those of marginalized ethnicities, gender identities, and sexualities. Of fifty solo shows since 2010, three featured Latin American artists and none have featured Latinx artists. Only four solo exhibitions since 2010 have featured Black artists. Within the iconic space of the rotunda, the museum has never held a solo exhibition of a Black artist, a woman artist of color, an Indigenous artist, or a trans-identified artist. Given this history, we express our commitment to the ongoing diversification of the collection, exhibition program, and research and publishing initiatives.

Key Outcome	Activity Commences
<p>Further diversify the collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acquire work by Black, Latinx, and Indigenous artists, especially including those of marginalized ethnicities, gender identities, and sexualities<li>• Prioritize acquisitions of historical works by Black artists<li>• Identify list of artists, artworks, and movements to be prioritized for acquisition and develop a collection strategy that includes projected timelines and allocation of funds<li>• Identify strategic conceptual overlaps and collaborative opportunities within the affinity groups to realize future acquisition priorities that intersect with the goals of the DEAI plan<li>• Increase representation of collection works by BIPOC artists on the museum’s digital channels, including Collection Online, Guggenheim at Large, and audio/video platforms	<p>In Progress</p>

<p>Consistently present a diverse exhibition and publications program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the last 25 years of exhibition history to determine patterns of representation • Include representation of BIPOC artists, especially those of marginalized ethnicities, gender identities, and sexualities, in each yearly calendar (solo and group exhibitions and public programs) • Revise process for exhibition proposals in order to ensure diversity in programming • Communicate clearly and regularly about exhibitions, programs, and publications to all staff 	<p>Winter 2020/21</p>
<p>Further research initiatives to advance multiple art historical perspectives and interpretive strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and collaborate on cross-departmental research programs that engage postcolonial critique, decoloniality, Black feminism, queer perspectives, and other frameworks • Dedicate a percentage of the Library and Archives acquisition budget to publications featuring BIPOC artists, curators, and scholars • Create public and internal platforms to invite BIPOC colleagues, scholars, and artists to present their research and projects • Plan publications, print and digital, featuring scholarship that centers BIPOC artists and writers 	<p>Winter 2020/21</p>

Audience Engagement

With this DEAL plan, the Guggenheim will pursue three primary goals as they relate to audience engagement:

1) Look critically at the experience of visiting the museum and engaging with our digital content from the perspective of racial equity; 2) Gather more and deeper data so we can track progress on diversifying our audience; and 3) Increase resources toward existing programs and initiatives that reach beyond our current constituents.

In recent years, we have expanded the museum's live and participatory programming to feature a wide range of voices. Highlights include Summer of Know; Latin American Circle Presents performances by Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa, OPAVIVARÁ!, Amalia Pica (2017) and Pia Camil (2019); and Middle Eastern Circle Presents performances by Hassan Khan (2016) and Tarek Atoui (2019).

Key projects that have broadened our audiences include the Guggenheim Social Practice Initiative, which explores ways in which artists and the museum can collaborate to foster new forms of public engagement through community participation. The Guggenheim also takes part in NYC Culture Pass with the Brooklyn, Queens, and New York Public Libraries, which offers free admission to the museum for all library-card holders. Our commitment to accessibility for NYC students is manifest in numerous ways, including our fifty-year association with Learning Through Art (LTA, an off-site studio program in classrooms founded in 1970), free virtual school tours for all New York City public schools, and a partnership with City University of New York (CUNY) wherein students from five colleges may visit the museum free of charge.

In November 2017, the Visitor Experience department began collecting visitor demographics with every ticketing transaction on a voluntary basis. In 2019, demographic data was obtained from 665,885 visitors, approximately 57% of total attendance. That year, the breakdown between domestic and international visitors was evenly split: 50% to 50%. Of domestic visitors, roughly 38% were residents of the tristate area. Over 4,100 surveys were conducted in 2019 as well. From this data, we can conclude that the average visitor is between the ages of 25 and 34 (28%), is visiting for the first time (66%), and cites the building/architecture as the main reason for the visit (36%).

In 2018, the museum participated in the New York City Positioning Study conducted by the Morey Group. Regarding race and ethnicity, the study found that our visitors are:

- 73% White/Caucasian
- 15% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 8% Black/African American
- 7% Latinx/Hispanic
- 1% Native American
- 1% Other

According to the most recent American Community Survey (2018), the racial composition of New York City is:

- 42.67% White/Caucasian
- 29% Latinx/Hispanic
- 24.27% Black/African American
- 15.12% Other
- 13.95% Asian
- 3.51% Two or more races
- 0.43% Native American
- 0.05% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

What can be determined from these findings is that the visitorship of the museum does not reflect the racial diversity of our city. In particular, we have work to do to make connections with Latinx and African American communities. While we have made significant strides in diversifying our programming, exhibition content, and collecting practices, these efforts alone are not enough. Building trust and partnership must anchor and guide our engagement strategy. Commitments to these relationships will be demonstrated by sustained outreach initiatives and equitable planning processes. We will become a more diverse institution in our programming, visitor experience, and digital content by not just presenting diverse artists, but also offering meaningful opportunities for Black and Latinx audiences to feel seen, heard, and valued.

Key Outcome	Activity Commences
<p>Deepen engagement with diverse communities throughout New York City by building partnerships and continuing outreach programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secure funding to continue social practice initiative, focused on NYC-based BIPOC artists and sustained community partnerships ● Expand existing partnership with CUNY offering free admission to students and launch student guide program ● Ensure funding for LTA partner schools in all five boroughs in order to build relationships with students, parents, and teachers, and reflect their creative experience in the museum through the annual exhibition, <i>A Year with Children</i> ● Continue to provide Access programs, such as Guggenheim for All and Mind’s Eye, and resources to visitors of all ages ● Hire Mellon-endowed Director of Engagement, Conservation, and Collections in order to engage diverse audiences and provide new entry points to the collection 	<p>In progress</p>

<p>Reduce barriers of access to the museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt universal and human-centered design principles for programs ● Provide training for all staff in American Disabilities Act and Universal Design for Learning ● Continue to participate in NYC Culture Pass program ● Continue to offer free tours for all NYC public schools in person and online beyond museum reopening ● Analyze possible expansion of “Pay What You Wish” hours 	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>Create a year-round portfolio of public programs that features and represents diverse voices and provides opportunity for dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase BIPOC artists, scholars, and other presenters within public programs ● Launch equity in architecture and design programming to bring new perspectives and explore new modes of engagement with the Frank Lloyd Wright building as a UNESCO World Heritage Site ● Continue to support and promote Works & Progress commissions by BIPOC artists 	<p>Fall 2020</p>
<p>Prioritize seeking new funding to support DEAL initiatives and programs outlined in this plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broaden institutional stakeholders by expanding outreach for annual fund ● Diversify membership base 	<p>Fall 2020</p>

<p>Commit to a visitor experience that is welcoming to all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule ongoing training for frontline staff on implicit bias, cultural competence, accessibility, museum de-escalation scenarios, and trauma-informed practice • Create a task force to recommend frontline visitor engagement and staffing best practices • Enhance surveys and analytics to develop more comprehensive data about museum visitors and digital audiences 	<p>Winter 2020/21</p>
<p>Improve digital communications by tailoring engagement to audience needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote social media takeovers by diverse local artists and organizations • Increase the visibility of BIPOC curators, artists, and educators on social media channels and website • Commit to ensuring digital platforms such as the website, app, and new digital formats meet accessibility standards 	<p>Winter 2020/21</p>
<p>Create an interpretive writing handbook to ensure that gallery text is accessible and written for a general audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess existing wayfinding materials to ensure they provide a dynamic and engaging approach to experiencing the building, collection and exhibitions 	<p>Spring 2021</p>