

Guggenheim DEAI Action Plan -Biannual Report
January 1 – June 30 2021
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DEAI Action Plan Commitment Updates: January 1–June 30, 2021

The Guggenheim’s staff-authored DEAI Action Plan enumerates actions and priorities that we, the Guggenheim staff and leadership, are pursuing in order to create a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse institution, reflecting the plurality of our culture and global audience. This is an iterative and ongoing process with goals of:

- Becoming an equitable and inclusive professional environment for all staff
- Creating 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
- Building programs and partnerships that amplify diverse voices and create shared authority

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. We are documenting these actions in hopes of nurturing mutual growth and accountability as a community.

We 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 our DEAI Action plan, and as such we continue to stand behind it as a collective vision for action. It has evolved and developed as we’ve started work toward accomplishing our goals together across every level of our organization. Our commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion as an institution remains unwavering throughout.

From January 1 through June 30, 2021, we have made the following progress in our four stated areas of priority: (1) Staffing and Culture; (2) Board Diversification and Governance; (3) Collection, Exhibitions, Research, and Publications; and 4) Audience Engagement.

STAFFING AND CULTURE

- Hiring underway for museum’s first Chief Culture and Inclusion Officer.
- Provided antiracism, cultural competency, and management training for all staff and the Board of Trustees:
 - Full-time employees participated in antiracism training, led by Dr. Derrick Gay and Dina Bailey of Mountain Top Vision, LLC.
 - Updated onboarding practices. New full-time employees now receive DEAI training as part of new-hire orientation.
 - The Board of Trustees completed a series of three DEAI and antiracism training sessions, led by Dr. Derrick Gay and Dina Bailey.
 - Continued staff professional development Guest Speaker Series prioritizing DEAI initiatives. Speakers included Keith Prewitt, former Chief Security Officer for the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Machel Monenerkit, Acting Director and Mandy Van-Heuvelen, Cultural Interpreter Coordinator, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian; Joy Bailey-Bryant,

President of the US office of Lord Cultural Resources; Tunji Adeniji, Chief Facilities and Safety Officer, MoMA; Vishakha Desai, Senior Advisor for Global Affairs to the President of Columbia University and former President and CEO of the Asia Society; Gonzalo Casals, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs.

- As part of ongoing work led by the staff DEAI Committee:
 - Launched Working Parents Connection Group following the launch of the BIPOC Connection Group and LGBTQIA+ Connection Group.
 - Built upon the DEAI Committee Statement published in November 2020 to refine governance structure of the DEAI Committee, and initiated meetings with each department through July 2021 to determine if and/or how DEAI efforts are being implemented throughout the institution. The Committee also advocated for an initial meeting with BIPOC staff members and Executive Leadership to take steps toward increased communication. That meeting occurred in June 2021.
- Increased frequency of presentations from staff across departments during All Staff meetings to build greater visibility, share information, and encourage collaboration.

BOARD DIVERSIFICATION AND GOVERNANCE

- Shared semiannual report of activities with all staff.
- Hired Naomi Beckwith as the Guggenheim's Deputy Director and Jennifer and David Stockman Chief Curator in January 2021, with her appointment effective in June 2021.
- Guggenheim Director delivered updates on DEAI progress to the Board of Trustees at scheduled Board and Executive Committee meetings.
- Board of Trustees elected two new BIPOC Trustees – [Tom Ellis and Brian Robinson](#).
- Board of Trustees elected one new female Trustee – [Lisa Baker](#).
- By remit of the Art and Museum Subcommittee, representatives from Curatorial and Registrar collaborated with the Association of Art Museum Curators to launch an intermuseum working group of more than 30 cultural institutions to develop industry-wide artist demographic questionnaires and field-wide best practices for the responsible collection and safe-keeping of artist demographic information to accurately and ethically examine exhibition history over the past 25 years and acquisition history over the past 10 years.

COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS, RESEARCH, AND PUBLICATIONS

The Curatorial team, led by the DEAI Exhibitions Working Group, is continuing to work toward developing a self-critical exhibition proposal process to ensure equity and diversity in programming. In addition, End-to-End Process Working Group, a larger, cross-departmental working group, is establishing procedures to ensure better, more inclusive communication from the inception of an exhibition through its conclusion.

- Prioritized presentation of BIPOC artists, which continues to be central to curatorial efforts, in recent and current exhibitions: *In-Between Days: Video from the Guggenheim Collections*, March 19–April 19, 2021; *Off the Record*, April 2–October 11, 2021; *Christian Nyampeta: Sometimes It Was Beautiful*, April 30–June 21, 2021; and *The Hugo Boss Prize 2020: Deana Lawson, Centropy*, May 2–October 11, 2021. As part of these efforts, reviewed and planned yearly calendar to ensure continued representation of BIPOC artists, especially those of marginalized ethnicities, gender identities, and sexualities.
- Expanded and diversified the collection by ratifying works by the following artists of color:
 - Laura Aguilar
 - rafa esparza

- Charles Gaines
 - Sky Hopinka
 - Tomashi Jackson
 - On Kawara
 - Deana Lawson
 - Christopher Meyers
 - Senga Nengudi
 - Christian Nyampeta
 - Tschabalala Self
 - Wu Tsang
 - Kenneth V. Young
- Newly acquired works by Gaines, Nengudi, and Young, all dating from forty or more years ago, followed the Action Plan charge to specifically prioritize acquisitions of historical pieces by Black artists.
 - Launched interdepartmental DEAI Research Working Group that developed frameworks for internal research programs and platforms for the presentation of research guided by the DEAI Action Plan. This working group created plans for:
 - Individual reading groups dedicated to engaging and examining postcolonial critique and decoloniality, Black feminism, queer perspectives.
 - A collection-focused digital publication featuring scholarship that centers BIPOC artists and writers.
 - A collaborative process with the Learning and Development series to feature BIPOC colleagues, scholars, and artists to present their research and projects to staff.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

- Expanded existing partnership with CUNY for Free Student Admission, with more than 550 tickets redeemed to date.
- Paid spring 2021 internship engaged five CUNY students to create new object-based narratives for the Guggenheim's Digital Guide on the Bloomberg Connects app. The content created by these students emphasizes a peer-to-peer perspective and encourages new and diverse audiences to visit the museum.
- Launched ten-week Summer College Workshop 2021 where students analyzed practices of record keeping and truth telling, inspired by the exhibition *Off the Record*. The workshop was developed in 2020 as a forum to engage a diverse, interdisciplinary group of college students nationwide during the pandemic and is a unique paid program that helps students develop new skills and deepen their engagement with the collection.
- Produced [video series](#) to celebrate and promote LTA's 50th anniversary, and pivoted to online programs that took place remotely in 11 schools across the five boroughs to increase access during the pandemic and provide students with instruction in the arts.
- Continued The Fund for the Future, which expands outreach for the museum's Annual Fund and raises additional funds to support key objectives within the plan. Examples include funding free tours for New York City public school visits and increasing accessibility initiatives and internships.
- Secured major grant from the Hill Art Foundation to support a [three-year Guggenheim Teens program](#) that builds upon three main goals: (1) Providing access to the museum as a place of learning for high school students, (2) Creating a diverse community of students who will work alongside staff to engage their peers, and (3) Providing critical insight into career opportunities in the arts. Recruitment of students begins this summer and the new program launches in the Fall.

- Launched Accessibility Committee to review and plan American Disabilities Act (ADA) training for all staff.
- Established [Saturday on the House](#) sponsored by The Macallan Scotch Whisky. Offers eight free Saturdays throughout 2021 to make art available to a wider audience.
- Formed cross-departmental Programming Committee to strategize and align on planning a year-long calendar of program events through a DEAI lens.
- Launched year-long residency with [The World Around](#) that will address equity and architecture. An online summit in January, which reached more than 36,000 global viewers, presented twenty groundbreaking projects from the past year and offered insights into future work.
- Cross-departmental Audience Group reinstated with focus on audience development, engagement, and experience.
- Conducted an online survey of New York City residents implemented by the Morey Group in February 2021 to inform how the museum can increase local visitation, with specific focus on understanding impressions, motivations, or barriers that may exist among Black and Latinx populations. This important piece of research, the first of its kind for the museum, will help to guide decision-making regarding audience outreach and engagement, as the museum seeks to build trust with its audience.
- Increased the visibility of BIPOC curators, artists, and educators on social media channels and website:
 - Guggenheim blog featured a [four-part conversation series](#) highlighting assistant curator X Zhu-Nowell and artists Jes Fan, Jota Mombaça, Iki Yos Piña Narváez, and Tuesday Smillie, while videos highlighting artist [Maren Hassinger](#) and [Deana Lawson](#) were released on social media, YouTube and Guggenheim.org, and are available on the Digital Guide.
 - The museum's Instagram account, reaching 2.6 million followers, was provided as a platform for new and diverse voices including takeovers featuring [Shezad Dawood](#) (*In-Between Days*), [Wael Al Awar](#), [Feifei Zhou](#), and *The Impossible Future* (*The World Around*, *Earth Month*), [John Jarboe](#) (*Works & Process*), the museum's [LGBTQIA+ Connection Group and Visual AIDS](#) (*Pride Month*).
- Committed to ensuring digital platforms, such as the website, app, and new digital formats, meet accessibility standards:
 - Partnered with Center for Accessible Technology to audit and revise website navigation and optimized user experience for users with disabilities. Results included the implementation of website performance enhancements for audiences using assistive technologies (such as screen readers) and improvements to core website features (such as the main navigation) to create a better user experience for audiences with vision, mobility, and cognitive needs.
- Translated all newly created exhibition content into [Spanish and Mandarin](#) (the two languages most widely spoken in New York City after English), produced verbal description audio and videos in American Sign Language (ASL) for key works on view, and developed an icon system to clearly indicate where content is available on exhibition walls and object labels. These ongoing efforts to reduce barriers of access to the museum build upon the translation of the [Building Audio Guide](#), produced with podcast *99 Percent Invisible*, into [11 languages](#).
- Continued to support and promote Works & Process commissions by BIPOC artists, who were featured in 65% of the 2020-21 online and in-person performances.