



Plan for Equity Training: Background

Date: August 21, 2020

To: The Board of Directors of TO Live

From: President and Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide background and context for the Board on the Equity Training and Policies work completed to date at TO Live in order to assist the Board in its Equity review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The President and CEO recommends that the Board of Directors of TO Live:

1. Receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

At its June 23, 2020 meeting, the Board directed that the President and CEO, TO Live report to the Board with a plan for equity training for Board Members.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CT11.1>

COMMENTS

TO Live believes strongly in the importance of diversity. It is at the heart of the mandate for the company. We are on a multi-year journey towards achieving this mandate which began in 2018 with the changing of our Mission, Vision and Values for the company (*see page 3 of this report below*).

TO Live then immediately rewrote all of our Human Resource policies to reflect these beliefs in inclusion and diversity. The next step, and the phase that we are currently in, is training to educate staff about those values, what they mean and how to live them on a day-to-day basis. This training began in 2019 and is ongoing.

TO Live recognizes that culture is the hardest thing to change and that we operate and work within an organization that has a colonial legacy and systems that are inherently racist in nature. We are working hard to root out the old and implement new practices and systems in our work so that we can be an anti-racist company. Part of this work includes the creation of an internal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee which will report directly to the Human Resources, Employment and Labour Relations Committee of the Board.

Over 80% of our company is currently laid off. Out of almost 700 people who work for TO Live, including full and part-time employees and unionized staff, only 39 people remain. Despite all this, we are focused on the future.

When we open again, TO Live has committed to filling vacant roles and new positions with members of the BIPOC community, especially from the under-represented Black and Indigenous communities. When shows were suspended in March, there were approximately 10 open positions at all levels of the organization out of the 150 full time non-union positions. We plan to hire for these roles with a focus on creating more representations from members of BIPOC communities.

Since TO Live was formed, we have increased the funding for and engaged with guest curators. The programming over the past year has included Mandela, Fatoumata Diawara, SALT, Okwui Okpokwasili, Ears, Eyes Voice, Daina Ashbee, Bangarra Dance, the Living Rooms series, The Arts Squad, and an upcoming presentation of Metamorphosis, to name just a few. We also have a robust education and outreach program that focuses on partnerships with community organizations, including at-risk and under-represented communities. This programming, on amalgamation in 2018, was increased in funding six-fold in a commitment to support the diverse voices of the City.

Josephine Ridge, our Vice President of Programming, will continue her long commitment of programming local, diverse artists as she has both here, at the Luminato Festival, and also in her work in Australia.

We are just beginning this journey and look forward to soon announcing additional programs to address the systemic inequities seen in the arts landscape and at TO Live.

MISSION: To activate creative spaces by inspiring local and international artists and connecting audiences - to be the nexus for new ideas, elevate artistic potential and be the catalyst for creative expression that is reflective of Toronto's diversity.

VISION: To be Canada's foremost multi-arts centre – pushing the boundaries of creativity and diversity through artistic excellence, education and public engagement.

CORE VALUES:

Inclusive: we welcome, support, foster and embrace creativity and artistry from all walks of society and culture.

Diverse: we provide spaces for creativity and help the many voices of Toronto's rich cultures be heard. We actively seek out and work with partners from an array of communities – artistic to corporate, locally and globally – to expand our vision and mission.

Innovative: we are unafraid to experiment, to be bold and push the boundaries of creativity and diversity. We are passionate about people, ideas and technologies that elevate the artistic creativity of Toronto.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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President & CEO

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Employment Policies and Initiatives - Timeline