



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: A framework for the Aurora Cultural Centre

As the Aurora Cultural Centre grows and learns how to serve all communities, we act intentionally to create opportunities for artists from vulnerable or marginalized groups who face systemic barriers that have limited their ability to participate in the arts. We seek to work with individuals with lived experience in communities defined in society as Indigenous, Black and other racialized minorities, Persons with Disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and the artistic organizations that work with these artists. We look to create and sustain community relationships, and invite professional artists and organizations who want a voice and platform to:

- Show their visual art,
- Share their musical talent,
- Share their storytelling in performing arts for young people,
- Teach their art to others in the community as a paid instructor,
- Join us as volunteers, and
- Build collaborative artistic products in visual and performing arts.

Process

We are ready to act. We are inviting a Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative Working Group to come together to support the planning of our initiatives with sensitivities to the communities we wish to connect with and serve. We honour the past participation of diverse of artists who have been ready to participate with us, and work to actively break down barriers, create safer spaces, and create new opportunities for participation.

We are initiating conversations inviting the community to add their voices as we decolonize language, listen and learn, and together build the programing we all participate in.

If we encounter someone who does not want to participate with us, we will be curious to discern why in order to build understanding, strengthen our initiative, and learn from the experience. When we make mistakes, we will acknowledge them, apologize, and learn from them so we can do better.

We hope to learn:

- What barriers exist to participating with the Aurora Cultural Centre, by intentionally asking the community,
- How we can support artists from vulnerable or marginalized groups to bring their voices to us,
- What communities we have relationships with; and where we need to build relationships,
- What mechanisms are important to have in place to sustain these relationships,
- What an authentic connection looks like for the artists we aim to support, and

- How to collect and report on the underserved community in order to be accountable for change.

Next steps to move this initiative forward:

- Develop a Diversity & Inclusion Collaborative Working Group of social advocates from representative communities, Staff and Board representatives to be a collaborative working group and resource to the initiative and staff.
- Bring initiatives forward to the Diversity & Inclusion Collaborative Working Group for discussion, building, planning, and implementation.
- Act on initiatives with authenticity, intention, to build sustainable programs for the Aurora Cultural Centre.
- Reflect and review on the process, initiatives, and outcomes with intent to learn and improve.
- Trust in the process and the open minds and hearts of the Diversity & Inclusion Collaborative Working Group to be supportive of action leading to success.

Created April 2021