What’s Happening in Pittsburgh

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The umbrella; big issues and values for GPAC; in our strategic plan

Racial Equity
(or Racial Justice)

Accessibility for
People with Disabilities

GPAC’s current efforts are focused on racial equity and accessibility for people with disabilities, but we acknowledge that more work must be done to address other inequalities (gender, age, class, sexual orientation, and more) in the arts and beyond. We’ll look for intersections and opportunities to expand our focus as we move forward.

www.pittsburghartscouncil.org/accessibility

www.pittsburghartscouncil.org/equity

Collection of links to articles, reports, organizations, and initiatives:
goo.gl/9hyf07

Want to know more? Contact us anytime!

Tiffany Wilhelm
Deputy Director
twilhelm@pittsburghartscouncil.org

anupama (anu) jain
Equity & Inclusion Consultant
ajain@pittsburghartscouncil.org

Anne Mulgrave
Manager of Grants and Accessibility
amulgrave@pittsburghartscouncil.org
Increasing Accessibility in Pittsburgh Arts & Culture
Since 2011, the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council has coordinated a multi-faceted, regional initiative to help arts and culture organizations welcome people with disabilities as visitors and patrons, artists and performers, employees and volunteers. The program receives support from FISA Foundation (a local disability funder) and the NEA.

Program Goals
GPAC’s primary goal for the program is to: “Increase regional capacity of arts and culture to be accessible to people with disabilities as visitors and patrons, artists and performers, employees and volunteers.” We do that by working on the following objectives:
1) Educate arts and culture managers about how to provide accessible programs, venues, events, communications, and workplaces.
2) Deliver technical assistance and resources to help organizations offer and promote accommodations for a variety of disabilities.
3) Build a supportive network of local arts managers, people with disabilities, and advocates for people with disabilities who are interested in addressing accessibility issues in our region.
4) Strengthen Pittsburgh’s connections and partnerships with people working on disability issues at regional, state, and national levels.

Program Components

Professional Development Workshops
Each year, GPAC provides a series of accessibility workshops focusing on specific topics conducted by local and national presenters. Participants learn practical strategies in a fun session that builds relationships with peers in the arts and individuals with disabilities. Each workshop includes at least two of the following: an expert on the accessibility topic, a person with a disability, a case study from a local arts organization, and/or an artist with a disability. Several of our past speakers have individually represented two or more of these elements.

Accessibility Peer Group
Arts administrators and artists involved in accessibility are part of this network that meets 3 or more times per year to share updates, what works, and what doesn’t. GPAC provides some peers with scholarships to attend the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) conference hosted annually by the Kennedy Center.

Access Advisory Committee
Local people with disabilities, advocates, and arts organizations gather together twice a year to give feedback on community-wide initiatives, as well as the services of individual arts and culture organizations. Committee members from the disability communities give advice about how to remove barriers as well as how to promote within the disability communities. We partner to coordinate this committee with our county funder.

Special Projects
GPAC adds special projects to bridge gaps uncovered as the initiative grows. For example, when we realized that regional capacity to provide programmatic accommodations was limited, GPAC hosted multi-day audio description trainings (for theatre and for dance) as well as American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for performance.
Goals: Identify and address inequities in the arts community. Actively elicit input from people of color as individuals and in organizations about how we might, together, uplift segments within our arts community and then take action to do so. Work with organization leaders in our region to recognize and address inequities in their own organizations. Build shared awareness and understanding of structural racism.

**PEOPLE**

**GPAC Racial Equity Task Force**
Composed of staff, board, and others; reviews this plan regularly

**Pittsburgh Coalition for Racial Equity in the Arts**
Growing list of individuals and organizations who commit themselves to working toward racial justice in the arts and beyond

- Strategies to engage more people and organizations
- Promotion of all related conversations/events/actions in the community
- Resources, readings, recommendations for people/orgs that want to learn more
- Create a vision of the Pittsburgh we want to live in and develop ways to measure our progress
- Anti-racism and/or anti-oppression training?

**ACTION**

**Programming/Events**
Host, partner, and promote related events for a variety of group sizes, entry points, within and outside the arts community. Seek to create or partner with events that...

- increase awareness and understanding of the challenge of structural racism
- promote shared definitions and language for conversations about race
- provide celebration, support, and/or healing for people of color
- clearly articulate the stakes and responsibility for white people
- prepare and enable more individuals to be agents of change

**Other Actions**

- Provide access to facilitators for inclusion and anti-racism training within arts organizations
- Research funding structures, investigate models to address inequities in funding, model transparency, utilize the Artist Opportunity Grant program as a laboratory, support annual roundtables on funding with a racial equity lens
- Develop shared redefinitions of what progress toward racial equity looks like

**Support Cohorts of Organizations and Artists of Color**
Nurture a cohort of organizations and artists of color; empower leadership and self determination within the cohort; support and develop a program to address needs

**Notes**
- We will allow the initiative to be as nimble as possible, change if something isn't working, make sure we have continuous and ongoing feedback loops.
- As much as possible, we will welcome individuals of all racial backgrounds to attend all programming, but when necessary caucus (focus on a particular group). For example, Programming that supports the particular challenges of organizations and artists of color, programming that helps predominantly white organizations address equity and inclusion in their organizations.
Language and Definitions to Inform Racial Equity Work

Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling Structural Racism/
Promoting Racial Equity Analysis

Based primarily on a document from the Aspen Institute

GPAC is collecting definitions from various sources to be more clear, both internally and externally, about this work. Then we do our best to use the language to say what we mean.

Unlike most glossaries, this glossary is not in alphabetical order. Instead it ranks the words in order of importance to an overall understanding of the dismantling structural racism/promoting racial justice analysis. - Aspen Institute

SOCIAL JUSTICE: A vision of society in which the distribution of resources, opportunity, societal benefits and protection is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

Racial Justice: the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all. A racial justice focus primarily addresses the causes of inequality and the solutions and strategies for producing equity. - Rinku Sen

Racial justice movement today

EQUITY: The condition that would be achieved if the identities assigned to historically oppressed groups no longer acted as the most powerful predictor of how one fares, with the root causes of inequities, not just their manifestations, eliminated. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce or fail to eliminate differential outcomes by group identity/background (economic, educational, health, criminal justice, etc.). - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

Racial Equity: Racial equity refers to what a genuinely non-racist society would look like. In a racially equitable society, the distribution of society’s benefits and burdens would not be skewed by race. In other words, racial equity would be a reality in which a person is no more or less likely to experience society’s benefits or burdens just because of the color of their skin. This is in contrast to the current state of affairs in which a person of color is more likely to live in poverty, be imprisoned, drop out of high school, be unemployed and experience poor health outcomes like diabetes, heart disease, depression and other potentially fatal diseases. Racial equity holds society to a higher standard. It demands that we pay attention not just to individual-level discrimination, but to overall social outcomes. - Aspen Institute

Structural Racism: A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist. - Aspen Institute
STRUCTURAL RACISM: The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, educational, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, characterized by white supremacy. Structural racism is racism underneath and across society, permeating its entire history, culture and institutions. Structural racism within U.S. culture perpetuates, normalizes and legitimates the effects of racism, while often making those effects invisible to the narrow legal definition of unlawful discrimination. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

Dimensions of structural racism: 1) History- roots and cumulative impact of white domination in the U.S.; 2) Culture-normalization and replication of everyday racism; 3) Interconnected institutions and policies-compounding relationships and rules the reinforce racism; 4) Racial Ideology- popular ideas and myths that perpetuate racial justice. –Applied Research Center

Systemic Racism: In many ways “systemic racism” and “structural racism” are synonymous. If there is a difference between the terms, it can be said to exist in the fact that a structural racism analysis pays more attention to the historical, cultural, and social psychological aspects of our currently racialized society. - Aspen Institute

White Privilege: White privilege, or “historically accumulated white privilege,” as we have come to call it, refers to whites’ historical and contemporary advantages in access to quality education, decent jobs and livable wages, homeownership, retirement benefits, wealth and so on. The following quotation from a publication by Peggy McIntosh can be helpful in understanding what is meant by white privilege: “As a white person I had been taught about racism that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage. . . White privilege is an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in every day, but about which I was meant to remain oblivious.” (Source: Peggy McIntosh, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.") - Aspen Institute

WHITE PRIVILEGE: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and power to shape the norms and values of society which white people receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society. For example, a privilege of whiteness is the expectation to be judged as an individual, not as a representative or reflection of an entire group. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

Institutional Racism: Institutional racism refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put a racial group at a disadvantage. Poignant examples of institutional racism can be found in school disciplinary policies in which students of color are punished at much higher rates than their white counterparts, in the criminal justice system, and within many employment sectors in which day-to-day operations, as well as hiring and firing practices can significantly disadvantage workers of color. - Aspen Institute

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM: Those established laws, policies and practices within an institution, supported intentionally or unintentionally by institutional power and authority, which systematically reflect, produce and maintain racial inequalities in U.S. society to the advantage of whites and the disadvantage of other races. Institutional racism is often discrimination without prejudice. Individuals can unintentionally discriminate by applying policies and practices that perpetuate past inequalities. While their attitude may be unbiased, their behavior enforces the philosophy as well as the practice of racism. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action
**Diversity:** Diversity has come to refer to the various backgrounds and races that comprise a community, nation or other grouping. In many cases the term diversity does not just acknowledge the existence of diversity of background, race, gender, religion, ability/disability, sexual orientation and so on, but implies an appreciation of these differences. The structural racism perspective can be distinguished from a diversity perspective in that structural racism takes direct account of the striking disparities in well-being and opportunity areas that come along with being a member of a particular racial group and works to identify ways in which these disparities can be eliminated. - Aspen Institute

**DIVERSITY:** The wide range of national, ethnic, racial and other backgrounds of U.S. residents and immigrants as social groupings, co-existing in American culture. The term is often used to include aspects of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and much more. The term simply describes the presence of individuals from various backgrounds and/or with various identities. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

A diversity focus primarily addresses the symptoms of racism [and other oppressions] - with the goal of minimizing tensions and maximizing people's ability to tolerate difference and get along. There can be diversity without equity. - Rinku Sen

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so than you can do your best work. The process of inclusion engages each individual and makes people feeling valued essential to the success of the organization. Individuals function at full capacity, feel more valued, and included in the organization's mission. This culture shift creates higher performing organizations where motivation and morale soar. - Wikipedia

**INCLUSION:** Authentically brings the perspectives and contributions of all people to the table, equitably distributes power, and incorporates their needs, assets and perspectives into the design and implementation of processes, policies, activities, and decision-making. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action

Simple inclusion leaves structural inequity intact, and fails to address the role of institutions in perpetuating injustice. Making inclusion in unjust institutions the goal, rather than regarding it as a step in a longer journey toward justice, forces us to accept that winning for some means losing for others – that some of us just don’t fit in the vision of America we’re creating. - Race Files

**Individual Racism:** Individual racism can include face-to-face or overt actions toward a person that intentionally express prejudice, hate or bias based on race. - Aspen Institute

**Ethnicity:** Ethnicity refers to the social characteristics that people may have in common, such as language, religion, regional background, culture, foods, etc. Ethnicity is revealed by the traditions one follows, a person’s native language, and so on. Race, on the other hand, describes categories assigned to demographic groups based mostly on observable physical characteristics, like skin color, hair texture and eye shape. - Aspen Institute

**PREJUDICE:** A positive or negative attitude toward a person or group, formed without just grounds or sufficient knowledge and not likely to be changed in spite of new evidence or contrary argument. Prejudice is an attitude. All ethnic and social groups possess some prejudices. - Baltimore Racial Justice Action