TCG strongly believes that improving the diversity of theatres is more than a moral imperative; it is essential for the vitality of theatre as an art form. Diversity has been a long-standing core value for TCG and a priority focus of the strategic plan.

TCG is committed to supporting the plurality of organizational diversity – aesthetic, mission, location, size and structure; as well as the many areas of personal identity – gender, race/ethnicity, religion/spirituality, class, age, ability, sexual orientation and nation of origin. TCG is increasingly being seen as a leader in advancing diversity and inclusion – being called upon more frequently to curate programming, and provide resources and tools to TCG Member Theatres as well as other theatre and art service organizations.

TCG’s strategic plan includes a multi-year, six-point Diversity & Inclusion Initiative (see below) to transform the national theatre field into a more inclusive and diverse community. While TCG is evolving its approach to recognize the complex intersections of difference, many of these programming efforts are focused on racial and ethnic diversity, with the understanding that steps must also be made to further diversify the field in many areas, such as gender parity. TCG is working in partnership with Diversity & Inclusion consultant Carmen Morgan, Director of Leadership Development in Intergroup Relations (LDIR), on several areas of the Initiative.

**TCG’S DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVE:**

**Establishing a Baseline and Knowledge Sharing:**

1. **REPRESENT – A demographic survey platform where theatre people self-identify across intersections of difference.** Through an evolving survey platform, REPRESENT will: measure the current diversity of theatre staff, board and artists; provide robust, real-time snapshots of diversity based on parameters provided by the user; and empower shared language and goal-setting for advancing diversity and inclusion field-wide. REPRESENT will initially focus on eight specific areas of identity: ability/disability, age, class/educational background, gender, place of origin, race/ethnicity, religion/spirituality and sexual orientation. Creating a baseline for the theatre field will help TCG measure future efforts of inclusion and more accurately benchmark progress.

2. **Literature Review** – TCG will curate a Literature Review of critical thinking about diversity and inclusion, including historic resources on race, ethnicity, gender and other areas of identity. The Literature Review will include reference materials and guides to assist theatres in launching diversity and inclusion initiatives within their organizations, providing a comprehensive study of historic and current resources, articles and thought-leadership pieces to provide year-round opportunities for support and learning. The literature review be available online and will include: past American Theatre articles, archives, video from conferences, other published articles, the Diversity & Inclusion blog *salon*, and the Legacy Project, detailed below.

3. **The Legacy Project – Documenting the stories of pioneering theatre leaders of color.** Through a series of video interviews, *The Legacy Project* will chronicle the stories of theatre leaders of color who created the work, founded the organizations and led the vanguards of the resident theatre movement. These leaders were inspired by the need to create opportunities lacking for artists of color; to challenge appropriation and misrepresentation through staging the full richness and complexity of diverse racial, ethnic and cultural identities; to gain political power and creative autonomy; and to contribute their unique aesthetic and social perspectives to the American theatre and wider culture. *The Legacy Project* will not only honor the elders, but serve as a road map for future leaders.
Action Oriented Programming:

4. Diversity & Inclusion Institute – A national cohort of 21 TCG Member Theatres and TCG creating action plans around diversity and inclusion. TCG has created an opportunity for a national network of theatres to come together to work on diversity and inclusion issues together over the course of three years. This intensive approach not only creates a climate within each individual theatre whereby institutional change is more likely to take hold, but it also adds significantly to the collective impact and national momentum of diversity and inclusion efforts already taking place.

Institute theatres are encouraged to: take on leadership roles within the field; be creative and innovative problem-solvers; boldly try out new ideas and initiatives; and share best practices and learnings with the broader field. The Curriculum has a dual focus on organizational development to advance diversity & inclusion; along with personal development around identity, social location, language, privilege, and unconscious bias. Both components are integral in understanding larger systemic and organizational structures, where privilege lies, and how to be an ally.


5. Nurturing Theatres of Color – TCG is taking an active role to nurture and convene theatres of color across the country. TCG will develop programming to address capacity-building amongst culturally-specific theatres, and raise the awareness of the importance of these theatres around the country. TCG has convened leaders of theatres of color at TCG’s National Conference and Fall Forum on Governance to identify their unique needs and challenges.

6. SPARK Leadership Program – An expansion and re-envisioning of TCG’s Young Leaders of Color Program (YLC) into a year-round program. The YLC Program, since 2008, has convened theatre practitioners around the country each year at TCG’s National Conferences; there are now 79 alumni.

With the expanded program, SPARK will provide 10 rising leaders of color with the opportunity to participate in a year-long curriculum that will focus on Knowledge & Skills-Building, Networking & Professional Connections and Self-Awareness & Inclusion. The overall intent of the SPARK Leadership Program is to create a more diverse theatre landscape by supporting the professional development of exceptional leaders of color who aim to take on executive leadership positions at U.S. not-for-profit theatres.

TCG is partnering with the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) along with year-round trainers and advisors to develop the rigorous curriculum. Activities will be hand-tailored to the needs and goals of each SPARK Leader and include a combination of required quarterly group workshops, convenings, and skills-building webinars, along with individual coaching and mentoring. TCG has launched the application. The deadline to apply is May 5, 2014.

Projects within “Establishing a Baseline” are supported to date by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The SPARK Leadership Program is funded to date by American Express and The Joyce Foundation.

For more information, visit: www.tcg.org/fifty/diversity.cfm