

# BIPOC DEMANDS FOR WHITE AMERICAN THEATRE



**#WESEEYOU**



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This is a living document. It is an omnibus declaration of interlinked strategies, comprehensive but by no means exhaustive, and remains subject to amendment. It is culled from years of discussion between members of the Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) theatre communities immersed in the dynamics of which they speak, and bears the contradictions of our many concerns, approaches, and needs. When demands are repeated, it should be taken as a reflection of their significance to the constituents. It is also due to the interdependent functioning of the theatrical ecosystem.

There are a variety of tones and formatting styles employed to record our manifold voices and views, all utilizing direct address and retaining our orality. This technique is designed to hold the multiplicity and urgency we lay claim to given the persistent devaluation of our voices. We are speaking to be heard at the front and back of the house.

Racism and white supremacy are cultural formations constructed to rationalize unjust behavior for economic gain, and eradicating them requires radical change on both cultural and economic fronts. We also wish to underscore that our emphasis on antiracism should not be taken as an excuse to overlook sexism, ableism, ageism, heteronormativity, gender binarism, and transphobia, as our identities are intersectional.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY

We begin with cultural competency to lay the groundwork for all of our antiracist measures. Codes of conduct, regular trainings, and the respect, recognition and protection of our differences are all immediate requirements for workplaces without harm. Remember that these mandatory policies and resources must be developed and/or approved by us.

**We demand the naming and acknowledgement of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tribal land and its Native peoples who have lived, currently live, and will live on the land where any theatre activity happens.**

- Land acknowledgement practice must be incorporated into first rehearsal rituals and at the beginning of any official meeting at Broadway, Off-Broadway, LORT, Educational and BIPOC theatres, because we all must honor tribal sovereignty and self-determination.
- Acknowledge that American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians exchanged millions of acres of land through treaties for basic needs and rights despite the fact that every treaty was broken by the US government.
- Practice ongoing acknowledgement of this mistreatment and the need to rectify the debt that American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians continue to pay for allowing others, including other displaced and removed Indigenous peoples, to be on their homelands.
- Recognize that the "I" in BIPOC refers to all Indigenous peoples, which can be yet another erasure of the specificity of the 573 Tribal Nations who negotiated with



the US government and have retained continuous traditions and folkways in the wake of genocide. Learn our tribal affiliations. Call us by our rightful names.

**We demand recognition and acknowledgement of the enslaved Africans, who have lived, been subjugated to free labor, and toiled the grounds where many theatres have been built and resurrected.**

- Respect the traditions of African diasporic, Afro-Latinx, and Latinx cultural practices inside of all theatre spaces.
- Center descendants of African enslavement in communities where theatres are built in their proximity.
- Acknowledge African burial grounds and the rejection of statues and other monuments that desecrate the memories of the enslaved.

**We demand recognition and acknowledgement of the exclusion, exploitation, and misrepresentation of Latinx, Asian, Middle Eastern and all People of Color.** Though we hold distinct histories of struggle and vast differences within our communities, we name ourselves present and stand together to demand respect.

**We demand that theatres create a safe and anti-racist environment for BIPOC producers, board members, leaders, staff and artists working on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in the Regions.**

- Ongoing mandatory EDI and Anti-Racism Training must be implemented for executive leadership, boards and staff. A dedicated EDI presence should be made available for all shows, and a budget line item should be provided for regular EDI work at the organizational level.
- Quarterly Anti-Racism Training must be provided to full-time staff, part-time staff, contract creative hires, contract workers in costume shops, contract workers in scene shops, stage management hires, and production crew hires at the expense of the institution. Training must include bystander intervention, de-escalation, and conflict resolution training to provide the necessary tools to address racism and harm when it happens. It should be held quarterly to ensure artists and contract workers can be reached at whatever stages they are at in their professional journeys.
- Intimacy coaches and fight directors must have mandatory BIPOC Training.
- Prioritize hiring contract workers who have gone through EDI, Anti-Racism and BIPOC Training.
- Hold a weekly 90 minute EDI/anti-racist check-in that is open to anyone and everyone who has attended Anti-Racism Training to allow for this work to continue.
- Develop intervention and disruption protocols for harmful moments (i.e. racist audience members).
- Require creative teams to undergo Anti-Racism Workshops at the beginning of each rehearsal or tech process and ensure accountability with signed statements.

**We demand fair and equitable acknowledgment and recognition of BIPOC artists.**

- Recognize and acknowledge the labor of BIPOC artists who, in addition to their contracted work as artists, are working to provide marketing expertise for audiences with whom they have a more connected relationship.



- Properly credit BIPOC marketing consultants, PR teams and theatremakers in all marketing collateral (print, electronic, etc.) on individual shows and within the pedagogy of institutions.

**We demand that theatres create a safe and anti-racist environment for BIPOC audiences on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in the Regions.**

- Abolish the policing practices of audience response and promote statements of inclusion for BIPOC audience cultural practices.
- Abolish the policing of BIPOC audience members inside of lobbies, rehearsal studios, and other theatre-related spaces.
- Provide theatre personnel (including ushers, front of house, concessions, etc.) with Anti-Racist, Implicit Bias, Anti-Oppression and Bystander Training.

**We demand that institutional leaders seek out those who are different from themselves and value their differences. What you gain from these new relationships may reap even greater dividends.**

- We see theatres nurturing white artists, singling out their contributions, extolling their virtues and employing them again and again while BIPOC artists are hired once to fulfill the exigencies of a “diversity” project and are somehow never able to cultivate the same relationships. The unstated messaging is clear: this is not your artistic home, and it never will be. Understand why you are more comfortable around some people than others and seek to sublimate your racist inclinations.
- Employ intentional and honest effort in establishing consistent, meaningful, long-term relationships with BIPOC artists. Stop using the excuse that you don’t know any BIPOC artists - step outside of your professional circle to find them. And, if the work produced by BIPOC artists is successful (do not measure our success by reviews), we demand to be hired more than once, and not just for BIPOC shows. No more one-offs. Additionally, if the work produced by BIPOC artists is not successful for any of the myriad reasons we’ve stated in this document, we still demand that BIPOC artists be hired more than once -- like you would do for our white counterparts.
- Invest in BIPOC leaders. Provide Gap Training for future leaders of color. While participating in this training, embrace peer mentorship instead of paternalistic impulses around mentorship.

**If you hire a BIPOC artist to direct and reimagine an existing work created by white artists, we demand that you demand from the creators’ estates free interpretive rein over the piece on behalf of the BIPOC artist. The BIPOC artist ought not be expected to advocate for the freedom to reinterpret, adapt and reimagine work by white people.**

**We demand costume shops be given proper training in styling and consultation of Black hair and makeup when working with Black actors. Alternatively, take the time to hire knowledgeable technicians.**

- Provide the necessary hair and makeup products, barbers, and/or hairdressers when working with Black artists. If you are unable to, then you must provide proper compensation for Black artists who are forced to bring in their own hair products due to the institution’s inability to provide equitable access to hair and skin care.



### **We demand that you prioritize the cultural care and feeding of BIPOC artists.**

- Provide therapists or counselors on site for the duration of a rehearsal process and production run when producing/programming content that deals with racialized experiences, and most especially racialized trauma. These therapists and/or counselors should also have experienced Anti-Racism Training.
- Hire culturally competent facilitators for BIPOC stories at talkbacks, especially for predominantly white audiences.
- Ensure BIPOC artist work has the audience for which it was intended. Do this by supporting the marketing of our work, and hire marketing professionals who know how to engage every community.
- Budget shows with BIPOC artists appropriately.
- Disrupt “the show must go on” culture by acknowledging the disproportionate and harmful effect that “pushing through” has on BIPOC bodies. This culture is physically damaging and is driven by fear. Eliminate the fear and protect BIPOC bodies, spirits and mental well-being.
- Stop tokenizing and fetishizing BIPOC artists and work, especially for donor dollars.
- Don’t try to make one of us your pets. Stop pitting us against each other or attempting to use us to control one other. Doing this encourages lateral violence.
- Dispel the threat of retaliation when we advocate for the cultural specificity of our work.
- Do not permanently label BIPOC artists as “difficult” for providing critique when you’ve asked them for cultural consultation.
- We demand to be valued for our worth as artists, not just for how we racially or ethnically identify.
- Honor and value the lived experiences of BIPOC folx/artists.
- Honor our elders and the work that they’ve put in. Our work should be framed in relation to theirs.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS AND HIRING PRACTICES**

This section provides more action steps to ensure the affirmative tenets of cultural competency are put into practice.

**We demand safe and exclusive affinity spaces for the protection of BIPOC bodies inside of all institutions.**

**We demand accountability to anti-racism.**

- Anti-racism policies must be publicized within 6 months from the release of these demands.
- Institute anti-racism statements that must be read at all first rehearsals, board meetings and quarterly staff meetings to continue to hold theatres accountable. How can you say you are an anti-racist theatre when you are in an all-white room?



**We demand humane and nurturing work environments specifically attuned to BIPOC artists' needs.**

- Designers, choreographers, fight and intimacy directors and their associates and assistants (as they become hired) should be fully disclosed when offers are made to ensure a full awareness of who will be in the room so that we can avoid subjecting ourselves to working with potentially harmful collaborators.
- Allow proficient and accessible walk-throughs of inventory and spatial configurations every time a BIPOC designer is hired -- especially as many are only hired once a year.
- Eliminate 10 out of 12s and eliminate the 6-day rehearsal week. These are long-standing practices that are seeped in capitalist and white supremacist culture. When these practices are in place, the growing and nurturing of the BIPOC family structure is imperiled. Many BIPOC artists have been forced to make a choice not to have families. For Indigenous artists and other peoples recovering from genocide, these practices are extremely detrimental.
- Allocate more time to create work. Do not force us to produce in a way that is antithetical to the artistic process, leading to the hiring of the same people over and over again, such as those who have developed a "shorthand" with the director and/or choreographer. It is the product of an authoritarian structure that silences the agency of BIPOC collaborators to voice concerns that are being glossed over for the sake of expediency. Creating one structure for every project does not allow for the specific exigencies that each project needs and taxes artists needlessly, creating a potentially hazardous and less humane work environment.
- Implement the mandatory hiring of EDI professionals.
- Create mandatory EDI committees on the organizational level.
- Require that employees have mandatory involvement on EDI committees.
- Assign a dedicated EDI officer for each production.
- Implement mandatory estate and financial planning for all employees.

**We demand an immediate end to oppressive hiring practices.**

- All executive leadership hires and structural leadership changes must occur through an equitable and transparent process.
- Diversify search firms and finalist pools for executive leadership positions.
- All executive search firms must have BIPOC consultants leading searches. We demand the severing of all ties with predominantly white search firms.
- Commit to a truly diverse pool of BIPOC candidates for leadership of your theatres.
- Build relationships with and hire BIPOC artists from your local area.
- Stop using one less-than-positive experience with a BIPOC artist as an excuse not to engage other BIPOC artists.
- Build a BIPOC production staff.



- Production job descriptions must use language that is free of unconscious bias, such as “years of experience” requirements for production staff.
- Production job descriptions must not have education requirements, which, by implying that coming from a certain degree or institution you are somehow more qualified than someone else, create a barrier to the hiring of BIPOC production staff.
- Cease using the term “most favored nations” when also using contract riders that undermine the equality of the pay structure.
- Eliminate the use of the Rooney Rule in your hiring practices; it is imbued with racist ideas. It has never been acceptable to have one candidate of color amongst four or five white candidates. Bringing in a single, tokenized candidate for consideration amidst an otherwise all-white field of candidates has consistently failed to institute equity or diversity across the field. It hasn’t even succeeded in greater representation. Instead, take a closer look at hiring practices, the wording of job descriptions and bias as to where the candidate last worked and with whom.
- We demand that BIPOC candidates comprise the majority of the final candidate pool for all positions so that candidate pools accurately reflect the standing excellence of BIPOC workers.
- We demand that you stop replacing us or clumping us with white women and white LGBTQ+. While we recognize their struggle, we are not interchangeable. We demand that you foster true and honest intersectionality.

**We demand that BIPOC comprise the majority of leadership positions and the majority of middle management, including production department heads and company managers, across your organization.**

- We are or have been your staff members. We have seen how you scrutinize candidates and dismiss them based on subjective criteria such as “likability” or give undue weight to criteria that selects out candidates of color such as where they went to school or whether their last institution was one you admire.
- We have seen you fail to develop the careers of the BIPOC members you do have on your staff, devaluing their contributions while creating a culture of agreement that silences and does not support employees, especially when they are the “only one” of their kind, which brings with it a special kind of suffering.
- We have seen you accept “diversity grants” to hire interns of color only to throw them away after they have fulfilled their utility.
- You need to do better if you are to earn our trust. You can’t be anti-racist if your leadership is predominantly white.

**We demand that BIPOC comprise the majority of literary departments and that you invest in a multiplicity of cultures.**

- Hire majority BIPOC literary departments, give them agency to inform season selection, and empower them to disagree with you during note sessions. Consider this an opportunity to diverge from the myopic,



insular stories that we see from you again and again. We are asking you to invest in a multiplicity of cultures and many permutations of form in order to re-imagine what is possible in the theatre. We are asking you to look outside of your own culture and to gain inspiration from others-- and if you do not have the vision to do so, please step aside.

**We demand that you implement equitable season planning, curation and programming.**

- Do away with the “mainstage” and “second stage” construct that consistently relegates work by BIPOC artists to a secondary position. Stop redlining BIPOC stories to the sidelines.
- Invest in a power sharing model for curation and beyond in season programming, including but not limited to having at least one show that is credited to BIPOC staff and community members beyond the Artistic Director.

**We demand BIPOC plays represent no less than 50% of mainstage programming with salaries and royalties equitable to the institution’s highest tier.**

- The practice of relegating BIPOC stories to your smallest spaces is an act of ghettoization and marginalization. This racist practice perpetuates an economic inequity for BIPOC artists across the field. Put BIPOC stories on your largest stages. Stop assigning risk to them. We are the mainstream. Invest in us or we’ll stop investing in you.

**We demand casting processes reflect the cultural specificity of the shows being cast.**

- If the casting director is white, we demand an additional BIPOC casting director be hired to work alongside the in-house casting office to cast BIPOC shows and be paid a competitive rate for their work.

**We demand that BIPOC marketers and PR consultants be present and given priority for covering ALL shows, including those featuring BIPOC artists.**

- This includes press passes, priority and premium seating, opening night invitations, early ticket sales and holding houses.
- Open up channels of contact between marketing consultants and creative teams so that they may more directly communicate around marketing decisions for a project or production.

**We demand that marketing departments hire full time BIPOC staff.**

- This includes the immediate removal of ineffective, biased administrative and curatorial leadership to demonstrate the good faith of the board for real, systemic change.
- Fill open positions with BIPOC marketing talent.
- Work with search firms that have a proven track record in finding and recruiting BIPOC talent to replace all open positions.
- Create a career track for BIPOC employees with clearly defined goals and processes for advancement within the institution.





- As we see you use brown and Black bodies, it is imperative that the theatre's marketing and fundraising materials and any other brochures be reflective of the racial makeup of your staff and programming.
- No longer require that we give up our likeness at the beginning of our engagement, and then use our likeness for YEARS to promote your diversity, marketing, grant writing, galas and board recruitment.

**We demand that regional theatres invest in local BIPOC vocational populations.**

**We demand that BIPOC audiences become a priority for ALL shows across Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in the Regions, including those featuring BIPOC artists.**

- Invest in and foster reciprocal relationships in BIPOC communities with a concentrated focus and investment in long-term BIPOC audience development.
- This includes the hiring of BIPOC marketing consulting teams by all theatres and commercial producers.
- Give an equitable and effective budget to marketing consultants.
- Ensure an effective time schedule for the execution of marketing and promotion campaigns.

**We demand equitable access for BIPOC audiences.**

- Acknowledge that the practice of maintaining donors, subscribers, and board members should also be applied to creating relationships with BIPOC audiences, and not exclusively for BIPOC shows.
- Develop affordable ticket price initiatives including reduced price ticketing.
- Hold ticket blocks for later and single ticket buyers.
- Reserve early ticket sales exclusively for BIPOC audiences.
- Provide exclusive access to readings, openings and other curated benefit programs that are usually only offered to donors, subscribers and board members.
- Create newsletters and other specialized mailings that prioritize BIPOC audiences.
- Abolish the practice of limiting BIPOC ticket buyers to the periphery of audiences and instead promote policies that give them access to the best seat selections before tickets go on sale to the general public.
- Offer free tickets to members of the American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tribal community on whose traditional homelands your theatre sits.

## **ARTISTIC AND CURATORIAL PRACTICES**

This section includes varying angles on many of the demands in Working Conditions and Hiring Practices to address the aesthetic and cultural import of abundant BIPOC presence in the creation of theatrical works.

**We demand that the majority of writers, directors and designers on stage for the foreseeable future be BIPOC artists.**

- Develop, commission, program and produce a majority of BIPOC artists.
- Understand that you cannot tell stories about us without us. We must be centered in the telling of our own stories. Get out of the way so we can thrive.



- Implement a deep interrogation as to where BIPOC artists are hired in the season. You must hire just as many BIPOC artists to work on period/canonical texts as to work on BIPOC-centered shows.
- Include a diversity of BIPOC artists' voices in your programming — BIPOC artists are not a monolith. There must be more variation in style, period and contexts. The only BIPOC plays in your season shouldn't solely center on trauma and pain.
- When producing/programming BIPOC stories, a full commitment to honoring the cultural specificity of those stories is required. Power must be in the rehearsal room and be yielded to those who share a cultural context with the work, especially when the director is white.
- When producing/programming BIPOC stories to be directed by someone from outside of the cultural context of the story itself (especially if the director is white), a cultural consultant must be hired at the expense of the institution.
- Implement mandatory hiring of credible cultural consultants for culturally specific shows.
- Employ mandatory hiring of intimacy directors with BIPOC Training for every show.

**We demand that there be no homogenous design teams.**

- All design teams must be more than 50% BIPOC, and the principal designers (costumes, lighting, sound, scenic, projections) must be 50% BIPOC.
- Individual directors must commit to hiring majority (not “half”) BIPOC design teams, and artistic directors need to commit to the same at the curatorial level.

**We demand the cessation of binary notes given between a white artistic director and a BIPOC artist.**

- Understand that the notes of a white artistic director/dramaturg will never be more important than the BIPOC creatives' values and opinions. You will never understand our stories better than we do. Decenter yourself.
- Center BIPOC cultural specificity in the creation of BIPOC art -- in pre-production, the rehearsal process, marketing, literary management and in-house dramaturgy, community engagement, audience development and audience engagement.

**We demand a systematic setting and maintaining of production expectations around artistic vision and budgeting processes.**

- Protect, honor, properly compensate and insure the artistic continuance of BIPOC bodies and our creations in the development of new work and the reinterpretation of existing work.

## **TRANSPARENCY, COMPENSATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND BOARDS**

We demand complete transparency about policies, procedures, compensation and relationships from artistic/executive leadership and boards of directors at Off-Broadway, LORT, and regional theatres across the country.

### **TRANSPARENCY**



**We demand:**

- Published and transparent listings of board member affiliations with corporations and other nonprofits.
- That you publish permanently and prominently in the lobby a description of how the theatre's land was acquired and the history of the land with acknowledgements of the land's Tribal Nations.
- That you conduct transparent hiring practices (including clear salary recommendations for postings) throughout the entire organization, particularly executive leadership and junior to mid-level positions.
- That you conduct a vendor audit, including of the wealth management companies managing endowments. Publish total dollars spent with BIPOC-owned businesses versus white-owned.
- That you create transparency around institutional expectations, logistics and requirements, and be prepared to embrace the possibility of the BIPOC artists in the boardroom asking for amendments and changes to those institutional expectations.

**We demand transparency in fundraising and the distribution of funds as it relates to BIPOC artists' work.**

- Cease the practice of raising money to engage BIPOC artistic work but using most of the funds raised for institutional overhead.
- Publish total dollars earned by white artists and staff in a season versus total dollars earned by BIPOC artists and staff, according to titles and positions.
- Stop exclusively fundraising from BIPOC communities to support the development of BIPOC work.
  - STOP asking Tribal Nations to fund your projects with American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Indigenous artists and communities; consider how those funds will be diverted from tribal infrastructure and cultural retention projects. In regards to the historic deficits of Tribal Nations, predominantly white institutions (PWIs) need to find other resources to ethically fund their projects with American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Indigenous artists and communities.
- Publish an organizational budget showing how dollars are allocated.

**COMPENSATION**

**We demand that the theatre's highest paid executive staff members make no more than 10x the yearly salary of the lowest paid full-time staff member.**

**We demand divestment from bloated executive packages and bonuses.**

**We demand all incoming executive leadership hires be offered a salary that is equitable to that of the prior hire's offer and consistent with those of executive leadership partners within the institution.**



- All salaries must be published and made easily accessible for each hire. This ensures a transparent process and encourages equitable wage practices.

**We demand additional compensation for BIPOC staff working within a PWI in recognition of the increased labor intrinsically required.**

**We demand fair compensation for BIPOC artists for appearances at donor events, audience talkbacks and any other appearances or work that falls outside of their position as detailed in their contract.**

- Theatres must cease all expectation of BIPOC artists or staff working outside of the expectations of the position itself as prescribed in the BIPOC artist or staff member's hiring paperwork/contract. No pressure shall be put on any BIPOC artist or staff member to assist with marketing, fundraising, etc. without proper compensation and credit.

**We demand the dismantling of internship programs, and we demand that paid entry level positions be created in their place.**

**We demand accountability in performance evaluations, and evaluations must be fully reflected in annual raises or bonuses.**

## **ACCOUNTABILITY AND BOARDS**

**We demand that boards of directors overhaul their memberships to be more inclusive and to better reflect the fact that white people make up just 11.5% of the global population.**

- We demand the immediate removal of racist board members and those who have exhibited racist behavior.
- Eliminate mandatory financial minimum gifts for board membership.
- Deprioritize outsized monetary influence in board decisions and prioritize valuing the voices and skills of BIPOC board members. Honor cultural competency, relationship building and lived experiences.
- Recognizing that artists are essential to boards, amend bylaws to require that executive committees must include BIPOC artists.
- Establish institutionalized board access for production staff.
- Institute an in-house BIPOC Alliance Committee made up of BIPOC staff, artists and community members to evaluate the mission and vision of the theater and collaborate with executive leadership and the board to build a strategic plan designed to move the theatre toward anti-racist practices. Members of the BIPOC Alliance should be voting board members.

**We demand an account of how your theatre is adhering to its obligation as a 501(c)3 to be in service of the public good. We, BIPOC, are a part of that public.**

- Boards of directors must require that institutional annual budgets reflect the institution's mission and values with respect to EDI work. Budgets are to be audited by an independent reviewer, and public funding is to be dependent in part on that independent reviewer's audit.



- We demand the creation of a national BIPOC rating system where institutions are graded according to their adherence to BIPOC and anti-racist policies.
- Give back dollars to BIPOC communities impacted by or represented in stories at PWI theatres. For example, do NOT tell a story about Flint without donating to organizations fighting for clean water in Flint.
- Public response to public questions for Boards regarding EDI.

**We demand that all theatres cease all contractual security agreements with police departments. Theatres must invest in security agencies that are not affiliated with or founded by police or ex-police officers.**

**We demand you divest in companies that build oil pipelines through the land of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Tribal Nations in the US and Indigenous communities globally that continue to poison the water, air, land and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples and contribute to climate change that is disproportionately affecting BIPOC communities.**

**We demand that white directors, playwrights, actors and designers begin implementing universal/across the board BIPOC inclusion/equity riders that explicitly state that work will only be accepted if their specific department, team and the entire company is at least 50% BIPOC.**

**We demand restorative justice for the crimes and infractions White American Theatres have committed against BIPOC theatre companies.**

- We have seen how you have engaged with BIPOC theatre companies you have chosen to collaborate with: attaching their name to your grant proposals without giving them any of the funds.
- We have seen how you exploit their life's work with their own communities and community members; extracting their artists; forcing them to raise money and produce the project for you.
- We have seen how you sometimes make them pay you rent for a show which you proudly take credit for as part of your season.
- We recognize that BIPOC artists bring cultural authenticity and value to your seasons. If you choose to collaborate with BIPOC theatres, it must be an equitable partnership.

**We demand a 360 annual review process for executive leadership, including artists, staff, and community stakeholders, the majority of whom should identify as BIPOC.**

- All executive leaders must develop a succession plan within 5 years of service.

**We demand term limits for executive leaders. It is an act of service to resign if you have currently been an executive leader of the same institution for 20+ years.**

## **FUNDING AND RESOURCE DEMANDS FOR BIPOC THEATRE ORGANIZATIONS**



Transformational funding must be made available, specifically to extant and newly formed BIPOC organizations and artists. This funding must be given directly to BIPOC organizations without PWI intermediaries. The inequity in funding has led to under-resourced BIPOC organizations while PWIs have been granted money to advance wholly unsuccessful EDI initiatives. This inequity has also impacted BIPOC artists who contribute to and seed so much of the cultural zeitgeist, yet don't receive a commensurate amount of funding to support their careers. Funders have an opportunity to correct these inequities and to provide transformational funding for BIPOC organizations and artists.

### **We demand that funders:**

- **Fund sustainable growth for BIPOC organizations, especially post-COVID.** The current crises facing our nation—COVID, institutional racism, and economic turbulence—will undoubtedly affect BIPOC organizations the most. For those that survive, the path towards sustainability and growth will be treacherous. Funding to help these organizations weather the storm and identify a pathway for growth and sustainability is imperative. Seeding the future of these organizations will be crucial in authentically capturing this cultural moment and retelling the story for future generations.
- **Make multi-year sustainable gifts.** Multi-year gifts allow organizations and artists to successfully envision and plan for future seasons. Providing multi-year grants, and doing it over the course of multiple cycles (i.e. giving two three-year grants over the course of eight years), will change the way BIPOC organizations and artists operate. Artists will be able to think about growing their artistry without the challenge of fretting over how to support themselves. Organizations can plan for long-term initiatives to further cement their work and legacies in their community, and better serve their artists.
- **Eliminate budget-size qualifications for major grants.** Many of the BIPOC organizations that could benefit the most from the funding available have relatively smaller budgets compared to their PWI colleagues. By eliminating the requirements, smaller BIPOC organizations can compete for funding that will elevate and further their work.
- **Diversify adjudicators and panelists.** The cultural contexts that some BIPOC artists operate in have historically been misunderstood and their greatness minimized. Incorporating a more inclusive panel that is at least 50% BIPOC into the grantmaking process will allow more BIPOC artists' work to be recognized.
- **Hire more program officers of color.**
- **Get to know more BIPOC organizations and artists.** Several funders are unaware of the various organizations doing outstanding work in their communities. Opportunities to get to know these organizations, like a virtual Funding Fair/Expo, can help establish new relationships, ultimately leading to new funding pathways.
- **Stop bankrupting our organizations.** The contributions of BIPOC organizations have been undervalued. The minor advancements of PWIs have been rewarded on the backs of the knowledge and contributions of the BIPOC advisors they hire to meet grant requirements. Shift the funding towards the organizations that have been doing the work for decades so that the experts are funded to do the work for their own communities. Stop funding the pilfering of our organizations.



- **Make grant evaluation metrics transparent.** Without a set rubric or standard on how and why grants are distributed, mistrust between the artistic community and the funders who wish to support them grows. Transparency will provide a standard that all organizations can operate from, re-establishing trust, and will help to promote equity in the funding process.
- **Provide funding to support audits.** Audits are a requirement for several funders, yet many organizations, most specifically smaller BIPOC organizations, struggle to afford the cost of said service. The expense is compounded by the risk of not receiving the grant, as most organizations look at the list of funded organizations and very infrequently see themselves or similar organizations. If funders are going to require an audit in order for an organization to apply for funds, provide funding to support the audit.
- **Make more general operations funding available to BIPOC organizations.** While programmatic funding is important, many BIPOC organizations are limited in their ability to properly pay for their administrative and overhead costs using those funds. General operating support will provide these organizations with funding to hire and retain more staff, create endowments and funding reserves to mitigate risk, and create sustainable growth.
- **Funding for space acquisition and maintenance.** Many BIPOC organizations are itinerant and don't have their own buildings. This leads to inconsistencies in producing as the terms and times of their activities are dictated by landlords. Funding for space acquisition will only fix this IF funding is also provided for the maintenance of the building. Funding to support the initial capital and the added operating costs will allow these organizations to safely acquire and maintain buildings to serve their communities more powerfully.
- **Hold our umbrella organizations accountable for gathering BIPOC organizations and artists.** Many of our umbrella organizations host convenings of our field, yet BIPOC artists and the representatives of BIPOC organizations are under-represented. These same organizations request and grant funding to host these events. Networking, sharing of best practices and other invaluable resources are gained during these meetings. When BIPOC artists and administrators are left out of these conversations, they are denied access to crucial field-wide learning. Hold these conveners accountable to better serve the entirety of our field.
- **Support mentorships, apprenticeships and career development, particularly in design and technical production.** Small production teams/staffs, or sometimes a single person on staff juggling multiple projects, are often unable to support the vision of guest designers.

**When engaging BIPOC theatres for collaborations with white-created institutions, we demand reciprocal and collaborative partnerships.** We insist all our partnerships be equitable, including a valuation of our cultural competency that grants your institutions credibility, authenticating your commitment to BIPOC artists on the strength of our relationships. All co-productions must be rooted in equity and co-constructed decision making. We demand ongoing participation and that subsidiary rights do not come from BIPOC artists' pockets. We also demand proper credit for our work and a cultural legacy that honors our contributions, interrupting the cycle of theft and extraction.



**We demand redistribution of EDI funding to BIPOC theatres rather than to white-created institutions.**

**We demand flexibility with unions.** As budgets for BIPOC organizations remain disproportionately low due to historic underfunding, required bonds and health and pension contributions can often prevent a company from doing its work at all. To pay our BIPOC artists at or above union minimums, we require negotiation on some of the higher fees.

**We charge talent agencies to remember we exist.** Invest in and develop relationships between represented BIPOC artists and BIPOC theatres, where they and their work can be supported wholly.

**We establish networks of solidarity, care, and accountability.** BIPOC theatres are speaking to each other in this moment, developing new paradigms, and fresh collaborative networks between us will continue to bolster our ability to be of service. We challenge ourselves to remove any aesthetic limitations born of racist narratives and the worldviews of Western patriarchy. We support each other in solidarity and cooperation, knowing that in our scramble for scant resources we have often been forced to compete against each other. We offer ourselves to BIPOC artists who have overlooked us, and dedicate ourselves to embracing expansive concepts of identity. BIPOC theatres are not untouched by heteropatriarchy, misogynoir, trans- and homophobia, gender binarism, ableism and ageism, and so we invest in practices to dismantle the lateral violence that tears through our intersectional communities. We take on healing structures for mental, physical and spiritual sustenance that repair our lifelong wounds and restore our cultural practices, traditions and ways of being, and we look to our artists to guide us toward new visions of liberatory theatre.

## **COMMERCIAL THEATRE AND BROADWAY**

With the highest level of investment, risk, and profit, the commercial theatre is prone to some of the most deeply rooted abuses. The call is to invest in the Visibility, Equity & Transparency, and Protection of BIPOC Artists in every aspect of its operation.

### **VISIBILITY**

**We demand that every department/sector/independent company affiliated with any one commercial theatre/Broadway show be made up of at least 50% BIPOC staff/artists across levels and positions, especially in decision-making roles. (Percentages are to be calculated per department, per show, and per company where applicable.) These sectors include but are not limited to:**

- Creative team
- Cast, especially when color-conscious casting may be applied, such as with Western classics and revivals of classics (unless racial identity is specifically dictated by the playwright)





- Backstage, technical and scenic crew (including IATSE local hires on touring shows)
- Casting directors and casting associates present in any audition room at any given time
- Full-time casting directors on payroll at any company contracted by a commercial theatre/Broadway show
- Company management
- Production team

**We demand the divestment from IATSE and its local unions until they comply with anti-racist practices. \*If the aforementioned demand is not met, we will demand the formation of BIPOC Entertainment Unions. (For more detail, please see the following section on Unions.)**

**We demand the divestment from the Casting Society of America (CSA) as the arbiter of industry standards, with its national oversight of hundreds of casting directors, until they comply with the following:**

- Change the racial makeup of their membership and board leadership as stated above within the next five years.
- Dismantle the seniority/apprentice membership requirement system in the next five years.
- Publish and implement anti-racism policies for all members within the next six months.
- Require all members to undergo anti-racism and anti-bias training annually.
- Create an anti-nepotism policy within the next six months.
- Put an end to free and unpaid labor by implementing a transparent and competitive pay rate for BIPOC casting interns, assistants, and associates when working in large casting offices.
- Put an end to the project-to-project independent contracting of BIPOC assistants and associates in large casting offices that employ more than 3 salaried casting directors.

**In addition to the abovementioned, we demand that the Rooney Rule hiring policy be eliminated in all sectors.**

- Eliminate the use of the Rooney Rule in your hiring practices. (See Working Conditions.)
- We demand that BIPOC candidates comprise the majority of the final candidate pool for all positions so that candidate pools accurately reflect the standing excellence of BIPOC workers.

**We demand that every company undergo annual equity and diversity audits; we demand that the results be published and posted in the theatres.**

**We demand that The Broadway League:**

- Embark on a campaign to seek, engage and develop BIPOC producers, general managers, presenters and theatre operators. Instead of the current policy, which can only be described as "weeding out the riff raff," seek to encourage new membership by making entry into the League as easy and as apolitical as possible.



- Create opportunities to educate prospective BIPOC producers, including but not limited to providing scholarships for them to attend the Commercial Theatre Institute (CTI) and providing mentorship opportunities with established producers.
- Change current policies which may be limiting the number of BIPOC that could qualify for full and associate membership, including:
  - a) Lower the minimum investment amount needed to qualify for full membership by half (5% of a play's capitalization and 2.5% of a musical's capitalization). Allow "in association with" producers to become full members.
  - b) Allow all general managers to immediately become full members, regardless of whether they are principals of their company, and forego the requirement that they must have served as a general manager twice in the last four years.
  - c) Expand the pool of people eligible to become associate members to include producer assistants and associate general managers.
  - c) Promote visibility of BIPOC members within the organization and its committees. Make them feel welcome.
  - d) Change the current system of "assigning" new members to committees and making certain committees off limits to new members.
  - d) Allow new committees to be created to engender new ideas.
  - e) Change policies that prevent new members from holding leadership positions within committees.
  - f) Facilitate greater networking opportunities specifically for BIPOC members to gain exposure to committee leaders and members of the Board of Governors.
- Provide a list of qualified BIPOC vendors and potential hires to its membership, such as lists of BIPOC musicians and conductors, BIPOC designers, and BIPOC press agents.
- Change its administrative requirements to make it easier for BIPOC members to become board members. We demand at least 50% BIPOC representation on the Board of Governors within 5 years.
- Institute term limits for its President and its Board of Governors.
- Hire a permanent staff member who will focus solely on EDI issues and Equity/Diversity Training within the League and across the industry, as well as supporting individual producers on their diversity initiatives. As we know the culture of The Broadway League offices to be one that stifles debate, this person should work hand in hand with the President, but be allowed to act independently and report directly only to the Board of Governors.

**We demand that Broadway theatre owners:**

- Rename 50% of the theatres they own with BIPOC theatre artists' names.
- Abolish the current system of secret handshakes that give theatre rentals to the same producers over and over again.
- Take an active role in developing BIPOC talent, including BIPOC producers.



- Invest in BIPOC artists and connect them with theatre insiders who can produce their work.
- Ensure that at least 50% of your theatres will be reserved for BIPOC stories, defined as stories written by, for and about BIPOC.
- Do the work of cultivating diverse audiences. Hire BIPOC consultants to engage with communities. Create special pricing and increased opportunities for these communities to see Broadway projects.
- Lower rental fees and the percentages at which shows would activate stop clauses. Greater flexibility must be given to help a show find its audience. This benefits all shows.

**We demand that individual commercial producers:**

- Reach out and establish relationships with BIPOC business communities for investment opportunities. This is only to your benefit.
- Actively seek to find and develop more BIPOC co-producers. Reserve space at the table--make them among the first people you reach out to for producing opportunities.
- Seek and develop commercial properties about cultures that are different from yours.
- Value the uniqueness that diverse projects offer; do not assign risk to them.
- Hire producing assistants of color, not just someone who looks like you.
- Insist on bringing your business only to agencies with 50+% BIPOC employees, including advertising agencies, casting agencies, law firms and general management offices.
- Ensure that each of your productions have 50+% BIPOC hires. Employ only directors who will subscribe to your conditions of creating an inclusive work space and support them by pointing them to resources.

**We demand that the Tony Administration Committee of the Broadway League and the American Theatre Wing:**

- Broaden Tony eligibility to include shows produced under a union contract at any theatre in NYC larger than 500 seats, including qualifying shows at The Apollo Theatre in Harlem.
- Ensure 50%+ BIPOC representation on the Tony Nominating Committee in 3 years.
- Increase the number of BIPOC Tony voters by:
  - a) Expanding the number of Tony voters granted to each presenting venue and mandating that at least 50% of them be BIPOC. For every white Tony voter from each theatre, there must also be a voter of color.
  - b) Expanding the number of Tony voters allocated to each union and mandating that at least 50% of them be BIPOC.



c) Inducting more BIPOC voting members into the Broadway League and the American Theatre Wing.

## **EQUITY & TRANSPARENCY**

**We demand that all current gag orders or any other orders given by general managers and producers as a requirement of employment that inhibit communication/conversation surrounding wages be terminated, and all future orders that inhibit communication/conversation surrounding wages must cease.**

**We demand that all information regarding who or what is investing in each production must be made public and easily accessible. Information pertaining to other investments of said investor/producer must also be made public and easily accessible.**

**We demand fair and equitable wage caps and compensation for BIPOC across all disciplines/sectors.**

- All actor counterparts with equal billing must be paid comparably. All other counterparts, across disciplines, with equal billing, must be paid comparably.
- Additional and fair compensation must be paid to any BIPOC artist/employee for any additional work asked of them that is outside of their contractual agreement.
- BIPOC artists must be properly honored, compensated, and artistically supported in our creations in the development of new work, as well as in the reinterpretation of existing work.

## **PROTECTION**

In addition to the naming and acknowledgement of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tribal land and its Native peoples who have lived, currently live, and will live on the land where any theatre activity happens. (See above in Cultural Competency.)

In addition to the acknowledgement of the enslaved Africans, who have lived, been subjugated to free labor, and built the grounds where many theatres have been built and resurrected. (See above in Cultural Competency)

**We demand that all theatres/productions cease all contractual security agreements with police departments across the United States. Theatres/productions must invest in security agencies that are not affiliated with or founded by police/ex-police officers.**

**We demand the discontinuance of racially charged and insensitive language and/or labels in regards to BIPOC artists/staff.**



- Language around lighting BIPOC bodies on stage must be stripped of any racially insensitive or discriminatory undertones or implications.
- Racially charged language and/or labels shall not be used in the workplace by creatives, cast or management in regards to or about any BIPOC actor's appearance.  
\*Non-BIPOC employees are to be held responsible for educating themselves on this unacceptable language.

**We demand the discontinuance of the usage of racial slurs in rehearsals, performances and/or as ad libs, unless the recitation of a racial slur is part of the actor's work in the production.**

**We demand the presence of a contracted intimacy director for every production.**

**We demand producers foster and fully support the creation of BIPOC affinity groups and spaces.**

**We demand that all 10/12 rehearsal schedules be eliminated.**

**We demand that BIPOC actors be invited to actively engage in any conversation regarding their hair and makeup. These conversations must be anti-racist in language and tone, provide the BIPOC actor with agency with regard to their final look and be carried forth without retribution.**

- Conversations about a Black actor's hair are to occur only between the actor and the person responsible for doing their hair unless the actor consents to third party involvement.
- Stylists in the hair department must exhibit proficiency in the proper care and maintenance of BIPOC hair; OR, alternatively, the hair team must be proactive and committed to supplying the Black actor with any and all products and supplies necessary to maintain hair continuity for the show (including but not limited to materials for wig prep, color, extensions, personal stylist fees, etc). The actor must approve all products/tools/materials.  
\*The stylist must collect a comprehensive list of products/tools/materials from the actor before First Preview.
- When there is a request for a BIPOC stylist, the production must honor that request.
- Management teams shall be contractually obligated to provide a reasonable monetary allotment dedicated to the specific and ongoing hair/body needs of BIPOC actors.
- Stylists in the makeup department must exhibit proficiency in makeup techniques and applications specific to BIPOC skin tones.

**We demand the complete eradication of the practice of measuring the successes and abilities of BIPOC artists against each other.**

**We demand the eradication of the practice of making SOME roles open to BIPOC actors and making actors of every race compete for those few slots. Acknowledge that the majority**



of roles are not racially specific--their stories are not about race--and can be played by actors of any race.

**We demand that there be adequate and ongoing Anti-Racism Training and oversight for all creatives, cast and management.**

- The Broadway League must mandate Anti-Racism Training for every producing partner/commercial investor of every commercial theatre/Broadway show.
- An anti-racism policy statement must be verbally stated and physically distributed at the start of every casting, PR, marketing, rehearsal, and tech process.
- Every company of each show must engage in Implicit Bias Training during the rehearsal process and bi-annually for the duration of the run, provided by the producer in association with Actors Equity.
- Every commercial production must have a dedicated EDI specialist present.

**We demand the immediate eradication of any language, written or verbal, that prohibits or discourages any BIPOC artist/staff member from mentioning/celebrating/claiming their own identity and genetic makeup with regard to social media and media as a whole. This silencing is an act of racial discrimination and will not be tolerated.**

## **UNIONS**

There is a profound lack of BIPOC members, staff and leadership in our unions, particularly outside of the ones governing performance. We demand action to correct this lack of representation, as well as disparities in pay and hiring.

### **For Actors Equity Association:**

**We demand mandatory and ongoing Anti-Racism Training for all union members.**

**We demand the institution of Gap Training for future BIPOC production stage managers.**

**We demand that production teams be made up of 50% or more BIPOC.**

**We demand that a study of pay disparity between BIPOC and white members be conducted and made public and easily accessible.**

**We demand full transparency of salaries upon request.**

**We demand a complete restructuring of the current healthcare qualifications.**

- The current system for determining benefits contributes to the racist healthcare system of this country, catering to the 1% of predominantly white union members who benefit from the hiring/casting disparities and therefore are able to acquire the required number of weeks. BIPOC artists



contribute to the healthcare fund but never see the benefits due to this disparity in employment opportunities.

**We demand the institution of a streamlined and transparent process for the proper documentation of issues/concerns brought to the attention of stage management, AEA and non-AEA deputies, and artistic leadership, including a timeline, as well as transparent communication.**

**For the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees:**

**We demand the divestment from IATSE and its local unions until they comply with following:**

- Build the number of BIPOC members to at least 50% of the union's total within 5 years.
- Dismantle the seniority system in the next five years.
- With full acknowledgement of BIPOC as the global majority, publish and implement anti-racism policies within the next six months, including a comprehensive, transparent plan for diversification.
- Mandate ongoing Anti-Racism Training.
- Create more shadowing opportunities for BIPOC.
- Create affinity spaces for BIPOC members to help/hear/heal.
- Develop a considerable BIPOC presence in IA Leadership.
- Create an anti-nepotism policy within the next six months.
- Become completely transparent with regard to their hiring practices.

**For the Society of Directors and Choreographers:**

**We demand the codifying of an agreement in regards to intimacy direction.**

**We demand that SDC creates a complete accounting of the hiring percentages of BIPOC versus white directors at the end of any given theatrical season of every SDC signatory theater. This list should be broken down into new plays, classics and revivals. We want to see a full accounting. We demand an end to the practice of hiring BIPOC directors to direct only BIPOC shows -- while white directors are hired for EVERYTHING, including BIPOC shows.**

**For the United Scenic Artists:**

**We demand that 50% of the total number of union members be from BIPOC communities.**

**We demand that the board and staff be at least 50% BIPOC.**

**We demand the formation of initiation fee scholarships for BIPOC designers, scenic artists, coordinators and any other subsequent category of workers.**

**We demand the formation of BIPOC apprenticeships that lead to membership. With**



close attention to Broadway, we want USA to institute entry level design staffing opportunities for BIPOC outside of the USA assistant/associate requirements.

We demand the immediate racial equity and diversification of the admission, exam and application review committees.

We demand the immediate formation of a BIPOC affinity group.

We demand 50%+ BIPOC membership on every collective bargaining agreement committee.

## **PRESS**

Theatre criticism for BIPOC productions, performers and theatres must be written through the lens of anti-racism. If press outlets cannot train their white writers to use an anti-racist lens, we demand that they not review BIPOC productions until they contract BIPOC critics.

**We demand that theatre institutions and commercial producers invest in critic training programs and fellowships for BIPOC critics,**

- With 5% or greater contribution from theatre budgets to allot for this training with BIPOC Critic Training organizations and/or consultants.
- With 15% or greater contribution from prominent press outlets, including The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Time Out NY, The Washington Post, New York Magazine and Chicago Tribune, among others, to allot for this training with BIPOC Critic Training organizations and/or consultants.

**We demand that prominent press outlets divest from salaried positions for critical review and feature writing, and invest in contract-based positions that are filled with at least 50% BIPOC writers,**

- As in the example of The New York Review of Books -- where the perspective of critical review is broadened by its commitment to a roster of rotating contract-based writers.
- Including The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Time Out NY, The Washington Post, New York Magazine, Chicago Tribune and other influential press.

**We demand commercial theatre producers and theatre institutions divest from buying ads in trades that do not have 50% BIPOC feature writers and BIPOC critics.**

- We expect this action to be taken within the timeline of 1.5 years from the release of these demands.
- This includes The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Time Out NY, The Washington Post, New York Magazine, Chicago Tribune and other influential press.





**We demand that theatres invest in independent media run by BIPOC journalists, including**

- Hiring BIPOC marketing and PR agents for all shows (including work featuring BIPOC artists).
- Buying ads in independent BIPOC press outlets and other press that have BIPOC journalists and critics.
- Giving exclusive features to BIPOC journalists and media outlets.

**We demand that BIPOC press be present at ALL artists' work in the theatre (including work featuring BIPOC artists).**

- Recognize that the gaze of the media is disproportionately white and male, and that even non-BIPOC artists are being reduced to this limited lens on their work.
- Pull quotes from BIPOC journalists (and properly credit them for the quote).
- Provide priority and premium seating for BIPOC critics and journalists at ALL shows and productions.
- Provide invitations for BIPOC critics and journalists at ALL opening night performances for Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in the Regions.
- Limit current critics to single tickets and not pairs, thereby opening up the opportunity for more BIPOC media presence at ALL shows.

**We demand the protection and indemnity of all BIPOC journalists and critics who promote accountability of their parent press contractors and employers.**

- There must be no retaliation against BIPOC journalists and writers who stand up for anti-racist practices while holding staff positions at all press institutions.
- There must be no retaliation against BIPOC artists and institutions who stand up and call out racist practices in reviews, features, ads, etc., from all press institutions.
- This includes The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Time Out NY, The Washington Post, New York Magazine, Chicago Tribune and ALL other press engaged in the theatre journalism circuit.

## **ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS**

This final section addresses antiracist protections, BIPOC student enrollment and faculty retention, the decentering of whiteness in curricula and pedagogies, conditions for student productions, and the removal of stereotypical images of Native peoples in institutions of higher learning.

**We demand that anti-racism become an explicit core value.**

- This must become as central to your mission as your standards of excellence.
- Claiming you do 'EDI work' is not enough.



- You cannot erase a history of racist policies and practices with a social media post.
- You must implement a transparent and accountable workplace Code of Conduct that explicitly disavows white supremacy and other racist ideas/ideals.
- Regular Anti-Racism and Ethnocultural Competency Training, along with a transparent system of accountability and regular external auditing/review, must be implemented immediately.
- We will not allow these values to be implicitly or quietly held by you while we suffer out loud and in plain sight.

**We demand regular mandatory universal Anti-Racism Training.**

- This includes Anti-Racism, Implicit Bias, Anti-Oppression and Bystander Training, to be conducted by a qualified, fully vetted specialist.
- The myth of the ‘innocent bystander’ has caused untold harm for BIPOC bodies in your spaces for far too long.
- Every student/employee/volunteer associated with your institution should be properly and regularly trained by a specialist in anti-racism intervention with the requisite tools necessary to address racism/harm when it happens.
- We are tired of being harmed while you sit idly by.

**We demand the formalization of protocols to provide safe structures whereby racist incidents are reported with timely administrative response and a transparent chain of accountability without fear of retaliation or retribution.**

- Transparent enforcement policies around accountability must be created immediately.
- Institutions must regularly submit policies to external audit for assessment, strengthening of efficacy and necessary revision of best practices.
- Internal review boards where faculty/staff can engage with the administration in real time to assess issues of lived racism and strategies to formalize and normalize anti-racism must be created.
- We also demand the furnishing of vetted referrals to qualified, specialized support professionals (e.g. occupational, behavioral or clinical therapists) to provide additional support for BIPOC community members when institutional support limits have been reached.

**We demand the urgent, immediate prioritization of the health & well-being of BIPOC bodies in your space.**

- We demand that all students be provided with a relevant advisor who can properly mentor them from an ethnocultural and artistic perspective.
  - Institutions will furnish outside support if no member of faculty is able to adequately provide guidance to BIPOC student artists.
    - Institutions will also prioritize the recruitment and hiring of qualified staff/faculty to fill any existing gaps in their ability to adequately serve BIPOC students.
  - We demand the creation of policy for regular well-being assessments of BIPOC communities.



- Institutions will provide safe, transparent structures for BIPOC community members to provide assessments/feedback.
  - Special emphasis will be placed on harm reduction.

**We demand sufficient outreach to ensure that BIPOC students comprise the majority of student cohort groups (across all disciplines).**

- This includes using your endowments to ensure that financial need is not a barrier to matriculation.
- We demand that you invest in assembling diverse adjudication panels to administer the recruitment and admissions processes.
- We also demand transparency around the facts, figures and finances of your admission processes.
  - This includes yearly demographic breakdowns on students that have been recruited/auditioned/accepted/enrolled.

**We demand the immediate decentralization of whiteness and the white/Western aesthetic as the default.**

- Assimilation to whiteness is not a learning outcome.
- BIPOC artists should not have their cultures, languages, perspectives and aesthetics stripped from them in order to receive your training.
- We demand the decentralization of whiteness as a ‘default’ in acting, design, directing, management, movement, speech, voice and writing classes.
  - This includes the immediate abolition of coded, racist language in the teaching of those skills that diminishes the artist in training or discourages them from bringing the fullness of themselves to the work.
  - BIPOC students should have their value derived individually and not out of a spirit of tokenism/“model minority” exceptionalism.
- Design students across all disciplines should learn specific design skills for BIPOC bodies.
  - This includes specific curricular space for the care of Black hair in costume design training as well as specific curricular space for lighting of Black bodies on stage and on screen.
    - If no one on your faculty is trained/skilled in these competencies, a guest lecturer will be provided at the expense of the training institution.
      - If no one on your faculty is trained/skilled in these competencies, a sincere good faith effort (with external auditing) must be conducted to identify and hire a member of your permanent full-time faculty with these skills.
- We demand the creation and nurturing of space for BIPOC students to explore the full range of their experience.
  - This includes expanding the idea of BIPOC and specifically Black experience beyond the fetishization of Black and BIPOC trauma.
  - However, proper ethnocultural context and necessary faculty training to equip faculty with tools to address physical manifestations of generational BIPOC trauma must be provided.
- We demand the creation of criteria to explicitly define ‘student success’ without erasure of BIPOC students’ intrinsic ethnocultural expression.



**We demand an audit of your pedagogy to ensure the inclusion of BIPOC writers in the canon.**

- This includes all core teaching texts, not just adding August Wilson to your syllabus and calling it a day.
  - Submit your core texts to an external audit to ensure inclusion of works by BIPOC instructors, writers, and creators.
- We demand the publication of ALL your curricular texts on your website as well as a submission of those texts to a regular external review for feedback on equity.
  - Invest in support of BIPOC instructional writers, dramaturgs and historians.
- We demand that accurate and adequate ethnocultural context must be provided when teaching works outside of the white canon.
  - Provide accurate and adequate supplemental teaching resources (e.g. reading materials, interviews, videos, etc.) to assist in the provision of ethnocultural context
- We demand space for BIPOC faculty to teach non-BIPOC works in order to provide a diverse lens through which white/Western stories are taught.
- We demand the provision of scholarship for visiting BIPOC educators to work with students in order to develop new teaching modalities.
  - BIPOC artists and thinkers have been developing pedagogy around arts education for centuries. You must invest in their research, not just wait for the finished product.

**We demand rigorous dramaturgical investigation and good faith effort of ethnocultural competence when programming student productions.**

- We will no longer squander our years in your training programs learning only to amplify and exalt racist tropes, furthering racialized trauma and driving us out of the art form.
- We demand the creation and nurturing of space in all institutions of learning for BIPOC students to use their instruments, cultures, and histories to the ends that they desire.
  - Create space for BIPOC students to engage with programming processes in accordance with educational needs and desired growth areas.
- We demand the choosing of culturally specific material that reflects the full spectrum of what will be asked of BIPOC students as working artists.
  - This includes the curation of diverse performance expressions for BIPOC students that reach beyond the scope of the reinforcement of racist tropes.
- We demand ethnoculturally responsible decisions in the hiring of guest directors, design staff, stage managers and dramaturgs for student productions.
  - A good faith effort MUST be made not to restrict hiring of BIPOC guest artists to BIPOC plays.
  - Institutions must ensure that guest design staff is adequately trained in working with BIPOC and specifically Black bodies.



- This includes the hiring of design staff with necessary resources to allow BIPOC students to successfully execute performance expectations (e.g. proper makeup, costuming, hair, lighting gels, etc).
- We demand specific training for stage management students and guest stage managers on care for BIPOC bodies.

**We demand culturally appropriate casting of all student productions.**

- This includes the immediate removal of the onus on acting, design, directing, playwriting and stage management students to assist in extra-department casting for BIPOC roles.
- We demand the end of black face, brown face, yellow face, red face and crip face casting, full stop.
- We also demand the provision of equitable funding, engagement and mentorship to support the artistic vision of BIPOC students in every discipline.
  - Institutions will furnish outside support if no member of the faculty is able to adequately provide mentorship for BIPOC students in their discipline.
- We demand support for the artistic vision of actors.
  - They will not be cast in roles that perpetuate cultural stereotypes.
  - They will be cast in multiple leading roles before they graduate.
  - There will be clear, open lines of communication for acting students to advocate for the roles that they best believe will contribute to their growth.
- We demand no BIPOC playwright be forced to cast white actors in roles written for BIPOC performers; acting programs should be diverse enough to reflect the stories of BIPOC playwrights.

**We demand the immediate cessation of BIPOC alums being asked/expected to perform pro bono networking tasks for graduating BIPOC students.**

- If BIPOC alums are being consulted for their networks, or asked to speak to graduating students, that work needs to be equitably compensated.

**We demand the prioritization of recruitment and retention of BIPOC theater faculty in full-time and tenure track positions.**

- The Rooney Rule was never an acceptable equity tactic. (See Working Conditions.)
- A special emphasis will be placed on departments where BIPOC are woefully underrepresented (e.g. design, stage management, dramaturgy, technical design and theater management).
- We demand the prioritization of the hiring of BIPOC staff in administrative roles such as department chairs, advising, and student support.
- We demand transparency around faculty/staff salaries.



**We demand the abolition of the “Adjunct Industrial Complex” that disproportionately perpetuates financial vulnerability amongst BIPOC faculty.**

- Invest in your BIPOC faculty. Provide them with financial stability and healthcare, as well as scholarship, continuing education and clear advancement opportunities.

**We demand the re-evaluation of criteria around “excellence” and “scholarship” to provide specific language in reappointment, promotion, and the tenure process to weigh work at BIPOC organizations and theaters and on BIPOC work as “state of the field”.**

- This includes the creation of specific language that acknowledges BIPOC faculty for mentorship and advocacy work done on behalf of BIPOC students.

**We demand the immediate removal of all Indian mascots in all universities and colleges. These mascots make authentic relationships and healthy learning environments IMPOSSIBLE for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Indigenous theatre students.**

**We demand, without argument, the total banishment of any play that employs racist, stereotypical, harmful and any non-Native created imagery/characters/metaphors of and about American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian or Indigenous peoples from the college and university system.**

- This incredibly harmful practice has practically closed the door on generations of American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Indigenous students from seeing theatre and the performing arts as a viable, inviting or safe career path. This means Peter Pan, too.

**We demand theatre and performing arts programs in Tribal Colleges and Tribal Universities be fully funded, respected, valued, seen and included in every way.**

- Tribal Colleges and Universities have unmatched and special relationships with tribal communities and can reach American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students in ways the rest of the American College system cannot, does not and refuses to.
- We demand authentic and reciprocal partnerships with nearby mainstream colleges.

**Again, this is a living document that does not represent every BIPOC stakeholder, and will be added to or changed by our communities and circumstances. We know that deep listening and genuine collaboration are vital to a truly sustainable, antiracist theatrical ecosystem. We look forward to witnessing your work toward its creation.**



**#WESEEYOU**