



BATS' Equity Action Plan

Summary

This is the BATS plan to address our history of white supremacy and transform into an anti-racist theatre.

Updates

We'll list updates to this page here.

- Version 1 (October 22, 2020): Initial plan

Introduction

At BATS, we are working to transform our theatre into an anti-racist organization. This requires dismantling the white supremacist power structures we've developed over the last thirty-five years.

We're grateful that the authors of the Living Document of BIPOC Experiences in Bay Area Theatre Companies have provided an action plan (at <https://www.bipoclivdoc.com/action-plan>) which has guided our process -- without this work, we would be moving much more slowly than we are.

We are fully committed to meeting all of the demands set out in the action plan. Given the length and complexity of the work involved, we are breaking our process up into three parts, which we explain in detail below. We'll update this page monthly with our progress.

Section A: Work in progress. In this section, we'll describe items from the action plan that are currently underway, along with an expected date of completion for each.

Section B: Work to be planned. In this section, we'll describe the items we intend to tackle next, along with an expected date for graduation to section A.

Section C: Completed work. In this section, we'll describe the ways in which BATS has met the action plan's demands.

As items graduate from Section B to Section A, we'll add new items to Section B, until the entire plan has been accounted for. This allows us to begin moving forward on the most critical items immediately. **We expect to begin implementing all items by the end of 2021.**

Section A: Work in Progress

Publish an Action Plan

Demands addressed:

- Publish a thorough plan of actions marked within a timeline with a commitment to creating an equitable, just, and anti-racist theater
- Acknowledge structures and histories of harm to better inform forward progress

This page serves as our plan. It's also our first step in acknowledging our problematic history. We aim to review it with stakeholders within BATS and the authors of the Living Document **by the end of 2020.**

Section B: Work To Be Planned

The BATS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee consists of diverse representatives from our leadership, school, board, staff and performing company. The committee has selected the following items as the highest priorities for the organization.

As we complete the plans for these items, we'll bring the remaining items from the action plan into this section.

No Tolerance Policy

Demands addressed:

- Create a No Tolerance Policy for harassment, prejudice, and discrimination towards all Black and Brown artists in the space
- End harmful practices, programs, and contracts with individuals with a history of problematic and racist behaviors
- Release Staff Members within the company who have a history of problematic, racist, and prejudiced behaviors.

BATS already has a "Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination Policy" and a Safe Spaces committee tasked with ensuring that all members of our community are protected from

discrimination, but we don't have a process for tracking repeated problematic behavior or enforcing our anti-harassment rules. We've asked our Managing Director to oversee the creation of that process, with the goal of having it fully documented **by the end of 2020**. At that point, we will move this item to section A, with the specific tasks required to implement the new process.

Once the process of enforcing the No Tolerance policy is in place, we'll apply it to the problematic and racist practices and individuals within the organization.

Diverse Company Membership

Demands addressed:

- Diversify content of programming to celebrate under-represented artists
- Produce plays written by 60% BIPOC, queer, trans, womxn of color, non-binary and/or disabled playwrights in season programming
- Commission plays by 60% BIPOC, queer, trans, womxn of color, non-binary and/or disabled local playwrights
- Intentionally recruit, meaningfully include, gainfully employ, and actively support under-represented artists, ranging from content creation to consulting to designing to performing
- Offer Director positions in the company's season to 60% BIPOC, queer, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled artists

BATS shows are completely improvised; we don't employ playwrights. Instead, our shows are all created and directed by the BATS Main Stage Company. This group has very few members in under-represented categories.

We've asked our Artistic Director to propose a plan to bring the BATS Main Stage Company to 60% under-represented membership, with the goal of having the plan accepted by our EDI committee, the company, and the board by **the end of 2020**.

Once we have agreement on the membership plan, we'll graduate this item to Section A with dates for milestones and completion.

Section C: Completed Work

BATS is proud to note that we meet the following demands from the action plan.

Fair Compensation

Demands addressed:

- Abolish unpaid artistic internship program
- Establish a budget that provides equitable artist compensations, at all cost
- Abolish culture of free artistic labor at all cost

- For Non-Union performers: provide a timesheet as a system for equitable hourly wage compensation based on the region's cost of living

At BATS, we strongly believe in compensating artists from our work. All of our artists, including actors, directors, lighting improvisers, and musicians, as well as teaching-artist coaches are provided equitable compensation based on the timesheets they submit twice per month.

Fair Board Participation

Demands addressed:

- Question the Board's Give/Get model that has historically barred participation of the BIPOC community
- Create a system in Board Membership that value means of support beyond Capitalism
- Board Membership should include stakeholders that the organization serves

Our board includes members from all parts of the BATS community (including company members, coaches, staff, and students) and has 60% BIPOC, queer, trans, womxn of color, and/or non-binary representation. We don't ask board members to contribute anything other than their time and expertise.

Anti-racism Training

Demand addressed:

- Provide anti-racist and anti-bias training to all departments annually

BATS has just completed a 4 week training course, which was offered to all members of the performing company, coaches, staff and board covering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion of underrepresented communities. Topics included: Inclusive Language, Privilege, Critical Allyship & Race and Ethnicity, Upstander Intervention & Gender and Sexuality, Dynamics of Oppression & Power structures and Safe and Brave Space Team Development.