

textile museum

OF CANADA

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Plan

Contact us

If you are interested in contributing to the Textile Museum of Canada's current and future work in the area of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), we encourage you to do so. Your voices are vital and we welcome dialogue. Please contact us at:
equity@textilemuseum.ca.

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Available at: textilemuseum.ca/about-the-museum/#annual-reports-plans

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Our Vision

To inspire understanding of the human experience through textiles.

Our Mission

The Textile Museum of Canada ignites creativity, inspires wonder, and sparks conversation and learning through the stories held within our global collection of textiles, and through active engagement with contemporary artistic practices.

Our Mandate

The Textile Museum of Canada connects a global collection of textiles to contemporary creative research and expression, as well as to local, national, and international experiences with textiles at their core. As a national, non-profit, cultural and educational organization, we focus on the exhibition, collection, conservation, and study of textiles. We also produce inclusive public programs that foster awareness of diverse cultural values.

Our Values

WE ARE - Open and inclusive

- We are responsive to our audience and visitors and recognize that they are at the heart of what we do.
- We recognize and celebrate the value of diversity.
- We embrace constructive inquiry and a multiplicity of perspectives.
- We respect the contributions of all individuals and offer an accessible and welcoming environment for visitors, volunteers, members, and staff.

WE ARE - Innovative and agile

- We nurture artistic creativity and research through a range of media and activities.
- We are a strong and reliable partner and believe in the cultivation of collaborative relationships.
- We encourage innovation and risk-taking.

WE ARE - Passionate about excellence

- We practice high museological standards.
- We continually push boundaries and explore new ground.
- We engage community through an accessible and welcoming centre of learning.
- We steward our collection, make smart financial decisions, and continually invest in our future.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which the Textile Museum of Canada operates is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat. It is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Through our activities we seek to create a space for people to share, learn, and celebrate the textile practices of today and long ago in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect.

Introduction

About the process

The Textile Museum of Canada (the Museum) has a long history of work in support of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)—in programming, exhibitions, and education. Examples of this work are available [here](#). In 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement inspired the Museum to undergo an intentional process to build on that history and develop a public plan to articulate a long-term, action-based commitment to EDI. Please see [here](#) for the working definition of “EDI” the Museum is using throughout this document.

To move this work forward, we created two new groups. In June, 2020, we formed the EDI Task Force, a group of staff and board members mandated to help the Museum articulate its EDI principles and outline related goals and initiatives. The Task Force engaged both staff and board members in one-on-one conversations. Participants were asked what EDI meant to them personally, and how they understood EDI in the context of the Museum’s work.

In August, we added the EDI Staff Working Group, which focused on deepening internal knowledge about systemic racism, white supremacy, and social inequalities through shared reading, collecting resource materials, and discussion groups. Both these groups helped us understand our strengths and weaknesses, and conceptualize new ways in which the Museum can promote anti-racism and anti-oppression within the organization.

About the plan

The Museum aspires to be an organization that respects and fosters the dignity, rights, and full participation of all those who engage, work, and learn with us. This includes working to recognize and address systemic racism in our workplace, curatorial, and programming practices. It also includes developing and communicating a clear point of view on issues that impact the cultural sector.

Further, some mainstream museums in Canada are beginning to recognize the need to address the Eurocentric and colonial nature of museum collecting. Our collection is no exception. This plan supports the Museum to explore new modes for collecting, exhibitions, and interpretation that involve new or evolving partnerships and relationships.

More generally, this plan sets out goals, objectives, and accountabilities intended to empower staff, departments, and committees across the Museum to develop and implement their own EDI plans and initiatives. Full support and intentional efforts from the Board of Trustees and the senior leadership team are required to effectively adopt and implement this plan.

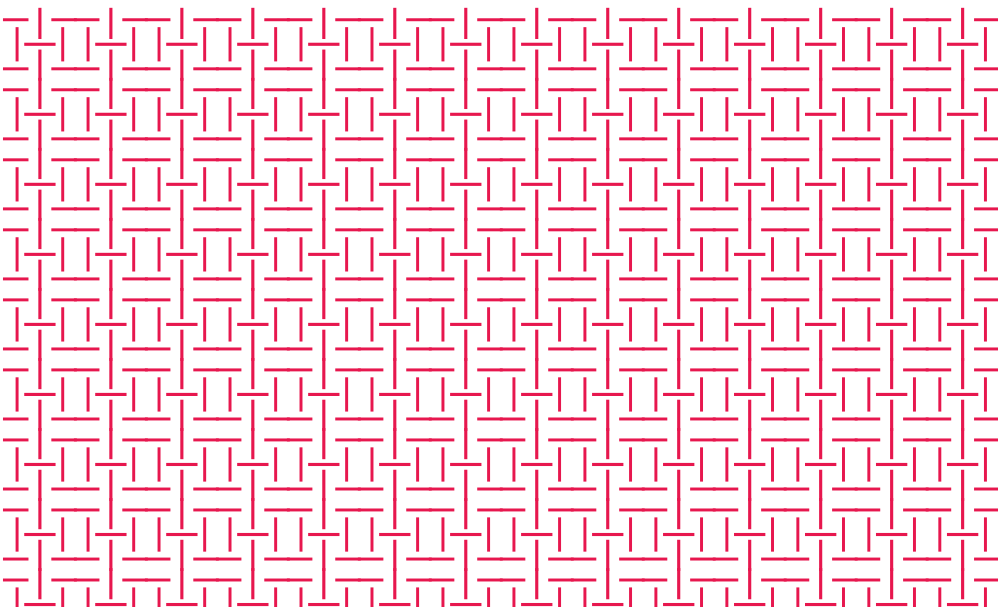
Accountability

Overall accountability for this plan rests with two staff positions: the Director & CEO and the Curatorial Director. On an annual basis, the Board of Trustees will evaluate progress and update the plan as necessary.

Now that the EDI plan is complete, a new, board-designated EDI group will be established, inclusive of board and staff members, to steward next steps.

About this document

This document is intended to provide an overview of the Museum's plans to foster EDI, and is current as of November, 2021. The Museum has also developed a detailed action plan that will be updated over time. For more information about the Museum's EDI plans and work, please contact: equity@textilemuseum.ca.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Plan

This plan is a living document. Some of the work listed is already underway, while other aspects will take time to develop thoughtfully. The Museum will revisit and update this plan on an annual basis.

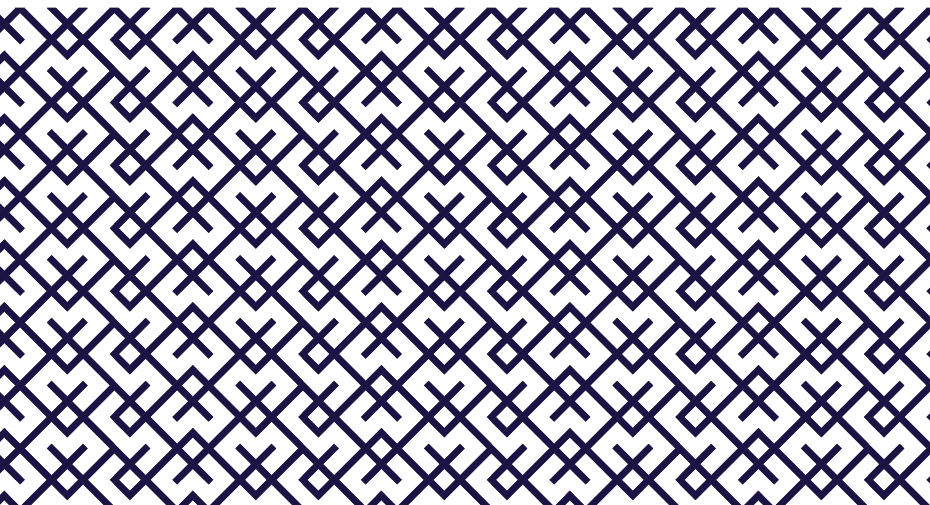
To support the continued development and improvement of the plan, the Museum will track its progress and impacts over time, and develop an in-house glossary of EDI-related terms. We will also put in place internal governance structures to carry this plan forward. As noted above, this will include the creation of a board-designated group specifically tasked with ensuring the objectives in this plan are met. Finally, the Museum will commit ongoing budget resources to EDI initiatives, and work with our funding and philanthropic partners to ensure that this work is sustainable over the long term.

This plan is divided into three, inter-related sections: (1) staff, board, and volunteers; (2) audiences and collaborators; (3) collection, curatorial practices, and Museum spaces. In each section, we discuss what we want to achieve, and the steps we will take to get there.

(1) Staff, board & volunteers

What we want to achieve:

- Staff leadership team and board are diverse, engaged in EDI issues, and accountable for achieving the EDI strategy.
- Staff, board, and volunteers are prepared to work in a diverse environment and have the knowledge and skills to contribute to EDI.
- The Museum's recruitment and renewal processes are transparent and equitable, and result in diverse representation amongst staff, board, and volunteers.
- The workplace environment welcomes and supports discussions about systemic racism, implicit/explicit bias, and white privilege.
- The Museum respects the contributions of all individuals, and offers an accessible and welcoming environment for staff and volunteers.
- The Museum's EDI principles are reflected in our core organizational structures, policies, systems, and practices.



What we will do to get there:

- Invest in annual anti-oppression and anti-racism training for staff, volunteers, and board members, and conflict resolution training for staff and volunteers.
- Develop an Employment Equity Policy and a Board Succession Policy that demonstrate the Museum's dedication to removing all systemic barriers, eliminating discrimination and harassment, and promoting equity.
- Review relevant policies and procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion, and retention of all staff, volunteers, and board members to explicitly incorporate structures and steps to support our EDI principles.
- Pursue active processes to ensure that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) are in leadership positions on staff and at the board and committee level.
- Ensure the Museum's onboarding process and documentation for new staff and volunteers states our values, policies, and commitment to EDI principles.
- Implement a staff evaluation framework that includes a focus on advancing EDI principles. This includes annual performance reviews, and ongoing efforts to share the channels through which staff can voice concerns and ask questions about EDI.
- Improve communications and interactions across the Museum. This includes quarterly social events and the development of an internal mentorship program.
- Ensure that the Museum's dedication to EDI guides the evolution of the volunteer program. This includes the development and implementation of an annual program review process and an agreement between staff and volunteers to guide the program.

(2) Audiences and collaborators

What we want to achieve:

- The Museum has deepened connections and relationships with our audiences and collaborators and offers inclusive and welcoming exchanges that reflect EDI principles.
- The Museum has expanded community outreach and built sustained trust and relationships with new and existing audiences.
- The Museum's programs for children, youth, and adults are co-created with cultural, social, and educational institutions, address barriers to access, and build trust with the community.
- The Museum is collaborating with cultural, social, and educational institutions to foster EDI within the cultural sector.
- Procurement and gift shop practices reflect the Museum's commitment to EDI.
- Philanthropic partners reflect the Museum's commitment to EDI.

What we will do to get there:

Gathering input

- Conduct EDI-focused stakeholder consultations to better understand external perceptions, and gather input to apply to future iterations of the Museum's EDI plan.
- Implement a process to collect and analyze participant feedback from program delivery to understand EDI-related concerns or issues.

Connections with audiences

- Secure funding to hire a community engagement specialist to help us better engage new audiences.
- Formalize a mentorship program that creates networks and opportunities for diverse and underrepresented artists, curators, students, and advisory partners.
- Partner with neighbouring civic, educational, and commercial organizations to co-create programs and/or engagement opportunities for adult learners.
- Partner with teachers, schools, and educationalists to co-create learning opportunities for young people at sites such as libraries, community centres, and schools, with a focus on underserved areas.
- Build relationships in unexpected and/or underserved places in the wider community.
- Develop marketing and communication strategies to build sustained relationships with diverse new audiences.

Connections with collaborators

- Steward and sustain relationships with programmers, exhibiting artists, and program participants to ensure meaningful, long-term engagement that builds diversity within our stakeholder groups.
- Initiate conversations with partner museums to explore opportunities for shared EDI initiatives designed to explore specific themes through the lens of each host organization.
- Actively engage with conversations and scholarship related to evolving practices of museology, including how they influence and shape the Museum's EDI foci.
- Leverage the digitization of our collection to connect to other museum collections and other textile-specific organizations globally to increase accessibility, perspectives, and understanding.
- Develop a purchasing and marketing policy for the Museum Shop to align with EDI principles, and engage partnerships with diverse vendors, BIPOC artists, NGOs, and social enterprises.
- Develop a policy for commercial business partners, suppliers, vendors, and philanthropic partners to ensure they align with the Museum's commitment to EDI.

(3) Collection, curatorial practices & Museum spaces

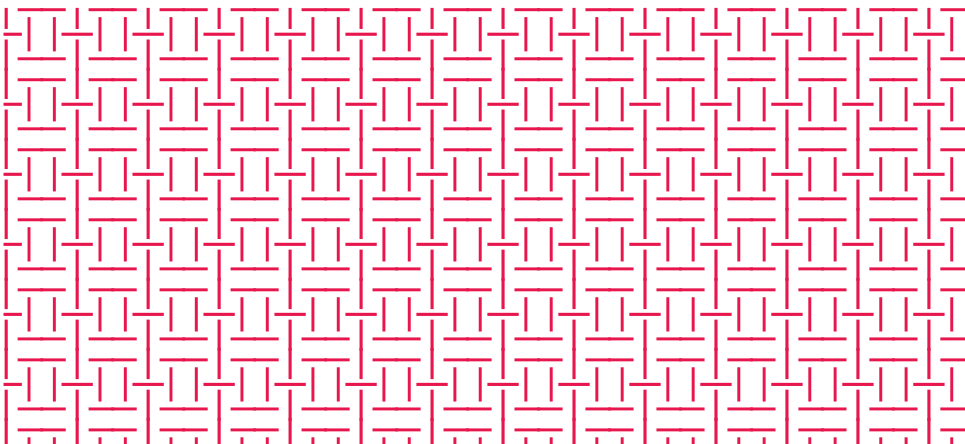
What we want to achieve:

- Collection, collecting, and exhibition practices are inclusive, accessible, and inspired by a wide range of people, cultures, and traditions.
- The care, display, and storage of culturally-sensitive materials is managed in consultation with originating communities.
- An expanded and diversified group of community members engages with the Museum on the evolution of the Collection Development Plan.
- BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, and marginalized artists, curators, and makers:
 - Activate and interpret collection objects and contribute towards how work is showcased, both virtually and physically.
 - Are well-represented in and have access to programming, exhibitions, and learning opportunities.
- The Museum is recognized for its best practices in accessibility.

What we will do to get there:

The collection

- Engage in an open and transparent review of the collection and its historical development and share deliberately with the public.
- Develop and implement a Collection Development Plan guided by research into the collection's historical development, examination of previous collecting practices, and input from community advisors.
- Prioritize the increased representation of BIPOC communities in the collection, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve.
- With input from community advisors, identify objects in the collection that are deemed culturally sensitive due to their acquisition history and/or cultural and spiritual value, and work to determine responsive, appropriate next steps.
- Re-examine and update language, structures, and standards in the collection database, aiming for greater inclusion.



Curatorial practices

- Secure funding to establish an annual BIPOC Curator-in-Residence program.
- Present new models of interpretation and engagement with textiles from the collection, foregrounding the active participation of the diverse communities from which these textiles originate.
- Present exhibitions, programs, and digital content that connect to current events and issues that impact people's lives.
- Continue to engage with guest curators and programming partners to diversify program content, connect to new audiences, and build sustainable pathways to community engagement.

Access to Museum spaces & collection

- Expand collection access through digital initiatives, social media, and offsite displays.
- Secure funding to offer additional "free admission" hours to the Museum.
- Conduct a universal design audit of the Museum's physical spaces and website accessibility to inform a plan to improve access.
- Train staff and volunteers in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code related to persons with disabilities.
- Review Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance and set targets for reaching AODA goals.

