

# A Commitment to Positive Change: BPP's Anti-Racism Policy and Path Forward

2020-10-12

At BPP we strive to be open, inclusive, and diverse in regards to race, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, and the intersection of those and other identities. We acknowledge that we can do better, that our work is an ongoing process. Without diminishing our other responsibilities towards inclusion and diversity, this document focuses on the need to raise our ambitions from being non-discriminatory in regards to race to playing our part in an anti-racist effort to deconstruct centuries of systemic racism towards Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

We are committed to having BIPOC stories on our stage and BIPOC people represented in our artists, staff, and board. Specific steps we are taking to follow this path:

- We commit to establishing consistent, meaningful, long-term conversations and relationships with BIPOC artists and groups in our community. Through these relationships we will ensure a diverse pool of candidates for casting, open staff positions, and our board.
- We commit to having the majority of roles in our 2020-21 and future seasons such that they are open to actors of all races and ethnicities, allowing for diversity in our casting. In plays where race is not dictated by the needs of the script, artists of all race and ethnicity will continue to be considered for all roles. For plays where race is dictated by the script, we will continue to be conscious of casting correctly.
- We commit to having at least one BIPOC playwright and at least one BIPOC director in our 2020-21 and future seasons in order to elevate the stories of BIPOC communities, attract BIPOC actors and other artists.
- We commit to establishing and publishing an anti-racism policy by the end of 2020 to help ensure that BIPOC people entering our space feel welcome. Full policies will be made available to all board, staff, and independent contractors.
- We commit to continuing our education on how we as a organization can advance being anti-racist. This education includes the conversations and other activities described in this policy, as well as dedicated time each year as a Board and senior staff.

- We commit that all executive leadership hires and structural leadership changes will occur through an equitable and transparent process to ensure that BIPOC people choosing to work with us find a rewarding career path.
- We commit to improving the diversity of our Board. We acknowledge that the racial diversity on our board is not representative of our local community and we understand that our board diversity needs to be more than tokenism. Through our ongoing work to diversify our staff, artists, and art we hope that our audience and stakeholders will also become more diverse, and that we will be able to authentically diversify our board leadership. To remove potential barriers to this end, we commit to abstaining from any mandatory financial minimum gifts for board membership.
- Our Anti-racism Advisory Committee has already helped us greatly by providing a means for us to hear the voices of BIPOC people. We commit to maintain this committee as a valuable means of hearing the voices of BIPOC people who are not part of our Board, staff, orcast.

## Acknowledgments

- We thank the members of the BPP Anti-racism Advisory Committee for their generous guidance: Gladys DeVane, John McCluskey, and Val Haughton.
- The Open Book Theater Company's "[A Commitment to Change: OBTC's Anti-Racist Policy](#)" was used as a model for this document.