

GOODMAN THEATRE

ACTION PLAN FOR INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM, ACCESS (IDEAA)

Creating a culture of opportunity for all—on stage and off—at Goodman Theatre

A LIVING DOCUMENT | AS OF JANUARY 31, 2021

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OVERVIEW

Goodman Theatre, “Chicago’s Theater since 1925,” is a not-for-profit arts and civic institution known for the quality of our productions, the depth and diversity of our artistic vision, and our commitment to community. At our core is the community of artists, artisans and craftspeople who bring life to the classic revivals, large-scale musicals and new plays on our stages. Supported by Goodman’s dedicated staff, passionate boards and committed volunteers, we are an organization that believes in the power of theater to instigate, educate and entertain.

As we at Goodman Theatre consider how we might contribute to the building of a more just, equitable and anti-racist American society, we must reckon with that which divides us. Systemic racism, societal prejudices and the entrenched inequalities of our legal system impact and affect everyone who enters our theater. To fully live our values, we must assess our own role in the lack of progress towards equity and justice; identify, disrupt and dismantle systems that no longer (or never served) us; and construct new processes and policies that advance our mission.

Our vision of a better future must first acknowledge what has brought us to this moment—including the salient historical milestones over the Goodman’s 40-year+ evolution as an arts and civic organization committed to quality, diversity and our Chicago community. Historically, diverse artistry on our stages—beginning in 1978 with Richard Wright’s *Native Son* starring Meshach Taylor through the 2000s with our biennial Latino Theatre Festival and continuing today, with inclusive casting in our annual *A Christmas Carol*—has helped open doors to our community, led to greater inclusivity and established the Goodman as the first major not-for-profit theater in Chicago. View our full [history](#), including our mission and commitments.

But we recognize that we must also continue to unpack our history as a predominantly white institution situated on [stolen lands](#), and actively work to dismantle systems that have kept us so. Greater representation of people of color in every aspect of our organization—from the artists on stage and behind the scenes, to our boards and among our staff—will help enact new systems that enable a better future for all. To do this work and promote social justice, we will work to examine our own institutional processes and root out any signs of systemic racism. We must speak up when we encounter all of racism’s expressions—from the visible acts of cruelty and injustice to the less visible micro-aggressions and manifestations of implicit bias—and confront our own prejudices. We are committed to justice not as a word, but as a value we practice through our actions. We will continue to learn through this process and we will make mistakes; but we endeavor to be proactive, listen and course-correct.

We would be remiss to proceed without acknowledging the times. The COVID-19 pandemic decimated our industry in 2020—halting production in our theaters, closing our partner

organizations, and effectively shutting down life as we knew it. Though it's not yet possible to measure the long-range impact, its damage to the American theater is significant and, in some circumstances, potentially irreparable. At the same time, the televised murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis—watched by millions, as we sat in our homes—focused our attention on the pestilential pandemic of racism that has plagued this country since slavery, and triggered racial justice activism around the world. The unending incidences of murders of Black and Brown people by police, along with the virus' disproportionate impact on Black and Brown communities, exposed the long-standing racial inequities in all aspects of American life. Including the American Theater.

We at Goodman Theatre chart our future course through the following living document—our **Action Plan for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism and Access (IDEAA)**. As we move through this process, we invite, welcome and center Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and all marginalized and underrepresented voices in conversations in a way that does not ask them to educate their white colleagues. The IDEAA Action Plan is the result of a six-month collaborative effort involving individuals at every level of our organization—artists, staff, leadership and boards. Key to our process has been the Goodman Staff Committee, a three-year-old body of representatives of departments theaterwide. The collective ideas, resources, diligence and dedication of the Goodman Staff coalesce as the foundation of our IDEAA Action Plan, which centers on the following four “cornerstone” areas of focus and goals:

Policy

We will work to revise and establish institutional policies in order to ensure a safe and respectful environment; break the traditional barriers of participation; and enact equitable practices for all who engage with our organization.

Programming

We will review our artistic priorities—as demonstrated in the plays we produce, the artists we champion, the works we develop and Education and Engagement programs we offer—and ensure that BIPOC voices are centered in all creative endeavors going forward, both in new opportunities as well as in our ongoing/established efforts.

Communication

We are committed to creating new opportunities for partnership, mentorship and stewardship through revision of our internal and external communication processes. Along the way, we will work to establish a safe channel for honest dialogue with leadership.

Research and Assessment

We will invest in creating a more equitable American theater by examining our internal systems with industry professionals who will help us analyze, measure and track our goals with our action plan.

A six-person cross-departmental writing team has drafted these actions into the IDEAA Action Plan, including: Marissa Ford (Associate Managing Director); Ken-Matt Martin (Associate Producer); Amber Porter (Production Coordinator); Denise Schneider (Director of Communications); Amy Szerlong (Manager of Institutional Giving); and Willa J. Taylor (Walter Director of Education and Engagement).

We express our appreciation for the diligence of our industry peers, whose work has helped to raise collective consciousness. In particular, [We See You, White American Theater](#) (a collective of BIPOC theater makers); [Design Action](#) (a consortium of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander and White theater designers committed to creating a more equitable future for emerging and early-career BIPOC artists); and [Ten Chimneys Foundation](#) (which has curated ongoing topical discussions among American theater practitioners). In the following living document, we will continue to acknowledge groups and individuals whose contributions help light the way.

As we progress, we evolve.

IDEAA STATEMENT

We at Goodman Theatre are storytellers who believe that a diversity of people, ideas and cultures in our organization enriches both the art on stage and our civic engagement. In our workplace, we strive to reflect the communities we serve, and make space in which each individual is empowered to bring their full, authentic self to work. The Goodman values equity, diversity and inclusion and is committed to approaching our work through the practice of anti-racism. We acknowledge that underrepresented identities have not always been welcomed by the theater industry, but recognize that our individual intersectional identities bring vibrancy to our work and must be championed. The inclusion of difference(s) such as ability, age, background, beliefs, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and all other identities represented across staff, board, artists and audiences help make us better equipped to live these values—on stage and off.

GOODMAN EQUITY LEADERSHIP GROUP

Acknowledging that each individual at Goodman Theatre plays a role and shares the responsibility of, and commitment to, IDEAA, we enter this work as a collective, organized and executed by the newly formed “Goodman Equity Leadership Group.” The Leadership Group is inclusive of individuals across departments and at every level within the organization; it involves the following components:

Board IDEAA Committee

Co-chaired by Past Chair and Life Trustee Les Coney, Trustee Rebecca Ford and Trustee Jill B. Smart, this group includes representation across three entities—the Goodman Board of Trustees (including Chair Jeff Hesse, President Maria Wynne and Trustee Julie Danis; the Women’s Board (including President Fran Del Boca and Member Jackie Robinson); Scenemakers Council (including President Meghan McCarthy Hayes and Member Veronica Appleton); and staff (including Executive Director Roche Schulfer, Resident Director Chuck Smith, Managing Director John

Collins, Associate Managing Director Marissa Ford and Resident Artistic Associate Henry Godinez).

Meet our [Board of Trustees](#), [Women's Board](#) and [Scenemakers Board](#).

Senior Leadership Team

Representatives of this group include heads of departments and/or leaders of integral areas of the theater who counsel the Staff Committee and help prioritize resources to advance IDEAA initiatives.

This body includes Robert Falls (Artistic Director); Roche Schulfer (Executive Director); Adam Belcuore (Managing Producer); John Collins (Managing Director); Scott Conn (Production Manager); Jay Corsi (Director of Marketing); Marissa Ford (Associate Managing Director); Dorlisa Martin (Director of Development); Denise Schneider (Director of Communications); Willa J. Taylor (Walter Director of Education and Engagement); and Lewis Warrick (Director of Finance & Administration).

Staff Committee

An advisory group for the Senior Leadership Team, the Staff Committee includes representatives of each department within the theater who help prioritize needs of the Goodman Staff, and the organization as a whole, as they work to advance IDEAA initiatives.

This body includes: Jodi Brown and Ashley Klingler (Administration); Julie Massey and Neena Arndt (Artistic); Rachael Swann (Box Office); Delaney Sterling and Mishari Zambrano (Development); Adrian Azevedo and Sam Mauceri (Education and Engagement); Patrick Feder and Miguel Melecio (Facilities); Demi Smith (Front-of-House/Events); Cecily Pincsak, Gavin Damore and Mary Alex Nosek (Marketing/Communications); Shari Eklof (Outbound Sales); Madeleine Borg and Amber Porter (Production); Eileen Clancy, Emily Robertson, Liz Taylor and Yvette Wesley (Costumes); Jason Rea and Sherry Simpson (Electrics); Chris Kolz (Props); Jess Hill and Vanessa Thomas (Run Staff); Krissy Cralle and Michael Frohbieter (Scenery); Bradford Chapin (Sound); Briana Fahey (Stage Management)

Individual Staff Members

Individual contributions make holistic progress. As the onus of IDEAA work is on us all, every Goodman Theatre staff member is invited to join a Cornerstone Task Force of their choice.

Get to know our staff [here](#).

FOUR CORNERSTONES OF ACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

POLICY | PROGRAMMING | COMMUNICATION | RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

The following section seeks to be a real-time, ongoing reflection of our process and progress, in order for our community to help hold us accountable for our actions. In the spirit of transparency, we are committed to issuing quarterly updates to help facilitate ongoing dialogue with our community partners.

A “Cornerstone Task Force” (CTF) leads efforts within each of the four action areas. This hybrid entity of Staff Committee members and Goodman Staff works to fully excavate specific areas of the IDEAA work and execute special projects. Any staff member is welcome to join. CTF leadership may evolve to include a rotating chair position, as well as an IDEAA Deputy. The CTF will contribute to the creation of a shared resource center designed to be accessible by staff theaterwide.

Please direct questions to IDEAA@GoodmanTheatre.org.

POLICY

Goal: We will work to revise and establish institutional policies in order to ensure a safe and respectful environment; break the traditional barriers of participation; and enact equitable practices for all who engage with our organization.

Throughout its history, the Goodman has dedicated itself to the guiding principles of Quality, Diversity and Community. Now, we further these principles by deepening our commitment to Anti-racism, Inclusion, Equity and Access, as well as ensuring that these values are integral to institutional policies and procedures. With a goal of ensuring a safe, respectful work environment for all, this cornerstone revises old and implements new guidelines to move the Goodman past a stated commitment and into a lived reality.

<i>ACTION:</i>	Create an IDEAA Committee of Goodman Theatre Boards
<i>Description:</i>	Committee has convened to help form this IDEAA Action Plan. They will meet quarterly with the Staff Committee towards aligning strategy to achieve goals. The IDEAA Board Committee will use the upcoming quarter to focus on its goals and commitments, including, but not limited to, developing a succession plan inspired by work with the Ten Chimneys Foundation; auditing the Goodman’s current Human Resources policies; scheduling and participating in anti-racist training in conjunction with the Goodman Equity Leadership Group; and how they as a board will work to become an anti-racist entity. See <i>Goodman Equity Leadership Group</i> .
<i>Status:</i>	Established and ongoing
<i>ACTION:</i>	Establish a senior level director position dedicated to HR, diversity and inclusion
<i>Description:</i>	Restore and modify our currently vacant HR staff position. This position deepens the work already in place through addressing issues

of leadership development, management training, employee relations, performance management, onboarding, succession planning and more.

Status: Finalizing position description; to post soon

ACTION: **Establish a “Community Agreement” for all who enter the Goodman**
Description: The current working draft of this code of conduct appears below. As it’s finalized, we will take steps to ensure that our front-line staff (Front-of-House, Patron Relations, Ticket Services and Facilities personnel, among others) are trained and empowered to respond. This Community Agreement applies to all who enter and/or interact with the theater; it will be displayed on-site as well as on our virtual platforms.

COMMUNITY AGREEMENT (*draft*)

As a cultural leader in Chicago, Goodman Theatre values equity, diversity and inclusion, and is committed to infusing these ideals into every aspect of our operations. We recognize that our individual intersectional identities represented across staff, board, artists and audiences bring vibrancy to our work and help make us better equipped to reflect our world—both on stage and off.

To that end, Goodman Theatre welcomes patrons, guests, artists, and community members of all abilities, ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender expressions, races, sexual orientations, socio-economic statuses and all other identities, and makes a commitment to provide a safe and respectful space for all who join us.

We commit to providing a clean, secure and welcoming facility; and a safe, encouraging environment for all people.

To meet these commitments, we will maintain standards and guidelines for all employees, contractors, personnel and patrons.

We welcome you to the Goodman, and ask that you join us in enacting these values. Behavior that is not in accordance with the values stated will not be tolerated. If you witness or experience such actions, please speak to management or email code@goodmantheatre.org

Status: Drafted; under review

ACTION: **Make hiring and compensation practices transparent**
Description: The Goodman commits to equitable practices and transparency for the hiring and compensation of our artists and staff. Though we are unable to hire for most positions during the pandemic, we will take this time to review our job postings, standardize language, commit to salary/wage transparency for all future postings and ensure that our interview processes are equitable and anti-racist.

Status: Reviewing current policies

ACTION: **Implement estate and financial planning for all staff**
Description: Create opportunities for employees to understand and utilize financial organization and security.

Status: Exploring connections within our Board of Trustees; action will be initiated with HR Director hire

ACTION: **Establish a Goodman Theatre “Day of Service”**
Description: The goal of a Day of Service is to encourage staff volunteerism. In addition, we intend to commit, as a staff, to at least one day of service to organizations that give back to the communities we serve.

Status: Identifying partner affinity organizations (those with whom we are alike in mission, values or purpose)

ACTION: **Share IDEAA Action Plan with our Union partners**
Description: Discussions with all of our union partners (IATSE/USA/AEA/etc.) regarding their Anti-Racism practice, policy and training for their members is essential to ensure that all staff and artists are working toward an equitable and anti-racist American society.

Status: Communication is underway

ACTION: **Conduct holistic assessment of all talent development programs (Maggio Fellowship, Fellows, Apprentices, Interns, etc.)**
Description: Audit our existing talent development programs to ensure equitable access, standardize on-boarding/out-boarding procedures and training opportunities to assure optimal experiences for all participants.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; applications will open when in-person work resumes.

ACTION: **Review our paid holiday policies towards inclusivity**
Description: We are auditing our paid holiday policies, which currently include eight holidays plus two floating holidays for full-time staff, and will consider ways to acknowledge additional religious and civic holidays beyond those already observed. The Goodman will add and acknowledge Juneteenth as a paid holiday for all full-time staff, and will encourage participation in learning, service and/or activism on this day.

Status: Under review

ACTION: **Offer Affinity Group participation for all under Goodman employ**
Description: In August 2020, the Goodman introduced the following Affinity Groups for all staff participation (contact: Briana Fahey, secondary contact: Madeleine Borg)—

- BIPOC
- Black Affinity Group/Space
- Disability Affinity Group
- Femme/Women Affinity Group

- Jewish Affinity Group
- Latinx Affinity Group
- LGBTQIA Affinity Group
- Parent Affinity Group

An initial virtual meeting was scheduled with interested staff, during which a representative/contact from the Group was chosen. Each Group created a working agreement and discussed the purpose of the Group. The Groups all have access to Goodman’s Teams account for their regular virtual meetings. In the future, we will work to ensure that new hires as well as any artists joining us for productions will receive information regarding the Affinity Groups, with directions on how to join if they are interested.

At the Goodman, upon the creation of these Affinity Groups, we recognize it is imperative to create a structure that enables dissemination of information, achievable goals, removal of organizational power structures and timely meetings and functions for the best use of the group. All Affinity Groups will be supported financially within the organization, allowing for funding to create and support the work of the group within and outside of the organization.

Resources:

Defining Affinity Groups: An Affinity Group is typically characterized by individuals forming around a common identity such as gender, sexual orientation, or race. The basis of an Affinity Group is to foster a ‘for us, by us’ experience that offers an antidote to being "the other", "the outsider" or “the problem”.

Reasons for Affinity Groups: Affinity groups are commonly used in the business world, activist communities within the political structure, and within academia. Affinity Groups allow those who have been historically excluded or targeted due to systematic racism to create communities of support for themselves that prioritize their needs. Affinity Groups oftentimes allow for and should include networking, team-building, and allowing space for professional growth.

Status:

Established and ongoing

ACTION:

Increase BIPOC Board representation to 20% by 2022

Description:

The Goodman has worked to maintain a Board that is inclusive. At the same time, we recognize that there is more work we must do towards a board that is reflective of our community. Our current BIPOC Board of Trustees representation is 15%. Over the next two years, we plan to increase BIPOC representation on the Board of Trustees to 20%, working to engage 7-8 new BIPOC Board Members over that time. Candidates will include BIPOC corporate and civic leaders as well as artistic voices. The Goodman understands, however, that such growth

must be fostered through organic relationship-building in order to be sustainable; we will keep that in mind as we work toward that goal.

Current BIPOC representation on the Women’s Board is 12% and the Scenemakers Board is 28%. Both of these boards will work to identify their targets for increasing representation in the coming year as well.

Of course, our work continues towards growing BIPOC representation and representation from all marginalized/underrepresented groups—including members who identify as disabled and/or LGBTQIA+—across all three Boards in the years to come.

Status: The Nominating Process is ongoing, with plans for the Nominating and IDEAA Committees to collaborate on Board recruitment in the years ahead

PROGRAMMING

GOAL: We will review our artistic priorities—as demonstrated in the plays we produce, the artists we champion, the works we develop, and Education and Engagement programs we offer—and ensure that BIPOC voices are centered in all creative endeavors going forward, both in new opportunities as well as in our ongoing/established efforts.

As a leader in the American Theater, it is incumbent upon us to contribute to the future of our industry with great plays from a range of dramatic voices. We strive to live our core values of Quality, Diversity and Community in the productions on our stages—as well as in our Education and Engagement programming, which stems from that work.

ACTION: **Develop a new play series that decentralizes the white gaze.**
Description: *Future Labs* joins the Goodman’s fleet of programs as our newest effort to support living writers and develop new plays (including *New Stages*, Playwrights Unit and individual artist commissions). *Future Labs* seeks bold, imaginative works from Chicago-based Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander and other playwrights of color to be workshopped and presented, led by artists of color (including directors). Furthermore, a unique Staff Evaluation Team, representing all departments and prioritizing staff members of color, reviews all submissions and selects the plays to be developed.

Status: Accepting submissions; begins January 2021

Resources: GoodmanTheatre.org/FutureLabs

ACTION: **Invest in and honor Black theater-makers and practitioners beyond playwrights, directors and actors.**

Description: We acknowledge the inequities within our society and our industry, and know that our Black colleagues often suffer the largest financial challenges, as well as the most limited opportunities. In honor of our longtime Resident Director, Chuck Smith, whose artistry and advocacy

have broken barriers and built bridges, we create the “Chuck Smith Awards.” These awards intend to honor and provide support to Black theater-makers—including, but not limited to, designers, composers, choreographers, dramaturgs and administrators—through direct grants and peer-to-peer mentoring opportunities. Recipients will be peer-nominated and selected by an all-Black selection committee.

Status: Details forthcoming

ACTION: Implement a more active recruitment process for BIPOC candidates for the Maggio Fellowship

Description: Goodman Theatre established our longest-running director mentorship opportunity—the annual Michael Maggio Fellowship—in 2000 in memory of our Associate Director and his commitment to nurturing young artists. Awarded annually in the fall, this stipend-based Fellowship offers an early-career Chicago-based director the opportunity to assist on a Goodman production and become involved in the Goodman’s ongoing artistic life. We will engage in more robust recruitment of BIPOC candidates and improve our process by reforming the selection committee structure for this 20-year-old program.

Resources: Improved Maggio Fellow selection process:

- The Maggio Fellowship selection committee will be newly assembled each year.
- We will create an inclusive committee comprised of Artistic Collective Members, a former Maggio Fellow and an additional outside perspective.
- We will announce the committee prior to opening applications.
- The Selection Committee will review applications, conduct interviews and determine at least three finalists.
- Final selection will be determined by Robert Falls, Adam Belcuore and Ken-Matt Martin in conversation with the Selection Committee.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; applications will open when in-person work resumes

ACTION: Diversify our creative teams towards more inclusive representation of BIPOC practitioners.

Description: We are committed to increasing inclusivity on every project through assembling creative teams including (but not limited to) directors, designers, choreographers, music directors, dramaturgs and consultants. We also acknowledge our colleagues and collaborators of Design Action (a consortium of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islander, and White theater designers, committed to creating a more equitable future for emerging and early-career BIPOC artists) and embrace their five points of advocacy; Equitable Representation, Harm Reduction, Anti-Racist Codes of Conduct, Cultural Competency and BIPOC Advocacy. The Goodman will develop a written set of expectations, goals and priorities regarding representation and inclusion for directors in terms of casting and hiring design teams. These expectations, which will be clarified as a condition of hiring, will also be shared with others on the production who seek support staff.

Status: Under review; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Increase BIPOC participation in the Playwrights Unit**
Description: The 10-year-old Goodman Playwrights Unit (PWU) was created for Chicago-based writers and designed to support the idea of “resident playwrights” at the Goodman.

The Goodman has commissioned 45 new plays from the PWU; of those, eight have gone on to the *New Stages* Festival (as either workshop productions or readings) and of those, two have made their world premiere at the Goodman. Beyond those eight writers, we have also produced later plays from three writers, with whom we first worked through the PWU. This program has seen BIPOC representation in 47% of its writers. In examining this program’s past, as well as the past decade of Goodman productions, we set our goal at 55-60% BIPOC artist representation in five years and each subsequent year into the future.

Resources: <http://www.onstage.goodmantheatre.org/2020/09/28/2020-2021-playwrights-unit/>

Status: Applications for four (4) positions open Spring 2021

ACTION: **Hire an Intimacy and Violence Consultant who is trained in anti-racism, to be present for the entire rehearsal process.**

Description: The Goodman acknowledges the need for a professionally trained consultant/staff member in the areas of stage combat and intimacy design, when scene work necessitates it, in order that artists feel safe on and off stage.

Status: To begin when in-person work resumes

EDUCATION

ACTION: **Connect early-career BIPOC artists with industry professionals.**
Description: Based on current citywide intern mix-and-learn sessions, establish a new series of networking/mixer opportunities for BIPOC artists. Mixers will be developed with an eye towards continued engagement of previous Maggio Fellows (MF), Playwrights Unit (PWU) members and other Fellows and Interns. Virtual discussions with MF and PWU alumni launch the effort to introduce prospective participants to the programs.
Status: Accepting ideas; the first program takes place (virtually) Winter/Spring 2021

ACTION: **Expand access to Student Programs**
Description: Redesign Goodman Youth Arts Council and Cindy Bandle Young Critics programs to hybrid (online/in-person) models to eliminate barriers to participation.
Status: Details forthcoming; target launch in Fall 2021

ACTION: **Expand portfolio of online Teacher professional development workshops.**
Description: Develop portfolio of asynchronous and virtual workshops for teacher professional development to expand access to our teacher training and non-School Matinee Series educators.
Status: Details forthcoming; target launch in Fall 2021

ACTION: **Increase Spanish-language classroom resources for Students.**
Description: Expand Spanish-language materials and resources to be incorporated into all School Matinee Series study guides and online assets.
Status: Details forthcoming; target launch in Fall 2021

ACTION: **Build Professional Development opportunities for current Staff**
Description: Create internal professional development and training opportunities for current staff to increase their knowledge of the organization, hone their technical skills and prepare them for advancement both within the Goodman and within the larger theatrical community.
Status: First training sessions to begin Winter/Spring 2021

ENGAGEMENT

ACTION: **Develop new entry points to a more economically, culturally and racially diverse workforce**
Description: We recognize that the traditional pipeline through higher education excludes many individuals. We aim to create an ease-of-access portal for resume submission—even if a specific position is unavailable. This effort works towards expanding our workforce development, apprenticeship and internship programs to increase pathways for

Status: BIPOC and other marginalized/underrepresented communities into theater and creative careers.
Policy review and related work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task force (CTF)

ACTION: **Re-establish “Criticism in America” Boot Camp**
Description: Held in 2017, the Criticism in America boot camp was designed to increase and encourage more BIPOC Chicago writers to enter the predominantly white cultural criticism field.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Expand the quantity, breadth and reach of our Access Programs.**
Description: Goodman Theatre currently provides accessibility services and a dedicated Accessibility/Ability Committee that is proactively researching new pathways to increase awareness of these programs and invest in building those audiences.

Status: Established and ongoing.

Resources: For a full list of our accessibility services, visit <https://www.goodmantheatre.org/tickets/accessibility/>

COMMUNICATION

GOAL: We are committed to creating new opportunities for partnership, mentorship and stewardship through revision of our internal and external communication processes. Along the way, we will work to establish a safe channel for honest dialogue with leadership.

This cornerstone addresses how we can better connect with a variety of storytellers—as well as with those who might benefit most from seeing themselves on stage. In addition, we explore how we might democratize internal communication, given the varying levels of digital acumen staff wide, as well as the reality that many theater jobs involve little digital activity. Eliminating barriers to arts participation—both for those who create and for those who consume the work—will help further our art form as a not-for-profit arts and community organization whose programming seeks to reflect its city.

ACTION: **Deepen existing relationships with BIPOC community leaders, arts organizations and kindle authentic new connections**

Description: The Goodman maintains these relationships across different departments including, but not limited to, Education and Engagement, Development and Marketing/Communications. This action involves ascertaining the ways each department cultivates these relationships in order that we might expand on them.

Status: Ongoing; often project-based, work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Foster deeper connection and conversation with audiences**

Description: Though the circumstances of COVID-19 prevent us from opening our Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement, we are working to facilitate virtual programming that better tells our story as “Chicago’s Theater Since 1925” and communicates our efforts as a not-for-profit arts and civic organization.

Status: Digital efforts are ongoing; in-person work is paused

ACTION: Audit, support and sustain community partners

Description: Towards establishing shared value systems, we will work to build awareness of partners we work with and share that information with audiences.

- Resources:*
- Develop a scaffolded institutional tiers/types of community partnerships with partner benefits.
 - Aggregate all partnership information and create partnership levels to better serve sustained community partners
 - Work cross-departmentally and with our community partners to fill seats at our performances and give more access to our guests.
 - Re-establish the Community Liaison staff position.

Status: Ongoing; Work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: Increase access to free and discounted programs

Description: The Goodman understands the importance of giving back to the communities we serve. It is an institutional priority to find ways to continue to expand our commitment to free and discounted public programs, most recently evidenced by *A Christmas Carol—An Audio Play* and *Fannie Lou Hamer: Speak On It!*, offered free of charge to Chicago audiences. Other free or reduced-rate initiatives include “Share the Joy;” accessible programming; sensory friendly performances; Blue Star; Spanish Translation; *New Stages*; and our commitment to Season of Concern.

Status: Digital efforts are ongoing; in-person work is paused

ACTION: Create digital space to improve internal communication

Description: To improve internal communication and transparency for all staff, we will work to establish a digital space to disseminate information. This can include updated Goodman policy information or serve as a space for individual staffers’ professional/personal work.

Status: Exploring what might be possible (potentially via an intraweb)

ACTION: Publicize staff involvement in outside organizations

Description: We acknowledge the many talents of our staff and we commit to supporting their work as artists and citizens in the City of Chicago beyond the Goodman.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Develop a system of engagement and communications that does not rely on digital access.**

Description: Reach/Engage with those who do not have digital access.

Status: Ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Create opportunities to engage with Indigenous communities**

Description: Board leadership and staff are discussing ways to expand programming, on stage and in the community, to develop relationships with Indigenous communities. Goodman staff have participated in the League of Chicago Theatre's land acknowledgement training workshop; work has begun to cultivate relationships and acknowledge those unseated tribes whose land the Goodman occupies.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Develop an annual survey and host listening sessions of alumni and key BIPOC collaborators, to be facilitated by an external organization, to ensure that we are supporting them in their work and career goals.**

Description: In order to improve our existing programs, we believe that engaging with alumni from our Maggio Fellowship, Playwrights Unit, educational programming, Artistic Collective Members and our BIPOC Artists will help improve our policies and practices. We must be prepared for difficult conversations and/or confront past inadequacies, but we commit to taking criticism seriously, and finding ways to make positive change within our organization.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: **Expand non-English language services and offerings**

Description: We seek to expand our language services and offerings to ensure our work is as accessible as possible.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

Resources: Examples of some goals to develop include, but are not limited to,

- *A Christmas Carol* Study guide and resources in Spanish
- Spanish-language audiogram for *A Christmas Carol*
- Spanish-captioned performances of *A Christmas Carol*

RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

GOAL: We will invest in creating a more equitable American theater by examining our internal systems with industry professionals who will help us analyze, measure and track our goals with our action plan.

It is impossible to adjust our policies, realign our programming or crystalize our communications without digging deeper into how we have worked in the past, evaluating our unique place in the field and transparently tracking the progress towards our goals and ideals. This cornerstone: focuses on how we create, document and codify the knowledge we gain; examines the systems needed to aggregate and disseminate that information across the institution; and activates industry pipelines and pathways for skill development for all Goodman staff.

RESEARCH

ACTION: Develop a simulcast programming study

Description: Research continues around ways to concurrently stream events and programming when we return to in-person producing in effort to make our work accessible to a broader audience and expand our offerings to Chicagoland schools.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: Develop relationships with the National Critics Institute at The Eugene O'Neill Center and the BIPOC Critics Lab.

Description: To help create a stronger pipeline for critics, we endeavor to explore how program participants, including those in the Criticism in America Bootcamp and Cindy Bandle Young Critics, progress into these additional training programs.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ASSESSMENT

ACTION: Evaluate current Information/Technology systems and develop an institution-wide system of tracking IDEAA actions

Description: We have discovered the need for a centralized directory to collect, monitor and internally disseminate information about BIPOC artists and teaching artists, artisans and craftspeople, contractors, community partners and vendors. Access to this information will help increase transparency and ease our accountability.

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

ACTION: Review and update our procurement practices with an eye towards increasing our purchasing from BIPOC and Black, Women and Minority Owned Enterprises (BWMOE).

Description: A cross-departmental “Procurement Team” will mobilize to: research our current vendors to confirm alignment between their Anti-Racist practices and our IDEAA Action Plan; set our annual purchasing goals with BIPOC/BWMOE businesses; assist in creating a method of annual assessment that ensures we achieve our short- and long-term goals.

Status: Work to be initiated by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

***ACTION:* Review Audience Engagement and Education resources**

Description: How do we best prepare our audiences for the work on our stages and increase their understanding of both theater and the Goodman? How do we use all institutional assets to engender deeper conversations and engagement with theatergoers?

Status: Efforts are ongoing; work to be continued by the Cornerstone Task Force (CTF)

NEXT STEPS

We invite you to revisit this page as we carry out our commitments and expand the goals within this document. This is a living document that will continue to evolve as we strengthen our mission and core values. As we discover opportunities to improve, we will update each of our goals with our progress along the way. Our Staff Committee, which has been so integral to this process over the past year, has already begun to activate many of strategies in the four Cornerstones.

Since collaboration between our Staff Committee and Senior Leadership was in process when the pandemic required us to suspend in-person productions, it was relatively easy for us to adapt to remote work and continue building our Action Plan. In order to sustain lasting change as well as propel the next phase of our progress, our Board of Trustees, Women’s Board and Scenemakers Board are working to build consensus among its membership—more than 100 loyal volunteers—to chart goals for board expansion, diversification and develop a leadership succession plan. These efforts will be highlighted in a future quarterly update.

We ask our Community to hold us accountable as we focus on these four Cornerstones of Policy, Programming, Communication and Research and Assessment. We are committed to doing all that we can to strengthen efforts in our organization, industry and city around inclusion, diversity, equity, anti-racism and access—and work towards a more equitable society.