

Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance Implicit Bias Scan Study Results

*Prepared for
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SECTION I: Executive Summary

Overview

The ROZ Group Inc. was contracted by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance to engage in a multitude of activities that would provide insight into the Alliance's standing with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the environment in which it exists. The Alliance clearly expressed the desire to "look within" by studying both the internal perspectives and the external points of view.

The charge to The ROZ Group was to serve as the conduit to this examination by asking the tough and sensitive questions; engaging in the "deep dive" conversations and interviews; and reviewing existing materials and programs. This project was in keeping with the strategic plan goal to develop and implement a diversity strategy that is relevant, impactful, and supported by the variety of people who would be affected. Engaging the people who were most likely to have been impacted by implicit bias issues and actions was key to our approach.

After some initial dialog with senior management and selected stakeholders, the decision was made to narrow the focus of the study to the internal workings of the Alliance with respect to its practices in:

- Internal workings of the Alliance: staff recruitment and staff retention;
- Organizational culture of the Alliance
- Board composition & recruitment;
- The role of the Alliance in the arts sector;
- What the diversity initiative looks like for the Alliance;
- Community engagement and audience development;
- DEI offerings in the sector; and
- Programmatic offerings.

The following methods were used to gather the feedback for this study:

- *Interviews of 32 Stakeholders* (February 2017 – April 2017)
- *Roundtable of 17 Affinity Group Members* (March 2, 2017)
- *Roundtable of 6 Diversity & Inclusion Practitioners* (April 18, 2017)
- *Survey Responses of 77 Members, Non-Members, and Lapsed Members* (as of 4/29/2017)
- *Survey of Affinity Group Members* (the Kickoff: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Affinity Group in October 2016)
- *Environmental Scan* of Articles, Reports, Websites, and other pertinent resource materials (January 2017 – March 2017)
- *Review of the GPCA Alliance Strategic Plan* and other documents to its diversity and inclusion goals (January 2017 – March 20017)

Note: In each category, the numbers cited are the actual participants. Outreach was made to significantly more people.

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The Alliance is highly respected as a professional organization in the arts sector. This was borne out by the feedback from everyone we encountered. The areas that receive consistent positive praise are:

- Advocacy for the Arts Sector
- Strength of Research Reports
- The model that the Alliance sets for other arts organizations of its kind around the country
- The programs like STAMP, etc.
- The Job Bank
- Invaluable work experience for the arts sector

The responses to the Alliance's initiatives around diversity were mixed ranging from being very excited about the steps that the Alliance is taking to address diversity to being distrustful, cynical, and resentful of the Alliance's past and current efforts in the space. All participants in this study agree that the time has come to get very serious about what it means to make positive change in diversity with respect to the arts.

However, there is wide ranging opinion about:

- How the Alliance actually delivers as evidenced by the composition of its own staff and board;
- What the Alliance actually plans to do beyond hosting meetings to talk about implicit bias and diversity;
- The lack of presence that the Alliance has in the communities it hopes to serve;
- Whether or not the Alliance should take the lead in establishing a model for other arts organizations in the region;
- The Alliance's need for training & professional development in the DEI realm, especially if it intends to be a catalyst for change;
- The difference between well-intentioned strategic objectives versus appropriately resourced action plans; and
- The need for the appropriate training, resources, and time frame critical to conducting the hard work to not only develop a framework, but to then implement the strategic imperatives.

“Attention is only episodic, not part of their DNA.”

The Key Findings

- The Alliance must be prepared for a long-term commitment if it is to be at the forefront of creating a sustainable Diversity strategy that is measurable and accountable.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion must be implemented as a strategic business investment, not simply a proposition that is “the right thing to do.”
- The Alliance is not perceived as having built meaningful relationships with diverse communities, nor with the varying socio-economic levels of people in these communities. This lack of relationship building has resulted in a compromised level of trust. “Visibility” leads to “credibility.” This lack of relationship has impacts audience development.
- Many organizations that represent or provide programming to diverse communities are either indifferent to the Alliance or have never heard of the organization.
- It is important to convey an understanding that the Alliance does not view people of color with a “monolithic lens.” This concern is expressed by a number of respondents of color.
- The Alliance and the arts sector in general are not viewed as cultivating potential board members and donors of color.
- There is a need to develop recruitment strategies at all levels that will attract people of color to the Alliance. The same holds true for the sector. Additionally, there is a need for training that will impact the process of interviewing diverse candidates and creating opportunities for on-boarding, mentoring, and professional development. The Alliance and the sector are unknowingly encountering challenges with the process of talent recruitment and development.
- Grant funding for Diversity in the Arts should go directly to organizations of color, not necessarily just the Alliance.
- The inconsistency in funding is a continuing challenge. For organizations of color this challenge is even more pronounced with mainstream organizations having more access to funds.
- The Alliance is perceived as being “Center-City” focused.

In the Fall of 2016, the Alliance launched an Affinity Group advisory board. This team of people committed themselves to participating in activities that were designed to strengthen the Alliance’s outreach to people of color and to increase the membership base to include those organizations that served people in the diverse communities. Input from this group was a vital part of this study.

“There is an unequal balance of power [between organizations that serve audience of color and mainstream audiences.]”

Recommendations:

Relationships: *The Alliance needs strong partners for the work in DEI.*

Creating Organizational partnerships

- Tap into a core leadership of people of color who can support the initiative and work toward achieving balance;
- Create a university-based partnership that includes programs for addressing the complexity of diversity in the arts as well as professional development for grooming people of color for the managerial talent. Include Cheney University, Lincoln University, and/or Howard University as part of a partnership collaborative. Also include Community College of Philadelphia, Temple University, Moore College of Art and University of the Arts.
- Partnering with or supporting organizations that are already conducting diversity work or partnering with minority institutions and organizations that would be credible catalysts for this work.

“Their lack of diversity is noticeable ... people of color seem to leave quickly.”

Internal Changes: *The Alliance must make internal changes to be credible in DEI work.*

Diversifying workforce and board

- Consider developing proposals to foundations to secure funding for senior level positions of color at organizations that would not ordinarily have ... advocating for criteria that does not automatically restrict participation (as per Philadelphia Museum of Art).
- Develop a mentorship model that addresses upward mobility and board participation. Developing a cadre of sponsors for board positions might help with aggressive cultivation and relationship building with a new set of people.
- Create a database of candidates with transferrable skill sets who are not necessarily in the arts but whose skills would be of value in managerial positions in the arts.
- Drive diverse talent to the Job Bank by conducting targeted diversity marketing.
- Take the lead on employer branding targeted to diverse talent for the arts sector.

“The Alliance goes through the motions but the “walk” is somewhat different from the “talk.”

Strategic Planning

- Explore the implementation of a “Collective Impact Model” that revolves around diversity in the arts (see outline in Appendix).
- Conduct a series of Board Retreats and staff retreats led by DEI practitioners.

“The Alliance should not attempt to be a leader in diversity until they get themselves together.”

Services: *The Alliance should narrow down focus to initiatives that can be done well.*

Focusing

- Select two to three initiatives to begin a focused diversity effort.
- Leverage responses to the April survey.

Funding/Resources

- Consider advocating to philanthropic community on behalf of smaller niche audiences in order to impact fund-raising.

Research

- Develop a comprehensive data-based study – *Portfolio*.
- Provide outcome-based, action-oriented suggestions on diversity issues as a result of conducting continued research.
- Conduct an in-depth examination of the varied audiences that the Alliance and the Sector hope to impact.