Interaction Institute for Social Change / Artist: Angus Maguire.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan (2022-2031)

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Acknowledgements

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Thank you to the community consultants who assisted in the facilitation of discussions and organization of this Action Plan. Finally, this work would not be possible without the aspirational leadership of Mothercraft's Board of Directors, Executive Director and Senior Leadership Team. Their commitment to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion are, and remain, a priority for the organization will be critical to the success of the plan.

Our Aspirations

Mothercraft strives to deeply ingrain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of the organization. There are four main areas of focus in our DEI Action Plan:
- organizational leadership and culture
- understanding and addressing the current state of diversity at Mothercraft
- DEI and the staff experience, and
- DEI in the delivery of services.

We recognize that diversity encompasses many often intersecting social identities including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, ability and beliefs. By embracing differences, addressing barriers and creating a culture where everyone feels safe and supported, we will be able to create a more innovative, productive and inclusive organization.

Mothercraft is also committed to actively recruiting and supporting a diverse workforce, and to improving inclusive policies and practices that reflect the communities we serve. In doing so, we believe we will help to build a better future for all.

Introduction

Mothercraft's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan is the foundation for how Mothercraft will continue to honour and strengthen existing, and establish new, inclusive and equitable practices.

The plan lays out concrete actions that Mothercraft plans to take to move forward on a collective journey of inclusivity. It is a living document that will be adapted to reflect the work and priority areas across Mothercraft. These activities will be carried out in the context of Mothercraft's Mission, Vision and Values and are aligned with other components of the organization's Strategic Plan.

Mothercraft established a DEI Advisory Council of eight members equally representing staff from direct service delivery, administration, management and senior leadership. The Advisory Council met 3 times during the months of June 2022 - August 2022 and reviewed drafts and provided feedback via email and phone conversations in-between meetings.

The Council established the vision and guiding principles and recommends that the DEI Action Plan be implemented in 3 phases, as it will support and align with other work in pursuit of the 10-year strategic plan. Mothercraft's Board of Directors developed and endorsed the organization's aspirational statement.

Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess.

Inclusion is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values difference.

Equity is present where everyone is treated according to their diverse needs in a way that enables all people to participate, perform and engage to the same extent.

~ *Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (https://ccdi.ca/)*

> "*Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is an action. Equity is a choice. Belonging is an outcome.*"
>
> *- Arthur Chan, Vice President of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Planned Parenthood Mar Monte*

Vision and Guiding Principles

The vision for the DEI Action Plan recognizes the central role of relationships at Mothercraft, and their importance to belonging and wellbeing, and seeks to facilitate equitable and inclusive relationships among and between Board, staff and service users. Realizing this vision requires a commitment to practical action at all levels that is based on current research into DEI and associated best practices.
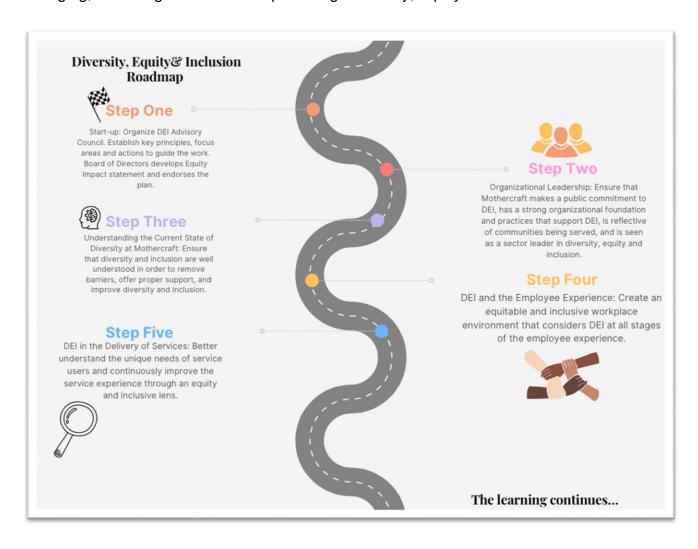
The DEI Action Plan provides practical strategies for building and renewing meaningful relationships and experiences in order to learn from each other and work towards more equity and inclusivity.

The *Guiding Principles* provide a lens through which the work will be planned, implemented and assessed. They are:

- Each of us are responsible for our own learning, while at the same time working to develop a learning community;
- We work with each other with humility in order to create a safe, respectful, and open environment;
- We work with compassion, honesty, kindness and open-mindedness;
- We engage each other to develop trust and the ability to non-judgmentally understand varying social realities;
- We create conditions for self-awareness and self-reflection;
- We listen and hear rather than assume and tell;
- We know that we may need to have 'difficult conversations' and struggle to develop meaningful consensus, and;
- We make room for creativity and innovation and operate from a strengths-based mindset.

Our Roadmap

The *Roadmap* is based on 4 categories of action after the initial start-up step: Organizational Leadership, Understanding the Current State of Diversity at Mothercraft, DEI and the Employee Experience, and DEI in the Delivery of Services. This Roadmap is intended to guide Mothercraft along an ongoing and evolving process of supporting belonging, wellbeing and relationships through diversity, equity and inclusion.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Roadmap

Step One

Start-up: Organize DEI Advisory Council. Establish key principles, focus areas and actions to guide the work. Board of Directors develops Equity Impact statement and endorses the plan.

Step Two

Organizational Leadership: Ensure that Mothercraft makes a public commitment to DEI, has a strong organizational foundation and practices that support DEI, is reflective of communities being served, and is seen as a sector leader in diversity, equity and inclusion.

Step Three

Understanding the Current State of Diversity at Mothercraft: Ensure that diversity and inclusion are well understood in order to remove barriers, offer proper support, and improve diversity and inclusion.

Step Four

DEI and the Employee Experience: Create an equitable and inclusive workplace environment that considers DEI at all stages of the employee experience.

Step Five

DEI in the Delivery of Services: Better understand the unique needs of service users and continuously improve the service experience through an equity and inclusive lens.

The learning continues...

Action Plan Activities

The **Action Plan** is organized into four areas of focus and suggests goals, outcomes and recommended actions. The four focus areas are:

1. Organizational Leadership,
2. Understanding the Current State of Diversity at Mothercraft,
3. DEI and the Employee Experience; and
4. DEI in the Delivery of Services.

Actions for each area of the DEI Action Plan are outlined below.

1. Organizational Leadership

Goal: Mothercraft is committed to DEI, has a strong organizational foundation and practices that support DEI, is reflective of communities being served, and is seen as a sector leader in diversity, equity and inclusion.

Outcomes:
- Staff and service users belonging to equity-deserving communities see themselves reflected in Mothercraft's leadership;
- Staff and service users understand Mothercraft's commitment to DEI and related policies and procedures; and
- There is an increased sense of accountability and meaningful action in support of DEI.

Recommended Actions for Organizational Leadership	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 (2022-23) Phase 2 (2024-2029) Phase 3 (2030-2031)	Progress Measures / Milestones
1. Review Board recruitment strategies to ensure the recruitment of candidates from diverse communities and backgrounds	- Board of Directors with support from ED	- Board and ED time	Phase 1	Board recruitment strategies are amended and diversity further increases over time.

Recommended Actions for Organizational Leadership	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 (2022-23) Phase 2 (2024-2029) Phase 3 (2030-2031)	Progress Measures / Milestones
2. Reflect on current composition of senior staff and address gaps through future planning	- ED and senior leadership team to lead - Divisions to support	- SLT / division time	Phase 2	Plan to address gaps is developed and implemented, as needed.
3. Provide decision-making processes that consider DEI implications and engage staff and service users as appropriate/ when needed.	- Senior Leadership to lead - Management to support	- $ for decision making training from a DEI lens OR consultant	Phase 1	DEI decision-making guidelines are developed and utilized.
4. Establish DEI goals / benchmarks in yearly plans	- SPQA and Senior Leadership to lead - Board to approve and Management team to support	- SLT and Board time	Phase 2	Annual Vision 2031 and applicable program work plans include DEI goals and benchmarks.
5. Review, develop and/or revise policies and procedures through a DEI lens, including responsibilities for managers and employees	- SPQA and ED to lead - Management team and HR to support	- Policy templates / guidance	Phase 2	1. Organization-wide DEI policy is developed. 2. All existing and newly created policies are reviewed or developed with a DEI lens.

2. Understanding the Current State of Diversity at Mothercraft

Goal: Diversity and inclusion are well understood in order to remove barriers, offer proper support, and improve diversity and inclusion.

Outcomes:
- Diversity representation among service users and staff is assessed and enhanced, as needed;
- Equity deserving communities feel seen and celebrated at Mothercraft programs and services, and;
- Increased understanding and removal of barriers for those belonging to diverse communities.

Recommended Actions for Understanding Current State	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 (2022-23) Phase 2 (2024-29) Phase 3 (2030-31)	Progress Measures / Milestones
1. Develop a formal commitment to DEI (e.g. Inclusion Impact Statement).	- Senior Leadership team to lead - Board to endorse	- SLT and Board time	Phase 1	Board endorses our commitment and it is shared, as appropriate.
2. Conduct further analysis of baseline survey results and develop plan for further data collection, including evaluation framework and targets.	- SPQA and ED to lead - Senior Leadership and Management team to support	- $ for evaluation consultant	Phase 1	1. Evaluation framework in place 2. Further data collection occurs 3. Annual DEI progress reported
3. Review and update Mothercraft's history including the acknowledgment of inclusionary and discriminatory practices (the good, the bad and the ugly).	- SPQA and ED to lead - Senior Leadership team and Board to support / endorse	- SLT and staff time to research and develop	Phase 2	History further developed and shared

Recommended Actions for Understanding Current State	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 (2022-23) Phase 2 (2024-29) Phase 3 (2030-31)	Progress Measures / Milestones
4. Develop and implement a process for collecting data that centres on marginalized (equity deserving) voices.	- SPQA to lead - Senior Leadership and Management Team to support - Retain external experts as required	- $ for consultant	Phase 1	Data is gathered from marginalized staff and service users and is used to guide the Action Plan activities.
5. Conduct accessibility audit (as per AODA): - Mothercraft facilities, - Training tools and materials, - New technologies, - Tools used for public communication, and - Experiences and needs of those with visible and invisible disabilities.	- Corporate Services (HR, IT) to lead - Senior leadership and management team to support - Retain external experts as required	- $ for consultant and resources	Phase 2	Accessibility Audit conducted and issues identified are addressed.
6. Track and report progress on DEI activities.	- SPQA and Senior Leadership team to lead - Corporate Services (HR communications) to support	- SLT and staff time	Phase 1	DEI progress is included in updates and formal reports.
7. Analyze and understand the demographic profile of communities and service users; develop strategy to reach under-served populations.	- ED to lead - SPQA and senior leadership team to support	- Hire expansion planning staff	Phase 1 & 2	Demographic profiles contribute to DEI activities and expansion planning

Recommended Actions for Understanding Current State	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 (2022-23) Phase 2 (2024-29) Phase 3 (2030-31)	Progress Measures / Milestones
8. Create opportunities for showcasing diversity and inclusion at Mothercraft.	- ED and Corporate Services to lead - SPQA and senior leadership to support	- SLT and staff time	Phase 2	Diversity and inclusion at Mothercraft is regularly celebrated.

3. DEI and the Employee Experience:

Goal: *Create an equitable and inclusive workplace environment that considers DEI at all stages of the employee experience*.*

Outcomes:
- Increase in staff sense of belonging and engagement;
- Opportunities for promotion and professional development are made available to all employees, with particular focus on engaging equity deserving groups, and;
- Issues of discrimination are addressed in a transparent, fair and timely way.

*Employee experience includes: Recruitment→ Onboarding →Training & Development → Retention→ Exit

Recommended Actions for Employee Experience	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 2022-23 Phase 2- 2024-29 Phase 3 - 2030-31	Progress Measures / Milestones
1. Review of Hiring and Recruitment practices through a DEI lens (i.e. revise job requirements so lived and work experience are assessed as valuable).	- Corporate Services (HR) to lead - ED to support	- Staff time	Phase 1	Recruitment and Hiring practices are amended, as needed

Recommended Actions for Employee Experience	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 2022-23 Phase 2- 2024-29 Phase 3 - 2030-31	Progress Measures / Milestones
2. DEI training for all current and new staff and Board.	- Corporate Services (HR) to lead - ED and Managers to support	- $ for external trainers	Phase 1	All staff and Board receive DEI training.
3. Ongoing DEI coaching for managers/directors that includes self-evaluation, privilege and inclusive leadership.	- SPQA to lead plan - HR, Senior Leadership and Management to support	- $ for external support and resources	Phase 2	Coaching supports are in place and are used, as needed.
4. Develop a staff mentorship program to support the professional advancement of staff from equity deserving groups.	- SPQA and HR to lead development of plan - Senior Leadership team to support / approve	- staff time	Phase 2	Mentoring program is in place and staff access it, as needed.
5. Embed DEI into Director and Manager Annual Performance Reviews (APRs).	- Corporate Services (HR) to lead - Senior Leadership team to support	- staff time	Phase 2	DEI is embedded and integrated into regular APR process.
6. Review and assess how complaints related to staff experiences of discrimination or bias are tracked, monitored and addressed.	-Corporate Services (HR) to lead - Senior leadership team to support	- staff time	Phase 2 & 3	1. Process reviewed and shared 2. Recommend-ations are considered and integrated as approved

4. DEI in the Delivery of Services:

Goal: *Better understand the unique needs of service users and continuously improve the service experience through an equity and inclusive lens.*

Outcomes:
- Increased satisfaction and sense of belonging among service users from equity deserving communities;
- Increased culturally responsive programming and presence in underserved communities; and
- Issues of discrimination are addressed in a transparent, fair and timely way.

Recommended Actions for Service Delivery	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 - 2022-2023 Phase 2- 2024-2029 Phase 3 - 2030-2031	Progress Measures / Milestones
1. Assess current opportunities for students to experience diversity in their placement settings and enhance as needed.	- Education, Training & Data to lead	- staff time	Phase 2	The level of diversity in student placement is understood and maximized
2. Create/review current outreach strategies and enhance, as needed, to ensure engagement of under-represented groups (e.g. Queer and Trans and/or Indigenous ECE)	- CFS & ETD to lead - ED to approve - SPQA to support - Managers to execute	- staff time	Phase 1	Engagement of under-represented groups is improved
3. Review course/ training and program materials to ensure they reflect: - DEI best practices; - lived experiences of service users (in particular, equity-deserving groups);	- ETD and CFS to lead (in respective areas) - Senior Leadership and Management	- staff time, training and resources, as needed - embedded in orientation and policy sign-off	Phase 1 & 2	Programs and services reflect any enhanced understanding or best practice Included in orientation and

Recommended Actions for Service Delivery	Lead	Resources Required (internal and external)	Timeline: Phase 1 - 2022-2023 Phase 2- 2024-2029 Phase 3 - 2030-2031	Progress Measures / Milestones
- Trauma informed practice, and; - Culturally responsive service delivery.	team to support			staff sign-off documented
4. Solicit ongoing service user feedback on diversity, equity and inclusion across all service areas.	-SPQA, ED and Senior Leadership to lead - ETD and CFS to support	- staff time	Phase 2 & 3	Service users, especially those from marginalized/equity deserving groups, contribute to the DEI Plan and its implementation
5. Review and assess how complaints related to service user experiences of discrimination or bias are tracked, monitored and addressed.	-CS -HR to lead - Senior leadership to support	- staff time	Phase 2 & 3	Procedure and/or process for tracking and reporting is enhanced, as needed

Final Thoughts

Centering Marginalized Voices in Data Collection
In the spring of 2022, Mothercraft initiated data collection through the distribution of surveys to both staff and service users in order to better understand who works for, and is served by, Mothercraft. While the information gathered provided useful insights into the demographic profiles and social identities of staff and service users, further investigation and refinement is required to deepen understanding. Future data collection should likely also include qualitative data via focus groups and/or interviews. This should be done with care and consideration given to participants' safety so that members of equity-deserving groups are able to fully participate and openly share their experiences of marginalization. Mothercraft recognizes that these experiences could be based on multiple, intersecting socio-demographic or identity related characteristics.

A Whole Organization Approach

Regarding the review of organization-wide policies and procedures, the DEI Advisory Council indicated that it was necessary to apply a DEI lens to the process. In the words of the Council, "There must be an acknowledgement that DEI is for the entire staff, Board and service users at Mothercraft and needs to be as transparent as possible regarding any barriers that exist." Additionally, the consultants provided the Council with a list of questions designed to help identify how policies could still be inequitable, even if written without the intention of harm. The Advisory also suggested that Mothercraft consider developing a statement that will inspire and guide the entire organization as it pursues this work.

Measuring Success

Each goal in the suggested action plan outlines a number of expected outcomes and some progress measures/milestones. In addition to gathering additional data and analysis and presenting and discussing key results as the DEI actions are implemented, the Advisory Council also noted that targets or indicators for each goal and an overall evaluation framework will need to be developed.