

CULTURE|SHIFT GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND RESOURCES

The terms provided here are definitions that have been drawn from *Culture|Shift* and informed by the community. They are not definitive and will continue to be updated to reflect current language and evolving forms of expression.

Reconciliation & Decolonization

Reconciliation is about building respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This includes recognition of Indigenous rights and titles, as well as restitution and redress for colonial harms. Colonialism has contributed to many forms of exclusion and erasure, limiting Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh, and Urban Indigenous peoples' involvement in defining and shaping Vancouver. Arts and culture systems are still rooted in the ongoing legacies of colonialism – from policies that guide public art to the naming of places.

Decolonization prioritizes Indigenous self-determination of leadership and land to address dispossession, cultural erasure, and denial of political governance. Decolonization change processes related to arts and culture, involve developing practices that:

- Respect the authority and leadership of Indigenous nations and people and their role in broader decision-making processes that relate to their culture
- Support the cultural visibility of local nations throughout their unceded lands
- Support the cultural, political and economic advancement of Indigenous people
- Determine ways to redress dispossession and cultural erasure

Cultural Equity & Cultural Redress

As a principle, cultural equity promotes fair support for cultural work, so marginalized people can see their stories presented by artists who share their experience. As a practice, cultural equity identifies and addresses the systemic discrimination built into cultural norms and practices within art and culture institutions and systems.

The work of cultural equity is informed by racial equity lens. Racial equity recognizes that the systemic racism, anti-Black racism, and anti-Indigenous racism and the ways whiteness is positioned as the cultural norm have significant impacts. These impacts are larger than individual acts of racism based on consciously or unconsciously held beliefs of racial superiority. Like gender equity, racial equity approaches focus on specific, rather than 'one-size-fits-all' approaches and centres the experiences of Indigenous people, Black people, people of colour and racialized people.

Cultural redress initiatives attempt to repair the harms of systemic exclusion and discrimination, including dispossession of land, forced relocations, internment, race-based taxes, race-based refusal of asylum and immigration, racial segregation, and displacing or demolishing of racialized communities' neighbourhoods. The City of Vancouver has formally acknowledged and apologized for legislated forms of discrimination, such as colonial dispossession of the

Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, the Chinese Head Tax, internment and forced relocation of Japanese Canadians, the refusal of passengers on the Komagatu Maru, and urban planning regimes that displaced Black Canadians in Hogan's Alley.

Ableism – an ablest society is said to be one that treats individuals without disabilities as the standard, which results in public and private places and services, education, and social work that are built to serve individuals without disabilities, thereby inherently excluding people with disabilities/disabled people.

Access – is the degree to which all people with a wide range of experiences can fully participate in activities. Access can include many dimensions of accessibility including physical, spatial, financial, linguistic, cultural, social, and geographic. Access measures might include reduced ticket programs, transit vouchers and other transportation support, gender neutral and accessible washroom and change room spaces, translation services, active listeners, child care on site, space for spiritual and religious practices.

Accessibility – is a set of equity practices aimed at identifying and reducing barriers that people with disabilities/disabled people and Deaf/deaf and Hard of Hearing people experience. Accessibility practices advance opportunities for creators with disabilities/disabled creators, Deaf/deaf or Hard of Hearing creators, and provide accommodations for people protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as people with disabilities/disabled people and Deaf/deaf people. Accessibility practices can include accessibility consultants, American Sign Language (ASL) Consultants, ASL Interpretation, Vlogs, description, sighted guides, Relaxed Performances, companion seating and tickets, scent-free spaces. It can also include universal design or physical upgrades that allow for people with a wide range of mobility, cognitive and perceptual experiences to easily navigate the space.

Cultural Appropriation – when people take artistic or cultural works or practices from oppressed people without free and informed consent, due credit, and fair compensation.

Cultural Competencies – the understanding of the worldviews, beliefs, protocols, etiquette, and cultural practices that equip people to understand, design, collaborate, communicate and effectively interact with people across cultures in relevant and safe ways. Cultural competence encompasses: being aware of one's own world view; developing positive attitudes towards cultural differences; gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and world views; developing skills for communication and interaction across cultures.

Cultural Protocols – Indigenous people and Nations have diverse protocols that govern how cultural expressions and collaborations are developed, shared, and stewarded. Learning these protocols is the first step towards developing reciprocal relationships between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people as collaborators.

Cultural Safety – the presence of a respectful and relevant space or program where Indigenous people's work and health are not compromised by power imbalances, discrimination, stereotypes, and unconscious bias.

Diversity – is the presence of difference. Diversity initiatives often look at whether leadership and artistic programs reflect the demographics of the communities they serve.

Equity – is the ongoing work to address the systems that privilege dominant groups and disadvantage equity-deserving groups. Cultural equity acknowledges that all people have rights to cultural expression and practice. Equity initiatives first identify the ways that discrimination and unconscious bias gets ‘baked into’ systems through policy, practices and programs and, together, create systemic discrimination. Systemic discrimination results in persistent disparities in compensation, funding, and exposure for equity-deserving groups. Equity can require different measures to create more fair conditions. Equity initiatives propose and resource actions that integrate equity into existing policy practice and programs as well as develop targeted funds and programs to support equity-deserving groups. An intersectional approach to equity acknowledges that where people experience multiple forms of discrimination, there are compounding effects.

Equity-deserving Groups – those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation and elevate the voices of racialized artists and cultural workers. These include but are not limited to people who identify as:

- Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, Urban Indigenous
- Black or of African descent
- People of Colour
- Deaf/deaf, Hard of Hearing
- Living with a disability/disabled people
- LGBTQ2+ and gender diverse

We recognize and acknowledge the compounding effects of different systems of marginalization and strive to apply an intersectionality lens to assessing requests

Equity & Accessibility Planning Initiatives – the work to integrate proactive equity and accessibility measures to advance the leadership and practices of equity-deserving groups. Multi-pronged, holistic, iterative approaches that are well resourced with the time, money, and leadership to succeed are more effective and may include:

- Commitments – mandates that explicitly name and prioritize advancing artistic or cultural work of equity-deserving artists and people, equity plans, decision-making frameworks, policies and plans for board/staff/artist diversity representation
- Operational Practices – board/staff/artists recruitment, proactive hiring, retention, promotion, succession; equity training – cultural protocols, anti-racism / anti-oppression, cultural competency, gender diverse inclusion; compensation parity; physical space audits
- Programmatic Practices – where the majority of resources and activities are dedicated to activities led by equity-deserving artists and cultural workers, leadership diversity, equitable compensation, ethical collaboration practices, intimacy plans and coordinators when performers perform romantic physical contact, practices to ensure informed consent, due credit, and fair compensation and preventing cultural appropriation

- Evaluation – systematic collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data to identify and address disparities, impact analysis, leadership accountability analysis

Examples of EDI Practices from the field

- Local knowledge: Implementing practices and programming that incorporate knowledge of historical, local, and systemic realities into their work, and prioritize ongoing engagement with community for feedback and future direction
- Equity Practices integrated into operations:
- Equity in leadership: commitment to organizational leadership representative of the city, or representative of the specific group(s) it serves
- Equity targets: setting specific measurable representation goals
- Collaborations and partnerships: ongoing significant engagement with community members and other organizations across cultural differences
- Organizational development: dedicated work to build cultural competency and increase understanding around specific realities for marginalized communities in order to carve out space for their inclusion
- Accessibility and Access practices: Positioning accessibility and access as ongoing learning projects to reduce barriers along multiple dimensions of access
- Accessibility: incorporating physical, cognitive, mental health, and perceptual (auditory and visual) accommodation practices through direct engagement with communities of people with disabilities/disabled people and Deaf/deaf and Hard of Hearing people.
- Access practices: adoption of practices that address potential barriers to participation, including income; language; culture; age; gender identity; geography; chemical sensitivity; and childcare
- Compensation: Paying above sector standards, when possible, to address the high cost of living in Vancouver
- Artistic Programs: Resourcing and prioritizing artistic programs reflecting underrepresented experiences and voices, while avoiding limiting artists' work to the expression of these identities
- Audience and community programs: Including targeted programs, community-based or collaborative projects, mentorship programs, community outreach, and traveling programming

Inclusion – is the presence of meaningful contribution and influence in processes and projects. Inclusion is strongest when people have significant, ongoing roles in shaping decisions.

Intersectionality – is a concept that explores how people who experience multiple forms of discrimination experience compounding impacts. For example, a queer, black woman who uses a wheelchair will experience the compounding effects of racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism. An intersectional approach examines how different forms of discrimination interact and designs equity measures accordingly.

Lived Experience – is the knowledge and understanding you get when you have lived through something – through direct personal participation and observation and first-hand knowledge and contact. People’s everyday lives gives them direct, first-hand knowledge of their own cultural context and experiences of structural discrimination which provide cultural competency and valuable professional knowledge and skills.

Reciprocal Relations – is a sustained engagement between people, communities or cultures that is positive, valued, balanced, and mutually supportive where they work together towards common interests and outcomes. With Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, it ensures their People are active participants in the social, economic, cultural, and political activities that take place on their lands by building strong relationships based on trust, mutual respect and benefit.

Respectful Workplace – where policies and practices are in place (e.g. anti-harassment, anti-discrimination) to maintain a workplace environment where employees are treated fairly, difference is acknowledged and valued, communication is open and civil, conflict is addressed early, and there is a culture of empowerment and cooperation. Provincial regulations are outlined in the B.C. Human Rights Code and WorkSafe BC.

Tokenism – the practice of making only a perfunctory gesture or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of fairness or equity.

Resources

City of Vancouver’s UNDRIP Five Year Action Plan

[UNDRIP Action Plan 2024 \(vancouver.ca\)](#)

The City of Vancouver’s Equity Framework

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/p1.pdf>

The City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Strategy – Phase 1

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20220719/documents/ra-plainlanguage.pdf>

City of Reconciliation Vision and Goals

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/city-of-reconciliation.aspx>

Vancouver Park Board report prepared by Kamala Todd, Nov. 2016

[Truth-Telling: Indigenous Perspectives on Working with Municipal Governments](#)

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

Towards Braiding

For organizations starting this journey

<https://decolonialfuturesnet.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/towards-braiding-handout-1.pdf>

Mis-steps on the path to braiding: opening conversations about appropriative engagements

<https://decolonialfuturesnet.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/towards-braiding-handout-2.pdf>

First Peoples' Cultural Council – Working with Elders

<https://fpcc.ca/resource/working-with-elders/>

Indigenous Protocols for the Visual Arts

[Indigenous Protocols for the Visual Arts › CARFAC](#)

Indigenous Community Resources

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/indigenous-communities>

Guide to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/how-rights-protected/guide-canadian-charter-rights-freedoms.html>

Respectful Workplace in the Arts (Canada Council and Cultural Human Resources Council)

<http://respectfulartsworkplaces.ca/>

City of Vancouver Respect in the Workplace Policy

<https://policy.vancouver.ca/ADMIN050.pdf>

Accessible Events Checklist and Resources

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/accessible-events-checklist-and-resources.aspx>

Other Civic Grant and Support Programs**Transit Shelter and Video Screens Outdoor Promotional Programs**

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/video-screen-advertising-program.aspx>

For organizations looking for a high-profile way to promote their events.

Free Support for City-wide Poster or Brochure Distribution

<http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/advertising-for-arts-culture-non-profit-groups.aspx>

Cultural Spaces Grants

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/cultural-spaces-grant-program.aspx>

For organizations operating and/or planning to operate space, undertaking small or large capital upgrades, seeking critical capital assistance, including permit fee assistance, and operational support for facilities providing subsidized space to artists and or cultural nonprofit organizations.

Theatre Rental Grants

<http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/theatre-rental-grant-program.aspx>

For organizations requesting subsidized access to civic performance venues including the Orpheum, Annex, Queen Elizabeth Theatre and Vancouver Playhouse.

Other Civic Theatre Grants

<https://vancouvercivictheatres.com/about-us/grants/>

For organizations seeking subsidized access to ancillary spaces at the Civic Theatres.

Community Placemaking Program

<http://vancouver.ca/streets-transportation/reducing-cars-on-city-streets.aspx>

For organizations looking to bring Vancouver's public spaces to life.

Greening Your Event

vancouver.ca/doing-business/greening-your-event

For organizations seeking to minimize their event's environmental impact: tools, tips, equipment.

Arts Event Licence

<http://vancouver.ca/doing-business/arts-event-licence.aspx>

For organizations hosting pop-up events in unconventional spaces. One application, one licence, one fee.