Belonging Plan
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN
Belonging Matters
Executive Summary

The Toledo Museum of Art seeks to become the model art museum in the United States for its commitment to quality and its culture of belonging. Museums for too long have not included everyone, but now is the time for that to change. We have listened; we have learned; and in this document, we outline the actions we have begun. We have put Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) at the core of all we do.

The Belonging Plan at the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) will be a living document that conveys the values, goals, strategies, and guiding principles our institution will use to nurture an authentic culture of belonging among our staff, visitors, and volunteers. Our plan is rooted in action, and the transparency with which we share it serves as a way to hold ourselves accountable.

For us, belonging is a verb, requiring intention and focus to address the years of structural exclusion that have led some in our community to feel unwelcomed, unrepresented, not included, or never invited. These feelings (and realities) of not belonging are not unique to TMA. Museum officials and stakeholders across the world are reimagining how they engage with community and acknowledging the historical biases that have left many out of the equation of enjoying art and visiting their spaces.
We have made progress in the past 18 months, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Established the inaugural Director of Belonging & Community Engagement position
- Partnered with The Ability Center of Greater Toledo to establish the inaugural Manager of Access Initiatives position, with the support of Joseph, Judith, and Susan Conda.
- Secured funding from ProMedica to develop and implement an active outreach model in the Junction Neighborhood; we have secured funding from two other corporations to expand outreach into two additional underserved neighborhoods
- Initiated 12-week paid parental leave policy
- Completed a salary equity study that seeks to increase salaries, including our minimum wage, to livable, market rates
- Created a collections strategy and policy for exhibition and acquisition selection to ensure more diversity in our core, art-related activities
- Formed a diverse, internal, and cross-functional Belonging Committee to hold TMA and its stakeholders accountable
- Engaged our auxiliary support groups in developing diversity initiatives in an effort to make their volunteer groups more inclusive
- Facilitated relevant listening sessions with key internal and external stakeholders
- Instituted a series of staff-wide implicit bias and allyship trainings
- Created an institutional Land Acknowledgment that recognizes the original stewards of the land on which the Museum sits. Likewise, we are researching local histories to develop a Labor Acknowledgment to recognize the people who stewarded the land and built the Museum campus
- Became the first Museum to join CEO Action for Racial Equity, an extension of CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion and the largest CEO-led business coalition to advance inclusion in the workplace
- Expanded investments with historically Black-owned civic and financial institutions
- Increased Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MBE, WBE, and DBE) representation among vendors
And yet, there is much more work to do.

In this plan, we will not just share our intentions; we will explain how they will be operationalized. This Belonging Plan is integral to our existing strategy, and we have embedded DEAI deliverables within each of our strategic objectives.

Structural challenges can only be undone with structural solutions, and this living document represents a first step towards articulating how TMA is building DEAI into its core operations to effect ongoing and institutional change.
Letter from the Director
As we seek to combat structural and systemic inequities, we believe that the only way to begin to redress these historical issues is to change the systems that undergird museums. Changes like those envisioned do not happen overnight, but with intentionality and alignment, change can happen quickly. At TMA, we created a new Strategic Plan, which begins the process of changing the structures of TMA by integrating DEAI across each of our four strategic objectives, and, through that effort, contributing to a culture of belonging.

While the 2021—2026 Strategic Plan was a start, it was not enough. As a staff, we decided we needed a separate plan, one that collated the relevant programs, projects, and outcomes from our strategy; one that was augmented by a separate internal advisory committee; and one that clearly articulated outcomes. We resolved to create transparency in our intent and accountability in our actions. We also committed to providing annual updates on progress, sharing lessons learned so that others can replicate our successes and learn from our mistakes.

Said differently, the plan that follows is a living document, one that will be adapted and amended as we continue to learn. This approach reflects the reality that institutions have much to learn from their communities, internally and externally. TMA’s strategy calls for us to become the model art museum in the United States for our commitment to quality and our culture of belonging. We hope this plan contributes to that effort.

At TMA, we seek to integrate DEAI into all we do. We believe that in so doing—by creating a culture where DEAI is ubiquitous—a sense of belonging will emerge. As a result, we call this document our Belonging Plan.

Letter from the Director
I end my letter with deep thanks to those of you who supported the creation of this first incarnation of our Belonging Plan. Thank you to our exceptional Belonging Committee led by Rhonda Sewell, TMA's inaugural Director of Belonging & Community Engagement—this diverse, cross-functional team included Joy Goodner (Director of Human Resources), Sandhya Holston (Executive Assistant), Jessica Hong (Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art), Maria Iafelice (Strategic Impact Specialist), Lisa Keyes (Facilities Supervisor), Jon-Jama Scott (Belonging Intern), Katie Shelley (Manager of Access Initiatives), and Mark Yappueying (Graphic Design Manager).

Thank you to our Board of Directors for your unanimous support of this effort. Thank you also to Jason and Kelli Daniels, principals of consulting firm JAYRAMON, LLC, for your assistance in every component of this plan. Thank you to our community for your candor through the more than 200 interviews and focus groups undertaken as part of our strategic planning. And finally, my deepest gratitude goes to our staff for their honesty in staff surveys, their feedback in externally facilitated listening sessions, and their unwavering support for this work. Our success will be because of you.

Adam Levine
Edward Drummond and Florence Scott Libbey Director
Vision, Mission, Values, and Belonging Definitions
The Toledo Museum of Art’s values are our true north. While tactics and strategies may be debatable, we are accountable to ourselves and to our community that each action TMA takes reflects the four values listed ahead. We believe our mission, undertaken holistically and refracted through these values, will help us achieve our vision. By authentically connecting quality with belonging, TMA can become one of the museums in this country from which others learn and that surrounding communities trust. Defining the terms that will shape this Museum work is important to establishing a shared language. For the purposes of this document, key definitions are also included in this section.¹

¹ Definitions have been taken/adapted from the American Alliance of Museums (https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AAM-DEAI-Definitions-Infographic.pdf)
Vision

TMA will become the model art museum in the United States for its commitment to quality and its culture of belonging.

Mission

Through our collection and programs, we strive to integrate art into the lives of people.

Values

Diversity
Diverse ideas emerge from a diverse team and engage diverse audiences. We create space for different voices and are accountable for listening, learning, and acting.

Community
We strive to reflect our community at all levels of the organization, to treat our community as a partner in our programming, and to serve our audiences broadly and intentionally through the highest quality art.

Innovation
We seek to innovate for our community and for our field. Museums need big solutions for historical challenges in the 21st century, and we will not be afraid to take calculated risks or to leverage paradigm shifts.

Trust
We steward our collection in the public trust and must guard the confidence placed in us. We also trust each other and commit to empowering our teammates.

Vision, Mission, Values, and Belonging Definitions
Definitions

Diversity
Diversity reflects the many ways that people are different and the same at individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.

Equity
Equity is the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals.

Accessibility
Accessibility gives equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings.

Inclusion
Inclusion refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community.

Belonging
Belonging is the sense of fitting in or feeling like a member of a group; it is the feeling of security, support, and acceptance that one is a member of a certain community. For people to feel like they belong, they need to arrive as they are and never feel as though they must change for the environment.

Community
Community can be a difficult term to define because its meaning is highly situational. As a starting point, the community that the Toledo Museum of Art generally seeks to serve is the Toledo Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as defined by the US Census Bureau. However, we hope all visitors will have a feeling of belonging when visiting TMA.

Representation
A group is considered representative when it reflects the community (as defined above) the Museum intends to serve.
Land and Labor
Acknowledgments
As an organization committed to a true and inclusive presentation of history, it is important to acknowledge the prior inhabitants of the land on which the Museum stands, as well as the labor provided to build the institution. The Toledo Museum of Art created a Land Acknowledgment both to honor the Indigenous peoples who resided on the land before the founding of the physical campus in the early 1900s and to demonstrate support for Indigenous communities of Ohio, celebrate their cultures, and recognize their forced removal from their lands in previous centuries. The Museum’s Land Acknowledgment along with additional resources can be found at: [www.toledomuseum.org/tma-land-acknowledgment](http://www.toledomuseum.org/tma-land-acknowledgment)

The Belonging Committee and other select staff are working to create a pendant Labor Acknowledgment, as appropriate. Labor Acknowledgments are intended to honor those who worked on the physical structures and landscape of the Museum, as well as those who worked on the land before the Museum’s founding. TMA researchers are working to find companies involved in building the Museum during its early formation for reference, including documenting our history with early unions.
DEAI Outcomes and Commitments in Our Strategy
The Toledo Museum of Art’s efforts to operationalize our commitment to quality and our culture of belonging will be supported by the four strategic objectives in the Museum’s 2021—2026 Strategic Plan: (1) Transition to Active Outreach and Engagement, (2) Broaden the Narrative of Art History, (3) Become an Employer of Choice, and (4) Create a Platform for Operational Excellence. At TMA, we believe that belonging emerges out of the integration of DEAI into each of these four objectives—in other words, a holistic and measurable commitment to DEAI as part of our strategy (rather than as an addition to our strategy) will result in the culture of belonging that we seek to create. This model is summarized in Figure 1.

Our Belonging Committee developed measurable outcomes for Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion across each objective—i.e., the team considered what it would look like if our Transition to Active Outreach and Engagement successfully engaged Diversity, and how that would differ in the case of Equity, in the case of Access, and in the case of Inclusion. Those outcomes, along with TMA’s commitments for each objective, are listed in the following pages.

**Figure 1. Belonging Emerging Out of the Integration of DEAI into TMA’s Strategic Objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEAI Outcomes and Commitments in Our Strategy</th>
<th>Transition to Active Community Outreach &amp; Engagement</th>
<th>Broaden the Narrative of Art History</th>
<th>Become an Employer of Choice</th>
<th>Create a Platform for Operational Excellence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
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<td>Equity</td>
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<td>Inclusion</td>
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Belonging
TMA seeks to involve and engage our stakeholders, especially neighborhoods within a two-mile radius of the Museum. These neighborhoods, which comprise low-income census tracts, historically under-index in TMA’s visitation.

Outreach that honors Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion requires us to build different relationships with constituents, develop an understanding of people’s priorities, and create communications and programs that reflect these interests. The Museum’s focus will shift to include programs beyond its walls, but our success in creating a sense of comfort will be measurable by changes in the demographics of our visitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEAI Outcomes and Commitments in Our Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants in outreach activities will represent their neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood partners and outreach participants’ needs are met through relevant outreach and engagement programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs and pathways to visitation are accessible (location, language, transportation, timing, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood partners and outreach participants are valued as respected members of the organization and community and are included in decision-making</td>
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Objective Outcome:
Greater Visitation from Non-Visitor Cohorts
Transition to Active Community Outreach and Engagement

Commitments:

• TMA will ensure its campus is an accessible, safe, and welcoming environment for all visitors, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) attendees, other diverse communities, and individuals with disabilities.

• TMA will equip staff and volunteers with education and training that promotes the understanding of the art and material culture of BIPOC and other diverse communities.

• TMA will build meaningful and sustained partnerships with local artists as well as with civic, cultural, educational and artistic organizations from BIPOC and other diverse communities; through these partnerships, we will expand our audience and build programs that address issues of equity and inclusion in the arts.

• TMA will develop brand marketing strategies that are inclusive and representative of our local community, helping reach occasional and first-time visitors and donors.

• TMA will increase engagement with Minority-, Women-, and Disadvantaged-Business Enterprises (MBEs, WBEs, and DBEs).
### DEAI Outcomes and Commitments in Our Strategy

TMA seeks to broaden the narratives we tell to foster inclusive and global art histories. Through our collecting and exhibitions program, we aim to represent the breadth and depth of creativity across societies, cultures, and time periods. We also seek to represent the multifaceted communities comprising Toledo, as well as cultivate a sense of belonging amongst our visitors when engaging with the Museum’s galleries. Collections representation is defined in this objective as representing the demographics of the US Census.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Exhibitions and collections displays better reflect the US population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Expanded curatorial coverage drives artistic representation in the collection that better reflects the US population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Gallery installations and interpretation—including digital displays—are accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Community is consulted and community voices are included in interpretation</td>
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² Note that the United States is more diverse than the Toledo MSA.

### Broaden the Narrative of Art History

**Objective Outcome:** Visitors Feel Represented by the Art on Display
Commitments:

- TMA will steward, display, and interpret the Museum’s permanent collections in a manner that reflects TMA’s commitment to DEAI.
- TMA will grow and diversify collections and works on view, with an increased focus on the sustained presence and prominence of works by underrepresented artists, cultures, regions, and media.
- TMA will resource this new direction, including the hiring of new curatorial staff.
- TMA will develop new and inclusive processes for: selecting and developing exhibitions and installations, displaying collections, and including feedback from staff, visitors, volunteers, and diverse community participants.
- TMA will consider the accessibility of the physical layout of galleries, as well as the accessibility of all text, audio/visual content, and hands-on activities, during planning and exhibition design.
- TMA will identify innovative ways to tell stories about its artworks, collection, and institutional history that build lifelong connections.
**Become an Employer of Choice**

TMA is committed to establishing the Museum as an employer of choice. We seek employees who believe in our vision, mission, and values and who bring a diverse set of skills, perspectives, and experiences. We seek to hire the best employees without bias, which will result in a diverse workforce that embodies, celebrates, and promotes DEAI. Such a staff and culture will strengthen our ability to serve our community, drive innovation and growth, and help us attract and retain the best talent.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objective Outcome:</th>
<th>TMA Will Have Best, Most Diverse, and Most Engaged Staff</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
<td>Internal and external stakeholders reflect the diverse community in which we live and operate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td>Leadership will ensure that all employees are treated fairly, justly, and have the opportunity for advancement as indicated in Museum policies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>Ensure all employees can participate in any programs and avail themselves of all services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion</strong></td>
<td>Intentionally maintain a safe space for everyone to feel valued, respected, and encouraged to bring their authentic self to work and fully participate to achieve job satisfaction</td>
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</table>
Become an Employer of Choice

Commitments:

- TMA will establish a performance management system and talent development strategies that support opportunities for equitable advancement through the organization.
- TMA will commit to hire, promote, and retain candidates from BIPOC and other diverse communities throughout the organization, including leadership, management, and professional positions, to ensure TMA emerges as the model museum.
- TMA will create and share a new compensation strategy that is understood by staff and promotes pay equity.
- TMA will support and invest in academic and career pathways for students and professionals from BIPOC and other diverse communities in the cultural heritage and visual arts sectors.
Workforce diversity is critical to growing the business of the Museum. We have invested in training and hiring a staff position focused on diversity efforts; transitioned an agile operating model that empowers staff as leaders regardless of their position in the organizational chart; diversified our candidate pools; and activated our anchor institution status to support MBEs, WBEs, and DBEs. These efforts now need to be leveraged into the visitor experience in ways that optimize belonging in addition to efficiency.

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<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective Outcome:</strong></td>
<td>Low Churn, High Performance, and Vendor Diversity</td>
<td>Greater MBE, WBE, and DBE representation among vendors</td>
<td>Agile teams represent all levels of the organization</td>
<td>Agile teams represent the demographics of staff</td>
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**DEAI Outcomes and Commitments in Our Strategy**

**Create a Platform for Operational Excellence**
Create a Platform for Operational Excellence

Commitments:

• TMA will research, pilot, and implement new approaches to visitor engagement in the galleries, considering the roles of security, visitor experience, and volunteers.

• TMA will continue to identify, recruit, and develop well-qualified, diverse volunteers, staff, and trustees.
Conclusion
Conclusion

Our belonging work started in 2020, and it will be implemented over time. This will require patience, education, dialogue, and an openness to changing and growing from our entire workforce. There is no conclusion to this work—it is ongoing—and as we continue to build Diversity, Equity, Access, Inclusion, and Belonging, we will update the plan. We are building a data infrastructure to track the outcomes listed in this document, and we will report on our results annually. We intend to be as transparent as possible to ensure accountability to ourselves, our plan, and our stakeholders.

Since our work is still nascent, we may find that some outcomes and measurements should be tweaked, and our team is constantly scanning the museum field and beyond for benchmarks. We hope that by sharing our journey, our successes and our lessons learned will be helpful to other museums and will help our industry continue to forge belonging best practices. As the shapers of this plan, the Belonging Committee intends to rotate members periodically, blending continuity with fresh ideas and providing other staff members with an opportunity to participate in this meaningful work so integral to TMA’s strategy.

As we implement this plan, we will create a culture of belonging in which everyone feels represented and welcome when entering and interacting with the Toledo Museum of Art.