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Dear Community of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society,

We are pleased to share with you our PHS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-24.

PHS’s purpose is to use horticulture to advance the health and wellbeing of the Greater Philadelphia Region. To fully achieve this purpose, we need to become an organization that reflects the diversity of our region, includes everyone interested in our purpose, and advances equity by bringing impact to the people with greatest need. Our DEI Statement lays out a clear aspiration and this Strategic Plan provides a road map towards that aspiration over the next three years. This plan belongs to everyone at PHS. To ensure that all staff members will be working together to achieve these goals, the initiatives will be incorporated into the workplans of each business unit.

The DEI Strategic Plan outlines our goals and initiatives for the next three years; however, we are conscious that achieving our goals for DEI at PHS may not be completed in three years. It will require time and continual effort to change the conscious and unconscious biases that preference whiteness, a concept called white supremacy. This strategic plan is the next stage of our journey to help create a more inclusive, equitable society. It is a living document, with the understanding that initiatives can and may need to evolve to meet new milestones along our journey, and we intend to establish another plan after the completion of this one. The focus of this initial plan is on the communities of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), because that is where our data shows us the most work needs to happen.

Our approach has been rooted in the Multicultural Organizational Development Framework. Learn more in the appendix, on page 11.
PHS began its intentional journey to embrace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2017, and has taken significant steps along the journey through the work of the staff in the DEI Working Group and CoHort, as well as the Board; embedding DEI into staff and Board training; building DEI into the PHS Values and annual Values Day; transforming staff, board, member, and volunteer recruitment processes to prioritize diversity; and beginning a supplier diversity initiative. The completed initiatives and ongoing initiatives are identified under each of the Plan’s goals.

The development of the plan was led by the DEI Strategic Plan Steering Committee and followed an intentional process over the course of nine months. The plan includes a host of ideas that were submitted by PHS staff and verified through research and data collection. The Steering Committee prioritized these initiatives on their potential to create tangible impact towards achieving the vision in our DEI Statement. The highest priority initiatives were refined by the PHS Executive Team and assigned to specific initiative owners.

PHS aims to be an organization that welcomes and embraces a diversity of people, connections, and relationships, both internally among our staff and leadership, and externally among the communities we serve and the organizations with which we partner. We approach this work in good faith, with humility and the desire to be a welcoming, affirming, accountable organization for everyone with whom we interact within the community. We embrace the illuminating and sometimes difficult conversations that we are having, and will continue to have, as an opportunity for evolution and growth.

Sincerely,

The PHS DEI Strategic Plan Steering Committee
Samir Dalal, Program Manager – LandCare
Patti Gregory, Vice President of Human Resources
Amanda Morales Pratt, Development Officer – Major Gifts
Matt Rader, PHS President
Melissa Raffel, Director of Volunteer Programs
Liane Sullivan, Associate Director of Strategy, Planning & Partnerships
Tiffenia Archie, PhD, Consultant
PHS uses the following language to define diversity, equity and inclusion. These definitions were influenced by language provided by The Avarna Group.

**Diversity** is the range of differences among individuals in a group. These differences may cause them to be treated differently in society. These differences include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic class, physical ability, and ideas and beliefs.

**Equity** is an approach that ensures everyone is given equal opportunity. This means that resources may be divided and shared unequally to ensure that each person can access an opportunity.

**Inclusion** recognizes that a richness of backgrounds and perspectives brings value. Acting inclusively goes beyond tolerating or overcoming differences and embraces, leverages, and celebrates the strengths of diversity. In an inclusive environment, everyone feels involved, welcomed, and respected.

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**PHS DEI Statement**

The PHS DEI Statement was developed and defined by the PHS DEI Working Group and approved by the President of PHS in the fourth quarter of 2019.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society believes that gardening and horticulture belong to everyone. We work in partnership with community members to promote the benefits of gardening and connect people in our region with gardening-related experiences in their neighborhoods and across the region. We welcome everyone to partner with us and together create beautiful, healthy and sustainable communities.

We acknowledge that there are oppressive systems at work within our communities. We use gardening, horticulture, and job training as tools to break down barriers to equity. PHS does not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, or oppression. We welcome thoughtful dialogue and criticism in our effort to use horticulture to effect social change.

We dedicate ourselves to sustaining and promoting diversity in recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, training, provision of compensation and benefits, management of organizational activities and general treatment during employment.

PHS actively works to create a community of staff, volunteers, board members, and vendors that reflects the city of Philadelphia.

We recognize that it takes the dedicated effort of many hands to create meaningful change. At PHS, we commit to seeking out the expertise of community members in the neighborhoods that we work in when engaging new projects and evaluating existing work. When consulting with community members on projects, we commit to accommodating their needs, integrating their insights into decision-making, and highlighting their contributions.

At PHS, we work to create an environment where all voices are respected and heard. We provide training, mentoring and resources to create a workplace where staff feel welcome and appreciated. Reaching true equity in our communities requires ongoing effort, and in this regard, as an organization we commit to evolution and growth.
To facilitate implementation of the DEI Strategic Plan, PHS has established the following structures:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee (DEI Steerco)
The DEI Steerco will track the implementation of the strategic plan, receive feedback and other ideas from staff, adjust the plan as needed, and monitor results. The DEI Steerco takes over from the existing DEI Strategic Plan Steering Committee, which sunset in May 2021. The DEI Steerco is chaired by the President and includes the Vice President of Human Resources, all direct reports to the President, and four additional non-executive level staff, as well as a project manager. The DEI Steerco meets quarterly. Staff members have the opportunity to apply to join the DEI Steerco.

2. Initiative Owners and Project Teams
Every initiative in the strategic plan is owned by a specific member of the Executive Team who is accountable for its implementation. These initiatives are incorporated into their Team Work Plans. These initiatives incorporate work that was previously owned by the DEI Working Group subgroups. Initiative Owners have the option of forming project teams to help with planning and implementation. These project teams include representation of departments that are necessary for the completion of the project, including any fundraising that is required. The project teams are time-limited and meet until the project is completed. Staff members who are interested in being involved in project teams working on specific initiatives may seek out the initiative’s owner(s) to voice their interest.

3. Dedicated Consultant Support
PHS is retaining consultant expertise to coordinate the work of the DEI Steerco and to serve as an internal expert and resource on DEI. The consultant(s) attend(s) the DEI Steerco meetings as expert advisor and resource on DEI. The consultant(s) are also available as a resource for staff who may speak with the consultant(s) about any personal DEI-related issues, questions, or ideas.

4. DEI Topics Reporting Structure
Staff with questions or ideas about the DEI Strategic Plan may reach out to the initiative owner or a member of the DEI Steerco. Any issues of individual interpersonal concern should follow company procedures as outlined in the Staff Resource Guide.
Goals and Initiatives

PHS’s purpose is using horticulture to advance the health and well-being of the Greater Philadelphia region. The goals of the DEI Strategic Plan strengthen that commitment by helping us build an organization that mirrors the diversity of our region, include perspectives that span the lived experiences of the people we serve, and work to reduce inequities across the region.

**Goal #1**
Use the lens of DEI to guide how we work, interact and engage, embedding DEI principles into our organization through education and training, more transparent and equitable policies, and inclusive behaviors.

**Goal #2**
Develop an organization that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve by increasing diversity in all groups that make up the PHS community, including members, volunteers, suppliers, staff, and board and committee members.

**Goal #3**
Leverage our leadership role in the horticultural field to create visibility and opportunity for underrepresented communities and perspectives.
**Goal #1**

*Use the lens of DEI to guide how we work, interact and engage, embedding DEI principles into our organization through education and training, more transparent and equitable policies, and inclusive behaviors.*

### Supporting Initiatives

**Implemented and On-going**

1.1 Conduct mandatory training on “Creating a Respectful and Inclusive Workplace”.

1.2 Introduce a policy on Harassment in the Workplace in the Staff Resource Guide.

1.3 Include a rating on adherence to PHS values and DEI Statement in the annual performance review.

1.4 Incorporate DEI principles into organizational values.

1.5 Circulate DEI information, resources and learning opportunities.

1.6 Conduct an annual pay equity audit, following EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) methodology, to identify any compensation differences associated with race, gender, or other factors.

1.7 Focus Healthy Neighborhoods initiatives in neighborhoods where data indicates our work can create the most impact and work with community to guide projects.

**In-Process**

1.8 Incorporate DEI as a priority in our financial investing strategy.

1.9 Establish an ongoing staff training program on core DEI concepts.

1.10 Conduct an annual review of DEI resources and learning opportunities.

1.11 Solidify salary grades and inform staff of where their salary falls across those grades.

1.12 Determine and share the criteria for promotion and advancement.

**New**

1.14 Implement an annual evaluation of organizational culture and progress on the Multicultural Organization Model via the Values/DEI Survey and/or staff focus groups.

1.15 Establish a DEI affinity group, led by staff members, to create a space for staff to learn, build connections, discuss DEI related issues and celebrate diverse cultures.

1.16 Examine the impact and perceptions of PHS work since our founding, working with a consultant to explore institutional history through a DEI lens. Publish findings and recommendations for any next steps.*

*Implementation of asterisked initiatives will require identification and allocation of additional financial and staff resources.*
Supporting Initiatives

Implemented and On-going

2.1 Fundraise for free or subsidized, low-cost community horticultural services to underserved communities, including trees, community gardens, vacant land management, and other gardening initiatives.

2.2 Share job postings on a variety of job boards, with BIPOC networks, and via PHS social media channels.

2.3 Update job description requirements to create more inclusivity, publish salary ranges on all jobs, and update hiring philosophy language on website to demonstrate commitment to DEI.

2.4 Review candidate interview process and implement processes that support our diversification effort, including providing unconscious bias training to hiring managers, involving staff from other teams in interview processes, and mandating that final candidate pools must be 50% non-white for all jobs. Report progress on dashboard.

2.5 Analyze staff turnover rates, evaluate barriers to job retention, develop a staff mentorship program to help new staff adjust to PHS, work with hiring managers to create a more inclusive work culture and implement an infrastructure that will reduce turnover. Report progress on dashboard.

2.6 Diversify PHS Board and Committees through recruiting efforts focused on diversity.

In-Process continued

2.7 Research best practices for collecting constituent demographic information and collect and analyze baseline data on current constituent groups, including volunteers, members, donors, and Flower Show guests.

2.8 Review PHS contracts and vendor relationships. Establish a plan for attracting minority-owned and women-owned suppliers and contractors and create a procurement policy that institutionalizes this approach.

2.9 Expand our EBT/ArtReach access program to offer as many PHS membership benefits and resources as possible for free to EBT cardholders and ensure EBT access for all paid events.

2.10 Implement closed captioning for webinars for guests who are deaf or hard of hearing.

2.11 Work with ArtReach to examine accessibility barriers and implement changes to create exhibits and experiences that are accessible and engaging to people of all abilities.

2.12 Continue to modify brand voice and visual representation to reflect and reach diverse PHS constituents. Create clear standards for use of photography/video of constituents. Implement use of photo/video releases and signage at all events.

2.13 Share and update internal and external stakeholders on DEI statement, strategic plan, and progress.

New

2.14 Identify staff who can act as representatives with partner organizations. Mentor them to help identify opportunities within the partnership, and to enhance communications between the two organization.

2.15 Establish a new Staff Leadership Fellowship program to support PHS staff interested in joining the boards of peer organizations that advance PHS’ impact priorities, with a focus on those that are BIPOC-led, and/or support BIPOC communities. Underwrite board fees.*

2.16 Establish concrete diversity goals for members, volunteers, and Flower Show audiences and define timelines and strategies to achieve them. *

2.17 Conduct an accessibility audit of PHS public gardens collective and develop a plan to achieve full accessibility.*

2.18 Identify the languages spoken by our constituent base, establish a plan to engage non-English-speaking constituents, and assess resources required to make multilingualism the standard for our programs and materials.*

* Implementation of asterisked initiatives will require identification and allocation of additional financial and staff resources.
Leverage our leadership role in the horticultural field to create visibility and opportunity for underrepresented communities and perspectives.

Supporting Initiatives

**Implemented and On-going**

3.1 Diversify horticultural design showcased at the Flower Show by inviting exhibitors with diverse backgrounds to participate.

**In-Process**

3.2 Expand our workforce development programs with a focus on training a diverse population for employment in horticulture.*

3.3 Find more opportunities to leverage the experience of BIPOC speakers and presenters and panelists. Establish a fee structure for all panelists and presenters. Advocate that all panels PHS is involved in include a diverse set of participants who are equitably compensated.*

**New**

3.4 Develop an outreach program to promote careers in horticulture to BIPOC students at all educational levels. Align this program with PHS workforce development programs and open positions at PHS.*

3.5 Establish intern, fellow, co-op, or certificate programs to provide mentorship, paid summer employment, and job assistance for BIPOC students and adult learners. Where possible, collaborate with other environmental and horticultural non-profits.*

3.6 Research traditions and approaches to horticulture not previously studied or represented in the professional field. Establish a process to ensure we incorporate under-represented styles into our work.

3.7 Revise educational content as well as print and online resources to include diverse horticultural traditions, approaches, and voices.

3.8 Participate in and/or organize discussions about the impact of systems of oppression on horticulture, especially as it relates to our impact priorities.*

*Implementation of asterisked initiatives will require identification and allocation of additional financial and staff resources.
The Multicultural Organizational Development Model (MCOD) is a framework that lays out the stages of evolution for organizations striving to become fully multicultural and it has become a powerful tool for understanding where PHS is on this continuum and what it needs to address to continue to move forward.

While this Strategic Plan advances us on the journey, we will have further work to do to become a fully Multicultural Organization. We will continue to use the MCOD framework to evaluate our progress on the journey to become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.

A multicultural organization is defined by Evangelina Holvino, Ed.D. as one where “(1) the diversity of knowledge and perspectives that different groups bring to the organization shapes its strategy, work, management, and operating systems, and its core values and norms for success; and (2) members of all groups are treated fairly, feel included, have equal opportunities and are represented at all organizational levels and functions.” We will use the MCOD chart below to gather staff feedback each year on where PHS stands on this continuum.

### The Multicultural Organization Development Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monocultural</th>
<th>Transitional</th>
<th>Multicultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exclusionary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Passive Club</strong></td>
<td><strong>Compliance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed to the dominance, values, and norms of one group. Actively excludes those who are not members of the dominant group.</td>
<td>Actively or passively excludes those who are not members of the dominant group. Includes other members only if they “fit” the dominant norm.</td>
<td>Passively committed to including others without making major changes. Includes only a few members of other groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and promotes the dominant perspective of one group, culture, or style.</td>
<td>Seeks to integrate others into systems created under dominant norms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
