

Access Coordinator: Yoni Tamang

POLICIES

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lightning Rod prohibits discrimination against any employee, applicant for employment, or program participant because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. All personnel responsible for the development and implementation of the organization's activities are charged to support this effort and to respond promptly and appropriately to any concerns brought to their attention.

ACCESS POLICY

Lightning Rod is committed to providing equal access and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Lightning Rod's immediate goal is the readily achievable integration of individuals with disabilities into its ongoing programs. The organization will continue to plan for improved access to public events, employment, and facilities, and to support the development and practice of skills pertaining to access and disability justice among organizational leadership, advisory council members and participants.

HISTORICAL & FUTURE ADA PLANNING

- **How has the organization planned for access in the past?**
- **How often will the organization revise this document?**
How will accessibility considerations be a part of all organization-wide and project-specific planning?

- Organizational and artistic leadership have met to consider access in pre-production meetings for our 3 annual productions to date
- This document will be engaged and revised annually at a minimum
- Access will be considered for both specific projects and on-going organizational operations by referencing this plan and the Access protocols developed this summer at initiation of each planning process

<p>ROLES & PERMISSIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for compliance with ADA requirements? Does the organization have access advisors to identify barriers and recommend strategies for access? What is the access coordinator’s role? What is the frontline staff’s role? What is senior leadership’s role? Who determines interpretations of “reasonable accommodation”? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kat Purcell, Producing Director, is ultimately responsible for checking for compliance ADA requirements for organizational operations and programming in collaboration with artistic leadership • Yoni Tamang, an Artistic Co-Producer of our annual intensive and performance currently takes on the role of an ad hoc accessibility coordinator, informally auditing rehearsal/performance venues for access considerations, • Frontline volunteers (box office/ushering) are oriented to access information and how to share it with incoming patrons at events • Currently, the Advisory Council includes artist-members with disabilities who support the work of identifying barriers and recommending strategies to improve
<p>GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the organization handle complaints? What is the process for submitting a complaint? What is the process for resolving the complaint, and appealing a decision? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To date, complaints or grievances have been received through an “open door” policy with artistic leadership, then problem solved relationally by way of those artists giving community mediation, individual support and changes to the facilitation of programming as needed.

ACCESS PLANNING & RESOURCES

- Does the organization have a named **accessibility coordinator**? Does the organization involve **access advisors**?
- Does the organization provide **staff/volunteer training** on disability etiquette, awareness, or other issues related to the provision of service to people with disabilities?
- Is there an **appropriate budget** specifically reserved for accessibility needs? How are resources secured for access strategies?
- How does a staff member, volunteer, or program participant **request accommodations** to participate equally?
- How does the organization actively seek to **expand accessibility knowledge/skills**?

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Apply for resources to fund the leadership of artists with disabilities to further develop organizational plan/resources around accessibility
- Volunteer work of The Advisory Council to review past/current access, identify gaps and recommend next steps
- Orientation for volunteers about event accessibility info for audiences
- In depth communication with all participants about their access needs for the arts intensive and production, provide a document ahead of time with all relevant accessibility information about the process/space, accommodations made as needed - including an emergency fund available to explicitly lower or reduce barriers to participation, audience accessibility discussed with all artist-participants

SHORT-TERM GOALS (3-18 months)

- Assemble an accessibility focused task force (i.e. the “Access Avengers”) to initiate work on the following:
- Research, organize and document relevant Access skills, protocols, practices
- Outreach to artists with disabilities and relevant organizations to learn about disability justice
- Develop training workshop for internal use (leadership and artist-participants)
- Develop a more formal grievance procedure in time for 2020 intensive

LONG-TERM GOALS (18-36+ months)

- Develop the resources to sustain an ongoing accessibility coordinator role within all organizational operations
- Hold disability justice workshop annually for Artistic Co-Producers, the Advisory Council and artist-participants
- Review and revise the ADA Access Plan and other accessibility strategies annually

KNOWN BARRIERS - sensory experience, mobility, communication, knowledge

- Current gaps in knowledge in regards to disability justice and accessibility
- Communications and documents could be more organized, offered in additional alternative formats
- Need to develop a collective understanding and shared definitions of disability, ableism, access, justice

PHYSICAL & ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS

- Has your organization completed a **recent physical audit** of any long-term and/or temporary spaces it uses to identify physical barriers to participation? Does consideration include both spaces open to the public and to employees?
- What is the **relationship of the organization to space**? Does the organization lease space on an ongoing or event basis? What arrangements does the organization have with space to make or suggest improvements? What policies does the organization have about the baseline accessibility features of any spaces used?
- What **solutions are available to address barriers** in: Building approach, entrance(s), and navigation; Spaces where programming takes place, such as lobby/theater/rehearsal/gallery spaces; Restrooms; Access for service animals; Emergency and evacuation situations?

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Performances always take place in venues that are ADA accessible for audiences
- Venues have gender-neutral and ADA accessible bathrooms available
- Organizational operations take place in spaces accessible to the needs of current artistic leadership and The Advisory Council
- Physical audits by Artistic Co-Producer and occupational therapist Yoni Tamang of spaces as part of the planning of programming
- Low scent policy, no strobe use for all programming
- We have committed that if a participating artist cannot access the stage or playing space of a particular venue, then the entire show/audience

SHORT-TERM GOALS (3-18 months)

- Problem solve access for potential artists that use chairs, as they currently cannot easily navigate to the stage of Pillsbury House and Theater (venue donated in-kind for 2020 Lightning Rod Intensive). Our considerations include using “untraditional” spaces for theater within their building.
- A production manager is budgeted to be hired as production manager for 2020 intensive and production. They will work with artistic leadership to review existing Pillsbury House and Theater accessibility and emergency policies
- Clearly communicate a more detailed fragrance free policy to our participants and audience. Provide informational resources that include alternatives to commonly used products to allow access to those with more

LONG-TERM GOALS (18-36+ months)

- Develop relationship with either alternative venue willing to donate space in kind that has stage accessible by artists with *all* kinds of mobility aids; OR, negotiate with Pillsbury House Theater to provide fully ADA compliant solutions for future performances using their stage
- Consult an auditor outside of Lightning Rods internal organization

<p>will move to be where they are able to perform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space we use for rehearsal and performance (Pillsbury House + Theatre) is donated in-kind to us. The artistic leadership of the space has invited us to give feedback and actively solicits our thoughts on a continual basis. - Pillsbury House + Theatre ensures that front of house staff are available for our shows and rehearsals to answer questions and provide assistance 	<p>acute chemical sensitivities</p>	
<p>KNOWN BARRIERS - sensory experience, mobility, communication, knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Barriers to the full participation of artists with mobility aids such as wheel chairs, power chairs or walkers to the stage of Pillsbury House Theater - 		

ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

- How does the organization **promote the availability of any access services**, and/or **process to request them**, with appropriate symbols and person-first language? Is there a prominent **accessibility page** on the organization’s website?
- Does the organization **communicate known accessibility barriers** that it cannot currently address so people with disabilities can make informed choices about their participation?
- Does the organization **conduct outreach** to individual patrons and groups of/serving disability communities?
- Are there **multiple modes to communicate** with the organization to purchase tickets/register for events and communicate with staff?
- Has the organization conducted a **recent website audit**? What practices are in place to provide digital accessibility?

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Detailed access information about venue and performance about both available accommodations and existing barriers are provided online on event pages (hosting venues and social media)
- Detailed access information, including both available access accommodations and known barriers, about the annual production are included in artist application and the artist packet provided to curated participants on the first day of the intensive process
- Collaboration with Pillsbury House Theater to offer multiple modes of ticket purchase (in person, over phone, online); “open door” policy of artistic leadership, with offers to engage and communicate via in person meetings, phone or online

SHORT-TERM GOALS (3-18 months)

- Research and identify potential community partners (both organizations and individuals) that are part of disability communities, including existing public health services that are part of Pillsbury House Theater
- Initiate, explore and coordinate opportunities for engagement and relationship building with those community partners (potential tactics include organizing informal skill shares, hiring partners for trainings, 1:1 conversations)
- Organize and diversify processes of communication around accessibility with artist-participants and the public
- Evaluate artistic leadership’s understanding of disability and

LONG-TERM GOALS (18-36+ months)

- Develop an independent website for Lightning Rod to provide easy access to archival work and current accessibility information
- Determine ways to sustain and deepen trusting relationships with community partners and disability community members by committing to consistent communication and forms of outreach and engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated discussion regarding access needs, desires on first day of intensive • Outreach was attempted to the deaf theatre-going community of Minneapolis, particularly to those who identify as queer and trans, but our efforts were unsuccessful so far 	<p>access, and their ability to communicate effectively</p>	
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KNOWN BARRIERS - sensory experience, mobility, communication, knowledge

- Lack of low-vision materials and communications
- Lack of resources to hire ASL interpreters for every night of show run
- Past outreach was informal/relational between those already connected to the circles of communities around Lighting Rod

ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- How are **financial challenges** addressed? Does the organization offer any transportation assistance or ticket/registration discounts for people with disabilities? Are support staff offered admission at no cost? Are ADA guidelines met with regard to **seating options**?
- Are **access services** offered, and with what frequency? Services could include (but are not limited to): ASL interpretation, audio description (AD), assistive listening devices, Braille/large print publications, open/closed captioning, touch tours, quiet rooms.
- Does the organization provide **programming specifically designed to serve people with disabilities**? Does the organization intentionally **produce/present the work of people with disabilities**? How does the organization aim to provide opportunities in which people with disabilities are **fully integrated** into mainstream activities as **both creators and consumers of culture**?

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Sliding scale ticket prices are available to ***all*** patrons without any proof of income or “eligibility” required; PCA admitted at no cost and seating options are ADA compliant
- 1 night out of 2 night runs have ASL interpretation; quiet/low stimulus space available at all programming (public events and rehearsal processes)
- The Advisory Council for the organization includes artists with disabilities who are taking leadership in proposing access plans and projects
- Selection process of artists chosen for the annual event intentionally evaluates inclusion of artists with disabilities. Annual event has presented the work of artists with disabilities every year.

SHORT-TERM GOALS (3-18 months)

- Orient participants and leadership to the tools in the quiet/low stimulus space to invite and promote use
- Review and revise past accessibility information documents provided to artist participants as well as interviewing past participants with disabilities to determine shifts in future programming
- Leverage community relationships to elicit more applications from disability communities for the 2020 intensive

LONG-TERM GOALS (18-36+ months)

- Explore opportunities to sustain engagement with community partners (referenced in above section) through collaborating on disability specific programming outside of the annual arts intensive, which is centered on all historically marginalized identities
- Organize resources for a subsidized ticket fund / transportation support specifically for people with disabilities

KNOWN BARRIERS - sensory experience, mobility, communication, knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of audio-captioning and other low vision services, broader ASL interpretation- No disability specific programming at this time		