



**T4E Module #3 Part 3  
INTERNAL EQUITY AUDIT ANALYSIS & REPORT**

**LANGHAM COURT THEATRE**

July 2022

**T4E Module #3 – The Equity Audit**

**INTRODUCTION given at the workshop when the results were presented to the membership:**

This Langham Equity Audit was meant to be an *internal* audit with the people weighing in usually being the core people responsible for the day to day running of the theatre. But Langham Court Theatre is not run like a traditional organization, you're a community theatre, and a number of people over the years have been an integral part of putting on the seasonal plays – a lot of you have been involved in the business of creating shows, either as volunteer performers, or as part of the production team.

You've also gone through a few years of crisis, and the Board wanted to make this process as open and transparent as possible, and they extended the invitation quite widely to anybody who wanted to respond to the survey, making this audit also an *external* one. To date, the organizations I have worked with have had an average of 20-40 core internal staff respond to the survey, but 147 people from the Langham community responded, including 6 people I personally interviewed, which tells me that many of you are very invested in this equity process at Langham Theatre. Many of you care deeply about the well-being of this theatre.

I've mentioned before that it's been painful for us in the community to watch what's been happening at Langham (from the outside) but having carefully sifted through all this Equity Audit Information, I now understand more fully what the crisis has been about and how divided you've all been as a Langham theatre community. Some pretty hard, even harsh lines have drawn in the sand, despite the clear love for Langham on both sides of the divide.

I would like to also make clear that this information you're about to hear, is not my information, it's information from your own Langham community. The question to ask

yourself is, “Do I want to dig my heels in and maintain my position no matter what?” (whatever your position might be) or “Do I want to look inward and spend some time reflecting on what people in my community are saying?” You get to decide whether to stay the same, because everything is working as it should be, or whether to change and grow in new and unexpected ways. This is your theatre. You get to choose the future path it will take.

You may feel during these next few hours that most of what you’re hearing about are the *problems* at Langham. I want to reassure you that some wonderful things were said too, and I want to encourage you to keep doing those things. However, it’s only in addressing the problems that have surfaced that we can create change.

### **SUMMARY of Previous Workshop**

The Tools for Equity Training Programs is 5 modules deep. In Module #3, Part 1, we talked about the importance of an Equity Audit and why organizations should conduct one. The only real way organizations can assert they do not have any real problems with equity, diversity and inclusion issues is to look at their data using an Equity Audit process - to see what stories the numbers tell. You’ve just completed that, so congratulations! It’s now up to you and your team to complete the final three stages on this process.

## **Equity Audit Process**

### **1-Collection of Data**

Collect relevant data, uncover hidden problems, and established a baseline.

### **2-Examine & Analyze the Data**

Examine the data to establish where the pain points might be and set priorities.

### **3-Design Effective Strategies to Solve Identified Problems**

Begin to surface possible strategies and solutions for addressing those problems. Strategies that will interrupt and change inequitable patterns. The strategies need to be:

- Concrete & Specific
- Appropriate & Relevant
- Realistic
- Attainable
- Actionable & Measurable

#### **4-Implement the Equity Strategies to a Set Timetable**

So that staff and management can be held accountable.

#### **5-Track, Measure & Evaluate Changes**

You need to track the changes and results and measure the impact of your strategic equity plan. Are your strategies having the actual or anticipated effect? Are they leveraging the desired change? You should be assessing your equity progress at every turn and on an ongoing basis. And upon evaluation, you should be implementing needed course adjustments as needed. Adjustments are critical to effectively do this work. Be ready to adapt your Equity strategies as time goes by too.

#### **The Audit Instruments Used**

1. Survey & questionnaire
2. Personal Interviews

### **FINDINGS**

#### **LANGHAM PERSONALITY**

Who is Langham Court Theatre? How would someone describe your organization's personality?

#### **Positive:**

- *“Langham can feel like family – I have forged some of the best relationships of my life in that building”*
- *“I never thought of Langham as just a building, just a theatre, and until 5 years ago, Langham was warm, supportive and caring. I was pregnant with my two kids while doing shows there, and they threw baby showers for me. But because of the way this current situation has been handled, I’ve had to walk away from people that I really cared about. Those people were a big part of my life for a long time”*
- *“Langham is community minded - If you have any desire to be a part of the Langham Community, it’s really wonderful”*
- *“Those that have stayed are passionate and love the theatre”*
- *“There’s this willingness to do anything for a show”*
- *“Loyal” - To all the people you’ve worked with over the years*
- *“A theatre that puts on the best quality shows for its audience and for people working on them to have fun. A theatre that puts on shows that are entertaining and thought-provoking and that maintain a good standard of theatre”*

- *“Langham in its heyday was like a grand dam, you know, beautifully gussied up, with beautiful costumes and set designs. And very British. And then it morphed into a porcupine that is very, very prickly on the outside, but once you get in, it’s just cuddly and warm and a fun place to play in. But you have to get past the quills though”*
- *“Langham is a beaver, a very industrious and hardworking beaver. But maybe a not a too clever beaver...because if you came in as a new beaver and the big beaver saw you working on a tree that needed cutting, man you could get clipped, or whacked with that big tail”*
- Describes Langham as three different people (past, present and future)  
*“I hope the future person is like my grandfather, who’s sitting on the front porch, waving at all the neighbors, and inviting any of them who want to come up to have some lemonade and talk about the weather. It doesn’t matter who they are, they all live in the same neighbourhood, and everyone is his neighbour. Some might need help putting in the peas or the corn, and even though he might not move as fast as people want, he’ll go out there and help. He approaches everyone with a disposition of love. His grandson might have been raising hell last Saturday night, but he can still go back to Grandpa Walker, and they can talk about going fishing next weekend. The idea is that anybody in the community can have a welcoming, warm and safe place talking to grandpa on the porch. And it doesn’t matter what colour grandpa’s skin is or what language he speaks”*

Not so positive:

- There are two sides to Langham - *“Langham is like a welcoming Aunt, who’s always been great to me, but you know, who also voted for Trump and doesn’t like Black people”*
- *“Langham has been a place that is open and welcoming, inventive and creative, and other times it’s been like dealing with an old folk’s home with entrenched and frightened people who cannot deal with change. The backlash that you’re hearing now is people unwilling to change. They’re so frightened of change, its toxic”*
- *“If I were to describe the personality and character of the Langham of the past, it would be your well-to-do Aunt who thinks she’s just a little bit better than you. She’s nice enough to you, but in a very condescending way. She’s always dressed to the nines, her make-up and everything is perfect because, god help her, she’s not going public without everything looking perfect. She might not be wearing the latest style, but she’ll sigh and move on, after looking at her expensive watch*

*repeatedly, because she has more important things to do than spend time with you”*

- *“Langham is like a really charming person who’s walked out of the 1960’s. She’s a nice old person, who is also very racist. Their social attitudes have been preserved is aspic. They’re the kind of person who thinks it’s a compliment to say to a racialized person that you’re so well spoken”*
- *“The current personality of Langham is like my 16-year-old teenage son who just got the family car keys. Boy, the things he’s going to do! He’s got all sorts of good ideas, but he gets in the car and realizes he cannot drive a stick-shift. He doesn’t quite know the right way of getting things done”*
- *“I recognize now that the caring experience and the family that I had at Langham was...I was like in a bit of a bubble. It isn’t what everyone experienced, you know. That’s not what Langham was to everybody”*
- *“Sometimes Langham doesn’t feel like a person. It’s a vampire. We give ourselves to the place with passion, and it takes, and it takes, and it only rewards very specific people”*

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

### **Survey Categories:**

1. Definitions Used in the Survey
2. Information about you and your organization/Workforce Data
3. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in the Work Environment: Leadership & Governance
4. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in the Work Environment: Transparent Staffing & Workforce Practices
5. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in the Work Environment: Organizational Culture
6. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: Measuring & Tracking Diversity
7. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in the Work Environment: Building a Diverse Talent Pool
8. Perceptions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusions in the Work Environment: Diversity Across the External Equity Framework

## A Note on Timeframes:

Usually, an Audit is snapshot of the where an organization stands today, at a given moment in time. It uses data to provide a baseline story from this point onward, so that an organization can be accountable for any changes thereafter.

It was a little trickier for Langham respondents to gauge timeframes, mainly because of the crisis the theater has been going through, and the recent change in leadership that marked a drastic change in culture at Langham. So, Langham's on the cusp of a shift. On top of it, the theatre also had to pause activities due to the pandemic, as well as pause to do this anti-racism training.

This made it difficult for some to answer some of the survey questions. They ended up splitting the timeframes this way:

- Community membership: Old Guard vs. New Guard
- Leadership: Old Board vs Current Board
- Pre-Covid vs Post-Covid

However, people made their points pretty clear in the *comments section* where they stood regarding these questions.

**Total Responses: 147**

**NB:** Please reference the attached Survey Monkey Analysis Document & File.

Percentages are rounded up in my analysis below.

Recommendations are made in red

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFO

### Q. 25 – 32

#### Gender

- Female 47%
- Male 31%
- Gender Queer 3%
- Non-binary 2%
- Self-identified: Non-binary/Transgender 1%
- Prefer not to answer 12%
- 98 answered, 49 skipped this question

## Age

- 65 years and above: 37%
- 56 – 65 years: 13%
- 46 -55 years: 7%
- 36 – 45 years: 12%
- 26 – 35 years: 17%
- Other: 12%
- 98 answered, 49 skipped this question
- 57% are above the age of 46. Recommend trying to attract a younger demographic to Langham going forward

## Years at Langham

- About 55% have been involved with Langham for 6 years and more. That's more than half of those who responded.
- One person said they'd been involved with Langham for 60+ years! Others: 14, 16, 17, 35, 40, 41, 48, 55...years. Indicating strong loyalties to the theatre.

## Self-Identification

- Do you identify as someone from an equity-seeking group? No – 70% and Yes – 23%
- Of the 23% that said yes, 13 identified as a person with a disability, 12 as LGBTQS2+, 5 as racialized, and 1 person as Indigenous
- Other responses: Low income, single parent, person of size, Jewish

## Languages Spoken

- 77 people answered this question, and of those, 43 said they spoke no other language besides English
- 27 people – French, 7 – Spanish, 3 – Hebrew, 3 – German, 2 – Italian, 2 – Russian, 2 – Yiddish, 2 – Bulgarian, 2 – American Sign language, 1 – Mandarin, 1 – Norwegian, 1 – Portuguese, 1 – Greek, 1 – Tagalog, 1 – Ukrainian, 1 – Ilocano (Austronesian language, Philippines), 1 – Beaver (Endangered First Nation Language, BC & Alberta)

## Identify as an Immigrant

- 20 people identified as an immigrant (from visible and non-visible groups)

## ORGANIZATION MAKE-UP

### Q 1. Core business of Organization: Arts, Entertainment & Recreation – 89%

A few people wanted to verify that Langham was not a business or corporation, but a volunteer-based, non-profit, community theatre.

### Q 2. Position in Organization:

- 69% - Volunteer
- 6% - Board Member
- 7% - Staff or Administrative Support
- 4% - Middle Manager
- 1% - Senior Manager
- 1% - First Level Manager
- Others: Former Staff, Audience member, Actor, General member, On-going supporter.

## WORKFORCE DATA

### Q. 3 – 13 – Tracking diversity metrics throughout the organization

#### Q. 3 Langham has Policies on:

- Diversity and Equity
- Harassment and Abuse Prevention
- Workplace Safety
- Code of Conduct and Ethics

I recommend you make everyone, staff and volunteers, aware that they exist and how they can access them when needed. Guidelines should also be provided about the process of reporting any incidents that pertain to the above. You might also want to consider creating Performers Agreements.

#### Q. 4 Equal pay audits

Langham says that pay audits are “somewhat” conducted at the theatre to ensure equal pay for work of equal value – this is because your theatre is largely volunteer, and community based.

However, I would not entirely ignore running pay audits on your admin. staff positions and any honorariums you may give out, especially as you start to attract wider



community representation from marginalized groups. Consideration should be given to how that “pay” is decided, or to any other “reward” decisions in general. I encourage you to filter those decisions through the equity lens.

#### **Q. 5 - 7 Diversity Metrics**

Langham says it “somewhat” collects and tracks data on underrepresented groups such as racialized people, women, disabled, people of minoritized religions, and LGBTQ2S+ individuals.

I recommend that Langham starts doing so. When it does, the data should also be tracked in employee separations such as retirements, dismissals and voluntary exits because this data can tell you a lot about what you’re doing right or wrong. More importantly, the data should be reported with feedback loops for action (Langham says it’s already doing this, which is good).

#### **Q. 8 – 13 Participation of underrepresented groups at upper staff levels**

Langham says:

- There are diversity targets for staff from underrepresented groups in management/leadership
- Data is collected on the participation of underrepresented groups at each management level/senior level
- Metrics used to track and collect this diversity data: *“Staff are welcome to self-identify as they feel comfortable. In the hiring and onboarding process, we ask staff to share their racial and/or cultural identities, as well as gender, sexual orientation, or disability identifiers with us”*
- Metrics used to track participation of underrepresented groups on your Board: *“We actively encourage people from underrepresented groups to join our Board of Directors, especially those with anti-racism training or those seeking to open the theatre up to broader communities than we have served in the past. Board recruits are welcomed to self-identity as they feel comfortable. Biographies of the folks running for the board are shared with the membership at the AGM. Once board directors are voted in and ready for an onboarding process, we ask them to share their racial and/or cultural identities, as well as gender, sexual orientation, or disability identifiers with us, as well as their access needs for a safe workplace and practices”*

I highly encourage you to continue collecting the participation of underrepresented groups in any leadership or supervisory positions at the Langham (in real data that’s

accessible) for example, on the Board, in Administration, on Committees, on Productions Teams, on Audition Panels, Director & Producer roles etc.

Also consider tracking this diversity data among your volunteers (at least the core volunteer group) and your seasonal casts (per show and annually.) This will help you officially track your **baselines numbers**, starting in 2022.

## PERCEPTIONS OF EDI - IN LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

### Q. 14 Leadership & Governance – Perceptions of EDI

- (1) 62% Strongly Agree & Agree that Langham is committed to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- (2) 46% Strongly Agree or Agree that Langham’s vision regarding EDI is consistently communicated consistently and regularly vs 26% who don’t think so
- (3) 47% Strongly Agree & Agree that there is strong leadership support for EDI vs 26% that Disagree or Strongly Disagree

### Comments (8/17):

- *“The current NEW board has created a hostile environment and I feel threatened by them and unwelcome”*
- *“The current board is not inclusive, and is actively creating dissention”*
- *“If the theatre is closed, you cannot include anyone!”*
- *“Leadership is committed. Membership far less so”*
- *“The current board is beginning this work, however the past leadership have not been supportive of diverse needs”*
- *“The current Board of Directors is highly focused on EDI, justice, and creating safe(r) spaces. What is difficult at this time, is that the BOD is not being respected for their leadership, skill, or the diverse backgrounds from which they came. It is hard to say the society ‘makes it easy for diverse people to fit in and be accepted’ when the BOD who are diverse, are being subject to ongoing harassment and attack and being told we do not belong. The BOD is responsible for HR and employment practices. If we cannot guarantee our own acceptance or fitting in, how can we guarantee it for another diverse participant?”*
- *“EDI is a new priority, and we haven’t had a show since the new Board and policy has taken effect. Past show directors (middle managers) have been problematic”*
- *“As a board member, I strongly agree that the new governance/leadership in place strongly supports EDI/anti-racism work, but this has not been reflected in*

*leadership in the past to the point of blatant anti-Black racism and discrimination viewed in the community. The leadership of this organization always changes, so while the current leadership is the most committed to EDI work, there is very little buy in from the previous leadership who continue to view themselves as the spokespeople of the society. It is incredibly complicated, but the hostility towards those who support anti-racism work (aka the new board and community members) is incredibly clear”*

#### **Q. 15 Diverse representation on Board & Senior leadership**

- In Senior Leadership – 47% said Yes or Somewhat
- On Board – 53% said Yes or Somewhat

Question:

- What does your “somewhat” mean in this case? Does it mean some Gender, Ability & LGBTQ2S+ representation?

#### **Comments: (5/13)**

- *“I selected “somewhat” because many of our leadership staff are from white, European settler backgrounds, however, those same people identify as disabled, neurodivergent, and/or women, so still offer representation of marginalized groups”*
- *“YES, the NEW board has diverse leaders from underrepresented groups that have lost the opportunity of a teaching moment to burn down the group out of spite and revenge”*
- *“New board took over from long term supporters. The ‘**underrepresented**’ are those who have put their lifeblood into the theatre”*
- *“Current board does NOT include any of Langham’s ‘**original**’ community, or of a ‘**certain**’ age”*
- *“This current board consists mainly of people under the age of 40. This does not represent the bulk of the working volunteer at the theatre, most of whom are over age 60”*

### **PERCEPTIONS OF EDI – IN TRANSPARENT STAFFING WORKPLACE PRACTICES**

#### **Q. 16 Workplace Practices and Professional Development Opportunities**

- Only 23% Strongly Agree/Agree that all employees are **held accountable** regarding upholding values of EDI in the organization. And 67% disagree/strongly disagree/neither agree nor disagree (neutral) or just don't know
- 27% Strongly Agree/Agree that everyone at Langham has access to **employment opportunities** (i.e., on Boards, Staffing, Production or in Shows) regardless of their difference, vs 62% that disagree/strongly disagree/neither agree nor disagree (neutral) or just don't know
- 31% Strongly Agree/Agree that Langham has done a good job providing **training** programs that promote EDI. But 59% disagree/strongly disagree/are neutral or don't know.

**Comments (9/16):**

- *“These practices have not been the norm at the society. That is shifting with the current BOD and their responsibility for employment issues”*
- *“Opportunities to work as a performer or director are not equally posted. It makes the process feel elite or closed, not open for participation”*
- *“I don't think Langham has done more than lip service when it comes to making audition notices more inclusive”*
- *“We are only at the beginning of our EDI journey as an organization”*
- *“Based on feedback and consultation with several past general managers, there is much to improve when it comes to who can work for this organization, proper pay, safe working environments, and respect of position. These roles have been predominantly filled by white people, so anyone who is BIPOC would have an immensely more difficult time navigating this”*
- *“We've had a method of reporting unfair practices for the last several years (at least 4 or 5 years)”*
- *“These items are so far from relevant to Langham that I will not respond”*
- *“I don't know because the NEW board has not been transparent with the membership. They haven't been timely with their board minutes, and they have written the minutes in a way that appears to frontload an agenda. I find much in the minutes that are not accurate or that attempt to cover up certain of their actions”*
- *“Under the current board, NOTHING is happening. Under previous boards, volunteerism was recognized, staff were treated fairly, and shows were cast (for the most part) according to who was best for the show. NONE of this is happening because a new group of inexperienced Board members, who have*

*had little to no experience in the organizational culture, are trying to 'fix' things that aren't broken"*

**Recommendations:**

1. Plan for more EDI training opportunities annually for everyone
2. Hold a Strategic & Planning meeting to re-look at the organizational structure and roles at Langham (see Responsibilities and Organizational Chart drafted by Karrie Ayotte, March 2014)

**Q. 17 Human Resources & Staffing**

A large percentage of respondents didn't seem to know or answered N/A to this section.

- 38% say that "yes", Langham does and "somewhat" recruits from underrepresented groups. And 30% say an outright "no" to this statement. And the other 32% say they "don't know" or N/A.
- 27% say individuals involved in the hiring & auditioning process at Langham don't receive specialized training on bias-free hiring vs 11% who say "yes" and "somewhat" they do. The rest don't know or N/A.

**Comments: (7/11)**

- *"Current board is beginning to implement these practices. Previously it is not the case"*
- *"Only recently, as per court mandate as I understand"*
- *"EDI and anti-racism training is offered to all levels of participants (volunteers to staff). Our HR committee would benefit from bias-free training before the next hiring process"*
- *"Our new code of conduct and on-boarding process includes EDI training and consult about incorporating EDI within new work processes"*
- *"I think there is now training in place for directors and producers regarding EDI, but this is a recent development"*
- *"The only new hires the new board have made appear to be personal friends – so, NO, the new board does not appear to be equitable"*
- *"It's a community theatre, for crying out loud. I applaud and respect the work of the ICA, but whoever designed this survey was given very poor direction. Langham has ONE issue, with a person of colour who was not cast because the director (rightly or wrongly) did not see that in their vision for the play (a period piece, and very site specific). For ALL of my time at LCT, I have seen people of all races,*

*genders, sexual orientation, ages and levels of experience made welcome in the organization as a whole. Which is NOT just about casting. The latest board have divided and damaged a (mostly) caring, supportive community of (mostly) like-minded artist and volunteers. This whole thing makes me very heartsick”*

### **Recommendations:**

1. Only 9% said an outright “yes” Langham does this, so I recommend internships, co-ops, and placement programs recruit more diverse candidates including those from underrepresented groups
2. Only 6% said “yes” Langham does this, so I recommend that individuals involved in the hiring and auditioning process receive specialized training on bias-free hiring
3. Only 9% said “yes” to this, so I encourage that all managers/supervisors/committee leads, and the Board receive specialized leadership training on EDI

### **PERCEPTION ON EDI – REGARDING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

#### **Q. 18 - 21 (20 Statements on culture – a lot of people responded to this section)**

- 42% Strongly Agree or Agree that Langham is welcoming to members of all groups vs 48% who Disagree or Strongly Disagree. And
- 50% say a new person coming into Langham will not see cultural diversity represented on their first visit to Langham. And if you include those who don’t know and say it’s not applicable to them, that percentage goes up to 81%
- 50% say they feel a sense of belonging at Langham vs 35% who don’t, plus an additional 10% who say they don’t know where they fall.
- 42% say cultural differences are respected at Langham, But 58% disagree, don’t know or answered N/A to this same question
- 55% Agree or Strongly Agree that there is work being done so that underrepresented groups feel safe from discrimination.
- 23% Disagree or Strongly disagree that there are opportunities at Langham to provide feedback on how EDI issues are handled, But half of you, 51%, say there are opportunities for feedback. So, the good news is people say they’re feeling heard but is this simply via organic, one-on-one means or do you have concrete mechanisms in place for feedback? **If not, I recommend that you create a concrete Feedback Mechanism that everyone is aware of.**

- While 43% feel that everyone is treated fairly, but 58% feel that certain people are treated more favorably than others
- 63% of those surveyed say they've not been a target of offensive language. 71% says they've not received inappropriate physical contact. 54% haven't witnessed racism at Langham. This indicates that people feel relatively safe at Langham. However, 29% have been a target of offensive language, 16% have received inappropriate touch, and 45% have witnessed discrimination at Langham. **This is highly unacceptable, and all of this should be addressed.**
- About 43% don't know how to report a concern about discrimination. Most of the rest do. **I recommend that Reporting Protocols be made ultra-clear.**
- 45% Strongly Agree or Agree that Langham will take appropriate action in response to incidents of discrimination, but 48% don't agree or don't know that they will. **Langham needs to put in place a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination of any sort. Again, it needs to be made ultra-clear.**
- On whether Langham is able to retain diverse and racialized people in the organization, 30% say NO, whereas 30% are confident that the organization can, with 32% answering they don't know or N/A. But again, you'll only really PROVE this once the organization is more representative of the wider community.
- 51% say "Yes" and "Somewhat" to flexible working arrangements being available at Langham
- A large percentage 78% don't know or responded N/A to whether Langham had family-friendly policies at the theatre. **This is something to consider if you attract more racialized people with different traditional practices, responsibilities, values, and social structures around family life.**

#### Comments: (18/34)

- *"Members/Volunteers who have given years to Langham are treated with the respect they deserve"*
- *"The discrimination/racism I witnessed was 'positive' – i.e., someone from a minority 'jumped the queue and was given special allowances' based on their shell"*
- *"CURRENTLY, nothing is happening, PREVIOUSLY, there was as much diversity as one small, oldey timey theatre club could hold. Race, sexual orientation, skill level, time commitment, age...if you wanted to come to LCT and volunteered behind the scenes, Front of House, behind the booth, box office or WHEREVER, you were made welcome to do so. If you auditioned for a part and weren't chosen...that is PART OF THEATRE"*

- *“The new board is NOT AT ALL WELCOMING to certain types of people. I hate to say this, but the new board appears to be championing the marginalized by waging war with the established group. It really is terrible modeling for how to create an environment of acceptance. They all appear to be angry, angry, people”*
- *“This is currently not a safe space for anyone who is an adversary to the ‘old guard’ or past ways of operating. This is not a safe space for speaking up or trying to make change or create equitable, just practices”*
- *“The biggest issue I have with this organization is that it has appeared to include the same people year after year”*
- *“Over a ten year, I see there are slow improvements happening”*
- *“I feel safe telling my story to the new Board. I wouldn’t have spoken up with past supervisors”*
- *“Under the current Board, work is now starting to ensure that employees from underrepresented groups can feel safe from discrimination”*
- *“I believe the current Board would take appropriate action in response to discrimination. Past Boards have done the opposite and created more harm”*
- *“A core group of longtime members have overtaken the opportunities to participate (Example: same 6 show directors for the past 20 years). This does not allow for equal participation. As for reporting, there is a new incident report system being implemented. I only know of it because of the Board, most folks have never had a mechanism for reporting”*
- *“The current BOD has shown that they will take action to remedy incidents of discrimination or harm. What is difficult, is the pressure from many members who ‘want proof’ or disbelieve those who speak up. A new incident reporting system has been created. We will continue to communicate the process for reporting incidents to members at every onboarding event (ex. New creative teams beginning a project together)”*
- *“I don’t think I can speak for how others feel. Also, there is much upheaval at the moment and little opportunity to be a part of community. Difficult to say what one might see since changes (are happening) during this time. I used to feel welcome but am no longer sure about that, so I didn’t know how to answer this question”*
- *“I received an offensive letter from a volunteer who is currently a Board member”*
- *“In the years I have been a volunteer, I have worked with many marginalized people. The only criteria has been ‘if you say you’ll do a job – turn up on time, regularly and do the job””*



- *The current Board is changing this; however, it continues to be a challenge with hostile membership who are change-avoidant”*
- *“Maybe once they start operating again; inclusive of racialized people, women, disabled, people of minoritized religions, and LGBTQ2S+ individuals. Just as they always have. Come on now. It’s theatre: LGBTQ are a cornerstone to this art form”*
- *“It is difficult to answer these questions since the theatre has not been operating for over 2 years, partly due to COVID. It is very unfortunate that the current Board decided to cancel the current season of plays, because we have no way of enacting anti-discrimination training. The ‘offensive language’ I have been subjected to occurred during my time on the Transition Committee. Some of the more vocal members of that committee took out their rage on the older members of the committee who dared to express a different opinion from their own. The transition Committee fostered a toxic, discriminatory environment where diverse voices were certainly not welcomed. The ‘unwanted physical touching’ occurred over 40 years ago. It was one minor incident which I chose not to report – we didn’t in those days”*

**Comments: (Flexible work arrangements & Family-Friendly work policies)**

- *Someone wanted to know the “relevance” of these questions, and another didn’t think these questions apply “to a volunteer theatre setting”*
- *“As a Board Director with children, I am constantly put under pressure to perform with tight deadlines (under 24 hours). It is crisis after crisis due to the longtime toxic environment created by a core group of volunteers. My needs as a parent are not respected by the membership”*
- *“Rehearsal blocks are extremely long and shows run for long stretches of time, which makes it hard to manage and juggle other commitments. All is unpaid labour”*
- *“The BOD supports workplace accommodations regarding these topics; however, the membership is highly critical of anyone not working to their expectations of productivity or professionalism. This is difficult when most participants are volunteering their time and need to address the necessities of life rather than their volunteer duties”*
- *“Doesn’t apply to the theatre where when you’re working on a production, you make a 3 to 4-month commitment to that project”*
- *“I cannot quote any such provisions in my contract, but I’m sure that the theatre would always be accommodating of reasonable requests re extended leaves etc.”*

## MEASURING & TRACKING DIVERSITY

### Q.22

- EDI is consistently included as part of the Strategic plans of Langham – 44% said yes and somewhat. I hope you have these strategies to show. And 43% said No or they Didn't Know.

#### Comments:

- *"We are at the beginning of this work, so it has not yet been consistent"*
- *"Currently, yes. Previous leadership, no"*
- *"It certainly is now"*
- *"I think so, but because I receive no snail mail information, I am only guessing"*
- *"The current Board is endeavoring to do this, but previous grant application have outlined explicitly who they are seeking to attract and cater to, and it has been seniors and women as target audiences. The behaviour at Langham in the last several years has also shown little drive to take equity and diversity seriously"*
- *"Strategic plans are not worth the paper they are written on"*

#### Recommendations:

1. Include EDI strategies in future Langham Strategic Plans. Filter all new decisions through and equity lens, until it becomes second nature, a habit.
2. Consider broadening the types of grants you apply for.

## BUILDING DIVERSE TALENT POOL

### Q 23

- Does Langham do cultural outreach? – 38% says Yes and Somewhat, 54% say No or Don't know.
- Recommend Langham organize more cultural outreach opportunities with various cultural groups and when you do create these outreach and networking events, consider diversity issues like religious restrictions, childcare, accessibility needs, holy days, cultural traditions and cultural norms. Only 8% say these are considered at Langham now.
- Only 12% said Langham consults with various cultural communities to develop programs and services that meet their needs. I highly recommend you create an

Outreach & Community Engagement Committee, especially if you'd like to foster real and meaningful relationships outside of the ones you currently serve. Alternatively, create a paid position for a person who deals with Community Outreach and Engagement. Even better if this person is racialized and has EDI experience.

**Comments: (4/9)**

- *"I don't believe these questions are relevant to a volunteer theatre organization"*
- *"In my experience, the theatre has only reached out to cultural organizations when they needed a POC to play a role"*
- *"Individuals did some, with little or no support from the Board"*
- *"This organization is currently too hostile to be reaching out and bringing in new cultural groups"*
- *"We need to improve outreach and consult practices"*

**DIVERSITY ACROSS THE EXTERNAL EQUITY FRAMEWORK**

**Q. 24**

- Only 18% clearly said organizational communications and promotional materials require inclusive language and images. 14% said Langham somewhat does this. **I recommend setting concrete Communication Guidelines around this.**
- Do Langham programs cater to diverse consumers? 43% said Yes or Somewhat. But 46% said No or I don't Know. **I'm assuming this diversity is referring to that other than cultural.**
- Only 9 % clearly said that Langham customer service people dealing with diverse clients get EDI training. **Recommend that any Langham personnel or Volunteers dealing with diverse clients get appropriate Diversity Training.**
- Only 4% think that diverse external stakeholders are prioritized when selecting partners, collaborators, suppliers etc. **I recommend that you create External Partner Guidelines for selecting who you work with. And make these decisions through the Equity lens.**

**Comments: (3/7)**

- *"Theatre is closed in order to set up systems to properly address the above"*

- *“Regarding organizational communications, not all communications would or could require images, as far as I know, we have provisions for Braille text when or if it may be required”*
- *“Special needs – Langham needs handicapped washrooms (funds are in place) & better access to auditorium”*

## PERSONAL INTERVIEW RESULTS

### INTERVIEW DEMOGRAPHICS

**Number Interviewed:** 6

**Length of involvement with Langham:** From 5 yrs – 50 yrs of service (Langham is 90 years old)

**Positions at Langham:** Board, Staff (various capacities), Production Crew, Directors, Served on Langham Committees, Volunteers and/or Performers and Actors

**Identity Representations:** (one or more identities): Male, Female, White, LGBTQ2S+, Cisgendered, Racialized, Non-white, ADHD, Fat

Some of the people I interviewed got very emotional talking about where Langham finds itself to date. The tears were not far away. They were very invested in sharing what they have experienced and observed. They were candid and honest about what they’ve been going through these last few years. I find that people are only this generous and courageous when they’re hoping for better things for their organization. To quote someone,

*“I walked away from Langham because my values were no longer aligning with what was going on at the theater, but I became a member again because I wanted to vote in this new Board. I wouldn’t have asked to be a part of this audit process if I was going to completely turn my back and walk away. I want to see Langham succeed. I want to see it change”*

### LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

*“I’d like to say that Langham has been managed, not governed over the years. Governance is distinct, and our Boards have not grappled well with things like bylaws and other governance issues”*

*“The past Langham leadership had some (not enough) representation, but I would say it was overwhelmingly a representation of European ancestry. And one of the things I notice about the current Board is the overwhelming preponderance of women. There’s more diversity than before, but there are definite segments of our society that are still not represented as sitting members. It is very difficult for me, as a member, to understand”*

*“Given that I’ve been involved with Langham for a very long time, the leadership at the theatre was more representative of people with a British background, but that was only in the early days. It didn’t include every ethnic or cultural group in the community, but there wasn’t any attempt to exclude anybody”*

*“The leadership didn’t spend every day saying this, but we did value diversity and inclusion. Our constitution and mission statement talked a lot about welcoming people from all walks of life, about being open...this was part of our mandate. Whether we were successful, I can’t say that’s always been the case”*

*“The leadership at Langham has been predominantly white and privileged. This has been one of the flaws of the theatre. It’s been largely dominated by men in the leadership role, with older white women later on. And it wasn’t until we formalized the position of GM at Langham that we were able to start seeing some better management & administrative practice”*

*“The Langham leadership of the past has been representative of the core Langham community, not of the larger community of Victoria or even the Victoria Theatre community - and it has been predominantly older and white”*

*“There have been personalities, some with good theatre training, and some with not so good training, that have found a place for themselves at Langham. Not all of them were likeable or socially mobile, and they loved to run the theatre like their fiefdom. They haven’t managed to handle new ideas or changes or even new personalities well”*

*“Remember, the whole purpose of Langham Theatre is to put on plays, and if we’re going to have other voices represented, I would much rather have plays representing a variety of voices and a variety of viewpoints and segments of society, than have a diverse Board”*

*“To be perfectly honest, most of the public doesn’t care who’s on any Executive Board. If the plays are giving voice to these otherwise unheard segments of our society, that’s more powerful than the gender or racial distribution of Board Members”*

*“The same group of people have held power at Langham for a very long time, and it’s been hard for them to let go”*

*“The Board election process at Langham has been more like a popularity contest. It’s not always been based on the skills that someone brings to the table. That’s partly due to the AGM’s at Langham being notoriously painful and long, and they’re mostly attended by the members who have been around for a long time - like 20, 30 years. The members who have done 50 productions, the ‘core group’ of people at Langham – the club. The same 50 people who are at every meeting”*

*“There was a time at Langham that all the photographs you saw on the walls were of white people, so no, the leadership at Langham hasn’t represented the broader community”*

*“Some people in leadership have wanted to try to understand the importance of diversity & inclusion, they’ve made gestures and said some words, but there’s a lack of understanding about what it really means...they blindly say things like, ‘well we’re not excluding people’, assuming that equates to creating a welcoming environment. They just have no idea”*

*It’s been the same people year after year who were on the board or as production chair. They come from a position of, ‘This is the way we’ve always done things’ or worse, ‘This is my place, and I don’t want to see it change’. They’re very vocal against the shift and change in the new Board”*

*“There were groups of people who spent time on the board, and who were heads of committees that were excellent. They were trained and had experience outside of the community that gave them skills that they would bring to bear on how a board and theatre could be managed”*

*“There have been some sterling moments of leadership at Langham, where peoples vision and magnanimity shone through, but there have also been some pretty awful, comical and dreadful moments too...where things like sexual harassment was swept under the rug because ‘boys will be boys’...or the times people were reduced to tears for speaking up and subsequently blacklisted as troublemakers, or even lost their roles... There was no mechanism from the top to deal with issues like these, they kept the dirty laundry tightly inside”*

*“There was a powerhouse of four women who developed many tools to improve the quality of the governance and management at Langham. They were Michelle Buck (the best GM we ever had), Michelle Mitchell, Karrie Ayotte and Angela Henry. They put in*

*place practices that helped guide the work i.e. HR policies like WorkSafe, Hiring guidelines, a Code of Conduct, Communications guidelines, Harassment policies & Legal guidelines”*

*“Michelle Buck and Michelle Mitchell, the past GM and past Board president, worked tirelessly toward a vision of inclusiveness and diversity. Their efforts have often been maligned. With a reasonable and respectful and courageous board, we would not be where we are now. Langham should hire a GM and Production Manager ASAP with a thorough hiring process”*

*“The leadership and board structure at Langham needs to be re-looked at and changed. It’s really problematic. The power dynamics don’t hold some of the leadership accountable and have caused a lot of harm in the past. The structure is set up to let some individuals hold all the power and make decisions that no one else can legally go against, even when the GM and Board President clearly express that a certain decision is wrong. There are no checks and balances... for instance if the Production Chair did something that was harmful – like put a swastika on a poster - the Board had no authority to reverse that decision.”*

*“Paid staff at Langham could be held accountable but not production staff, who could make decisions that would require 2/3 of the membership to challenge”*

*“The current Board is trying to make sweeping changes, but do not have the people power or time to do it. They need to delegate”*

*“Boards changed every two years, and some were wonderful, and some were bad. The good boards started putting in place policies like a Harassment policy, HR practices and legal protections, but it totally depended on who the active players were and what committees were filled, or who had the skills. Many of the people were conflict averse, so if they couldn’t deal with a problem head-on, it was swept under the rug”*

*“A lot of good management work was done in the last few years just before the troubles began, but it was often met with a great deal of push back from the old guard, from that little group of heavy hitting bullying men”*

*“The leadership haven’t often communicated the value of diversity and inclusion at Langham, but there’s definitely been more focus on that since the recent events and everything surrounding the Human Rights Tribunal”*

*“The importance of EDI wasn’t effectively communicated by the Langham leadership, but it certainly wasn’t discouraged either. I’d say it wasn’t front and center. There would be*

*things like territorial acknowledgements, for instance. But again, you need more than lip service for anything to be really meaningful”*

*“The current Board have made diversity and inclusion, front and center. For good and for bad. They may have the most inclusive, forward-thinking ideas and representative processes in the world, but unless they’re putting on plays, who cares? Nobody is going to see it. So, the real test will be when they actually open the theatre”*

*“The new Board, the new guard, boy do they have passion! But they don’t necessarily have the experience to work with the old guard at Langham. Their heart is in the right place, but some of them are coming at this from a very adversarial place. They don’t seem to have the patience to work with those who are only beginning to understand their privilege, those who can actually change. They’re not giving people the space to do that. There’s obviously no point in trying to reach the people who are absolutely against you, but you can find ways to work with the middle”*

*“Leadership hasn’t responded well at all to incidences of discrimination”*

*“The leadership always tried to accommodate the old guards. Promises would be made to get things sorted, but they would die at the Board-level. The old Board was always an impediment to everything!”*

*“There were attempts at the Board level to be inclusive and representative, but that becomes really challenging when the entire Board doesn’t exhibit these values, when there is denial right at the leadership level that’s there is even an issue to be addressed”*

*“The new Board came in with some very good ideas, but they’ve forgotten the goal, which is to put on plays. To just shut down the theatre? What a shame. What a lost opportunity! If they want to make the biggest impact in our community, they should put on plays that reflect diverse ideas, diverse cultures, and represent many voices”*

*“I was there at the recent AGM, where this newly elected group was standing outside the theatre with clipboards checking off their friends who’d shown up to get instant membership. It had the appearance of a hostile takeover of the Board. That’s never going to succeed. Even though the current Board has come in with some very good ideas, they have made a terrible mistake in alienating so many people, because even though the people before may put their teeth on edge, people can learn. People can be brought along. You’ve got to win them over because your ideas are better. It’s the right thing to do. Nobody is going to argue with you when it’s blindingly obvious this is the right thing to do”*



*“A Board should represent the entire membership. The strength of any organization, when it comes to change, is that everybody is doing it together. Otherwise, there will be a schism and ongoing friction. What I’m really afraid of with this new leadership, is that somewhere down the road, the pendulum will swing the other way again, as an overreaction to the really well-intentioned and I believe, well thought out changes so long overdue. It will be a reaction because some people are feeling alienated”*

*“I went to the last AGM and for 2 hours my heartrate was above 120 beats per minute. When I got home, I was still shaking, and I had a migraine. I almost had to take a sick day the next day because my body felt like it had gone into shock from all the anxiety. I couldn’t believe that this Langham was about those people who I had thought of as family...they were not acting like it”*

*“The current governing procedure at present needs work. I have real concern that the process may be hobbling the journey”*

*“We have a volunteer Board and sometimes a position on the Board was not filled because nobody wanted to do all that work, and every once in a while, a small-town oligarch, who loved the work stepped in, and then hung in there with their teeth, and it was very difficult to get them out”*

*“I think previous Boards valued diversity, but they may not have understood how to actually go into community and mine the pockets of our community that aren’t represented. They simply ran Langham like it was a prestigious club that you had to come and get accepted into, and as long as you fit in, you were welcome...But sometimes fitting in meant that you didn’t want to make changes, that you weren’t outspoken and that you didn’t challenge the existing status quo”*

*“There’s some inherent issues and inequality just in the way the leadership structure at Langham is set up. It’s a working Board, and there’s a lot of work that’s required, and it’s really difficult if you’re a younger person, if you’re raising a family, and have a full-time job. That’s why the board is typically made up of older, often retired white folk who have time and financial means. And there has always been a very strong resistance to the idea of rethinking how the Board operates” **I recommend that Langham does some real thinking about how its Board operates in the future in this respect. Some consideration should also be made as to whether the positions can be partially subsidized by grant funds.***

*“The thing that really scares me right now and since we elected this new Board is that only people with financial capacity are able to volunteer the countless hours needed to govern and be on the Board, but the people that really want the change are the ones*

*that struggle most with finding the time and capacity to devote that time and energy to the theatre”*

*“For the most part, the folks that feel very threatened by what’s been happening at Langham, are the ones that don’t understand why there’s a problem at all, the ones that say, ‘Why can’t we just go back to making pleasant theatre together?’ – those are mostly the people that have the time and means to give to the theatre. So it feels almost dangerous to me, you know? I really worry about this”*

*“It’s a big commitment for some to be on the Board, and I would suggest creating and selecting committees with representatives from different segments of our society who could be included in the decision-making process. They’d have an input. Also, members could be part of committees to support the leadership without too much commitment”*  
*(Great recommendation)*

*“You know, after the Me-too Movement, and the recent George Floyd incident, some of us who are more activist at Langham were waiting for Langham to come on board, to do the right thing...I mean other theatre companies all over the country were making statements, making changes, and Langham was just lagging, lagging, lagging in response, despite the many letters me and others sent to the Board...they were just ignored. No one wanted to address the issues at hand. A number of us ended up resigning because we could see Langham was at cross-roads and this was going to sink this organization...I just thought this place is doomed until it burns...”*

*“Previous ills at Langham Theatre have spread like a cancer through the body, and the condition has metastasized. We now have a new illness. Distrust for the current Board is now growing unnecessarily, and as opposed to corrective surgery, people are attempting to remove an old tumor with a chainsaw”*

*“A group stood up for election hoping to solve the crisis at Langham. They said they wanted to work with us, they said let’s do this together - we have a problem, let US figure out a way to solve it. Well, they’ve got my vote, every time”*

*“The leadership transition from past to present wasn’t handled with care...the new Board wasn’t given access to past information. They were left in the dark. This was not a responsible way to hand over that governance role. The new Board is like having to start from scratch”*

*“**Communication** from the previous executive was always very good. You’d get the newsy Newsletter that covered everything that was happening at the theatre, from the*

*costume loft updates, to social events, to productions, to even productions that other companies were putting on”*

*“The current Board **communication** has been abysmal. Absolutely terrible. It should not take weeks to get a response from a simple email. It’s not acceptable. I put in a request for information for a number of things, and still haven’t heard anything back. The communication has been, slow, slow, slow. They’ve shared with the membership that they have to take care of their health, and their families and their jobs...and maybe they’re overwhelmed...but if these other things are so overwhelming in your life, maybe you should not have stood for a position on the board. They still have duties as members of the executive, and this just rings so hollow with me. It gives the impression that they’re just not really committed to their work”*

*“You asked about leadership, do you know it took six weeks for the Board to officially respond to Tenyjah McKenna’s initial letter? It’s like, are you kidding me? Usually in these issues, timeliness is of the essence. It’s unbelievably important”*

*“In the last 3-4 years, there were some people on the Board that were pushing for change, but it was just two or three people against everybody else who didn’t see that there were any issues. And from the outside it didn’t look like anything was being done. Our board wasn’t united and didn’t have the same path in mind”*

*“I’m encouraged by the current Board. They know there’s a long path ahead, but they’re united, and have a vision going forward. I believe they have the theatre’s best interests at heart. That’s the only way Langham can rise out of this, and that’s why I voted for them...but I really feel for them too because they’ve been so many challenges thrown at them. There’s this anonymous group trying to take them down. The Facebook comments and criticism towards them have been terrible, toxic. They’ve had to develop thick skins”*

*“I fully support the current Board’s decision to shut down the theater when they did. This isn’t work that you can do off the side of your desk while you’re trying to put on a season, and while you’re trying to deal with a very resistant and vocal membership”*

*“There’ been a push from a vocal part of the membership (those who have been around for 50 years and of course have a vested interest in the theatre) to reduce paid positions and rely more on volunteers, but expecting volunteer leaders to do everything, and be professional, and respond to every email immediately, and solve every problem now, is really unrealistic, and dumb. The work is time consuming and energy draining. **The theatre simply cannot be run efficiently on volunteers alone... you need people with the right skills in paid positions to make sure that things run in the way they need to be run”***

*“Around 2014/15 we developed an organizational chart to help solve some legitimate management and administrative problems...we recommended that some staffing positions be paid. It was a wonderful vision, but the overwhelming response was ‘we cannot afford it’...even though we presented ways we could pay people a decent salary. That voice is getting louder now, this alternative group of Langham courtiers wants to go back to unpaid positions, where it’s all volunteer work” (See Responsibilities and Organizational Chart – Draft 2 – March 2014 by Karrie Ayotte)*

*“Some thoughts about the management of Langham. Change happens within a context. It is possible to make a couple of important changes:*

- *All members and staff need to sign a code of conduct*
- *HR activity needs to draw upon the best practice models previously established and found in high functioning organizations*
- *New hirings need to go through this fulsome process*
- *All volunteers are treated like staff, held to the contract, rewarded, evaluated*
- *Mount a contracted season and provide on-going in-service training to improve all aspects of the job descriptions*
- *Work toward changing by-laws and organizational structure*
- *Make changes as people do the work”*

### **Transition Leadership Committee 2019/20:**

(NB: This was before the current Board was elected)

Created when the theatre had closed due to the pandemic to reimagine and re-look at how open, inclusive, and welcoming Langham was.

- *“Let me tell you, it was a messy process, incredibly so. It was a group of people saying hey, we need to face what happened with Tenyah and the Human Rights Tribunal case”*
- *“We need to apologize. We need to say it. Start from there and then start doing some reparation work and put the right processes in place”*
- *“Our first committee recommendation to the Board was that the Board needed to issue a formal apology. But there was so much anger and fear and resistance to doing any of that work”*
- *“That season we also did a play called Blue Light about a Nazi filmmaker and had to deal with an issue of a swastika put in the poster. Previously, there was another incident with brownface in the Mystery of Edwin Drood. And we wanted*

*to name these things and apologize and also be clear what we were going to do about it – but the Board flat out said no”*

- *“Eventually the Board went so far as to create their own apology...saying things like ‘we are sorry some people have been offended by some of our actions’...it was a terrible non-apology”*
- *“The Board solicited and reached out only to specific members, let me call them the older white guard, who were resistant to any change and who felt the committee was bullying them and shouting them down. With their feedback, they shut down the committee”*
- *“The transition committee quickly devolved into chaos and messiness...because essentially, we felt the Board was saying we’re not interested in your recommendations and in the work you want to do”*
- *“During this time, I also witnessed several members of the Board bullying a young gay man on their Board who tried to raise issues of antisemitism and bullying that he had experienced on the Board. I can’t speak for him, but what was said was racist and very hurtful to him, but he was shouted down and left the meeting in tears. He then quit and left the city...It was a really horrifying experience for me and I left that meeting determined that I really didn’t want to be involved with Langham anymore. This place that for many years had really nurtured me and been a wonderful place for me. I thought if this is the attitude and the people that are in charge, then this is no longer a place for me”*
- *“You know, one of the Board members (who was also on the committee) who was part of the bullying would just outright laugh during the meetings in response to things people said...and belittle people. It was a dangerous and really dysfunctional space. I don’t also blame the Board for trying to contain it. But at the same time, to throw out all that committee work because they were not comfortable with the recommendation or ready to do the work and instead, disband the committee, was not the right action either”*
- *“A couple other members of the Transition Committee and the Board also quit after this...”*

## **TRANSPARENT STAFFING & WORKPLACE PRACTICES**

*“I’ve watched many discriminatory things happen at Langham over the years. Many. Big and small. And it’s obvious with what the theatre is going through right now, that we haven’t always taken appropriate action in response to these incidents. Things like this shouldn’t be normalized”*

*“There’s this sense at Langham that all labor should be free...and there was particularly an issue of women labor being taken for granted. There were many systems that could have been put in place, but they didn’t want to pay anyone to do it. And even the people who were paid, they were paid extremely & extraordinarily little”*

*“I never saw any racism happen at Langham, but I’ve heard stories, and I know everybody deserves dignity”*

*“For a long time, there were no mechanisms in place at the theatre to deal with people being inappropriate. You would sometimes tell someone about it, but nothing came of it”*

*“They’ve been mechanisms in place for a long, long time at Langham to deal with harassment and all sorts of discrimination. Policies have been in place for quite a long time...but we’ve also encouraged people to first talk to the person who said something to them that they didn’t feel good about, and if they didn’t feel safe approaching that person, to then go talk to a Stage Manager. If that still wasn’t satisfactory, someone on the Board could try to help resolve the issue. And in the last few years, we’ve had an Ombudsman...”*

*“I remember at one of our pride events we suggested we designate gender neutral bathrooms - it was extremely resisted. We did it to make the theatre a more inviting and equitable place...the Board was always the resistance”*

*“There have been people on staff at Langham who should have been fired long ago. People who were coordinating crucial theatre activities who had no understanding of what was going on. And they were not listening to others either, because they thought they knew everything, and even thought they had good intentions. People in important roles with terrible social skills and no empathy for people different from themselves...the worst possible people to arbitrate and moderate such a critical process and period at Langham”*

*“The racial problem at Langham is the sharpest end of a very big wedge, but it wasn’t the only problem at the theatre”*

*“Putting an Ombudsman in place after 2017 helped put some mechanisms in place at Langham to deal with some of the issues of concern that were HR related”*

*“Everybody wants to be on stage, the actors, the directors. Everybody wants to get the applause, but not a lot of people are willing to do the backstage and admin work, to do the stuff that actually needs to get done”*

*“Langham has the craziest ethos of not creating paper trails and so many new staff would join the theatre or people would come on committees and they would have to re-invent the wheel...sometimes a lot of good work was thrown out”*

### **Hiring or Auditioning Process:**

- *“One of the things that I actually really like at Langham is the audition process. It’s very low barrier, especially in comparison to other theatres. Everyone comes in on equal footing”*
- *“Langham Theatre is organized around silos and these silos are organized around each individual play. For instance, a favored director will come forward with a play he wants to direct, and probably with a team together that he wants to work with, so the play is almost pre-cast. This well-functioning silo puts on an excellent show, but the high functioning quality of some of those silos don’t necessarily spill over to the rest of the plays that are directed by appointed directors coming in without a lot of history at Langham”*
- *“Langham has done a lot of work over the years to try and get interest from diverse groups to audition. They’ve added language to a lot of audition notices to encourage people of all races, orientations and genders to audition. I think their heart is very much in the right place, but then again, it takes more than just putting that on an audition notice to make it clear and comfortable for people. There hasn’t been any kind work to support that”*
- *“I once had a conversation with a man, he worked at Langham, who was telling me how useless social media was because we don’t need to bring in new audiences or new people to audition. This was the kind of thinking there. They wanted to keep things as they were. Nothing was broken, so don’t fix it”*
- *“After working as a regular volunteer for a year, I applied for a staff position at the theatre. There was no real hiring process in place. I wasn’t even given an interview. I never applied to work there again”*
- *There needs to be more clear hiring processes at Langham, either part-time or full time in administration. Typically, part-timers e.g. at the Box Office, were expected to do so much more work than they were ever compensated for, and every request to address this, or make the position full time, was basically met with, “Well, we’re a volunteer organization, and if you cannot get it done in the time allotted, then do it on your own time”. So, people would leave, especially the younger ones. “Once again, jobs are set up for retired, monied people. This is one of the central kind of conflicts at Langham”*

## **Casting:**

- *“It’s well known at Langham that directors were constantly choosing and casting the people that they knew and liked. They pick the same people.... I’m kind of surprised that it took as long as it did for someone to object”*
- *“In the 12 years I’ve been involved with Langham, I can think of only a handful of people of colour, playing people of colour. There have definitely been people of colour on stage, but the majority of the time, they’re playing white characters, characters that are written as white or any nationality. I remember a show where the directors and producers couldn’t find a POC to play a character who was Caribbean, despite a lot of community outreach, and their backup plan was to just have an old white guy play the role with a Jamaican accent”*
- *“I recognize now that I was privileged and cast in a lot of shows, but before that I was a bit naïve and blind to what was happening in terms of how exclusive this process was”*
- *“When my wife and I sit in on auditions, we look around the room, and 90% – 95% of the time we can correctly guess who they are going to pick, every time”*
- *“When you have the same directors directing shows, over and over again, you have the same people being cast...I was one of those people who was always cast...like I knew that if I went in and auditioned for a certain director, I had a pretty good chance of getting into the show. I thought I’d proven my worth, I’d done my time. I didn’t think about the people that weren’t getting opportunities. Now I obviously look back, and that really sucks”*

## **Show/Play selection:**

- *“There was a season a few years ago where all the six plays were based entirely or partially in the UK. Every single play. And it required people with English accents. I remember saying, where are all the Canadian plays?”*
- *“I love reading plays and joined the Play Reading Committee. I would find incredible plays, written by women or about an Asian family, about an immigrant family in Toronto, about POC or Indigenous people...but the attitude I encountered was ‘We can’t do that...that’s pretty impossible for Langham...too hard to cast...’ It wasn’t a policy; it was just kind of understood. It became the default. I realize now how quickly I agreed with that, went along with it, and really believed it. But I know now that we just weren’t willing to do the work, to make it a space where actors and POC felt safe and wanted to come to.*



*Understanding this has been part of my personal journey around anti-racism work”*

- *“I think we have an issue about how plays are chosen at Langham...we have a Production Chair who’s typically an older white person (voted in at the AGM by a membership that is typically older, typically white) that chooses the plays with a Reading Committee that’s mostly white people as well. These plays are then ratified by a Board of older white people. So, those are the people always choosing the plays. And on top of that, the relationship between the Production Chair/s and the Board is kind of contentious too, especially if there are any changes to be made”*
- *“There was a wonderful production of inclusivity that really stands out, The Laramie Project – it was a story of a young gay man who’s beaten to death in Laramie, Wyoming. And the cast for that really represented that community”*
- *In the ten years prior to Covid, Langham put on 62 productions. 31 of those plays, or 50% of the productions were directed by the same 6 directors. I have no problem with the directors, they’re all good fine people, the statistic is what I have a problem with. Mainly because directors tend to pick the same people for their casts and the same people for their production crew, again and again, and what you get is a monoculture. The theatre is then dominated by the same directors and director teams. So, has Langham been an old boys and old girls club? This statistic says, yes. You’re not going to get diversity this way. You are not going to get more voices participating unless you give them opportunities”*  
*Suggested recommendation by interviewee: Make it so that if anybody directs in a given year, a whole year has to pass before their name can be put forward again.*
- *“There has never been a call for selecting directors. It was always the same 6 directors directing plays at Langham every year. The same few people being recycled. And it was the Production Chair who had the sole responsibility for getting directors, so if you were friends with the PC, you got slotted in”*
- *“I’ve never seen any racist incidents on the productions I have worked on...and I’ve worked on about 37 shows at Langham Court Theatre”*
- *“I would like to talk about the play Langham staged last year ‘Into the Flood’ – on one hand some action was being taken about stepping outside their historical comfort zone, but I was shocked by how far out of that realm they stepped. I think the Board was desperate to show that this was something Langham could do, that it could be a safe space for people of colour and that their audience had an appetite for this kind of work. But it made me really uncomfortable. I felt really uneasy because I didn’t think at the time that Langham had done any work to*

*deserve staging it. They hadn't been any work done to make it a safe space for people of colour. They had been no real apology and reconciliation about what happened with Tenyah. I didn't think we had earned the right to put on this work and invite artists of colour into our space"*

- In this section, there were some directors who were named, a few times, for being bullies, for being real terrors and for body shaming people.

### **Rehearsal Process:**

- *"In every single production I was part of at Langham, anti-harassment language was one of the first things that was described to all the cast and production members. They made sure people understood that there was an avenue if they felt they were being treated incorrectly...I don't know if it specified racist actions...but harassment was the main term covered"*
- *"I was in a play where the director, in front of the whole cast and crew, told me I was too fat - for the role they had already cast me in. I told the producer about it, and I was told 'yeah, that is the way this director is, they've always been like that. Just push through because at the end of the day, they put on a good show'...and the show was wonderful. It was one of the highlights of my experience in that theatre, but there were so many times I wanted to quit because of the way that director treated me and the other people in the cast. I later found out that many other people, over many years, had had similar experiences - I've had conversations with at least half a dozen other actors, and they've told me that director was a bully. This director was a life member at this point"*

### **Professional Development:**

- *"I was asked to be part of the Board from almost the minute I started because I was kind of young fresh blood and they really wanted active participation from younger people. They wanted that voice and perspective"*
- *"I think Langham has a very genuine desire to help people develop their skills and I'm sure some people have had some guidance and mentorship, but there hasn't been a process or formal system in place to really help with this kind of expertise. There is a desire for it though"*
- *"I've mentored a lot of people over the years at Langham and helped find suitable positions for volunteers.... they're also given learning opportunities. The theatre*

*has such a wide range of opportunities. That's actually one of the most exciting and rewarding parts about being part of a volunteer organization"*

- *"I know people on staff who were promised more responsibility over their time there, but they were never given more responsibilities. They were given more work, but not responsibilities... and not even recognized for that work either. You were expected to work full-time hours pretty much for part-time pay"*
- *"The other thing about a volunteer community theatre is that it can give people opportunities that a professional company just cannot do. I've seen actors come in who've never been on stage before and within a few years have become really good. That's because they got some directors who was really good at working with them, who showed them good techniques and helped them along"*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

*"One of the things I've always been really pleased about Langham is how open the theatre is. It's traditionally been a place that allows people to be themselves. We've often had people involved from the gay community, from all economic backgrounds, people of different ages, people with different kinds of disabilities. I've worked with people who have hearing problems, eyesight problems...if a person shows to volunteer, we're only too pleased to involve them"*

*"Langham could be a great place. It has so much potential, but it's obsessed with the legacy of the past, and the way things have always been done. It's all about looking backwards...there's no room for growth, in fact it's shrinking now. Those of us, who are by Langham's definition young, are fighting for the soul of the place" – PG – Include in intro?*

*"This is the problem at Langham. We basically have people in opposite camps, and most of them are not talking to each other, and when they do it's on social media, which is causing all sorts of harm. And the people who are thinking, doing some reflection, and trying to do good work - they're mostly not talking"*

*"The people who are on the fence, those who are listening and trying to learn, and change, they're not saying anything public because they're afraid of saying the wrong thing...they're afraid of taking space from the voices of people of colour. So, we're only hearing from the two extreme fighting camps; the racists and the anti-racists"*

*"We have a culture here of everybody diving in and doing a bit of everything"*

*“I was involved in a lot of things at Langham, but I cannot think of a time when there was another person of colour there. It happened very, very few times”*

*“Most people at Langham have good intentions, but a lot of them have been frozen in amber since 1980. It’s a place where good intentions go to die. And I’d also like to say that there are those who DON’T have good intentions too”*

*“There are core ‘actors’ at Langham who want their every thought to be heard, but don’t know how to listen”*

*“It seems like young people’s ideas or anything new at Langham is treated in a patronizing way by those that have been at Langham for a long time...they think they know what’s best”*

*“The image at Langham is that it is an old boys and old girls club. It’s been well known by people at Langham for a long time. Change is well over-due”*

*“The Langham refrain is, ‘This is the way it’s always been done’, repeated every time you’re trying to change something. We have to preserve the past at all costs!”*

*“We were like known as the best community theatre in town, but for many years Langham was incredibly exclusive. People saw it as a club they had worked very hard to build. But I feel quite ashamed now at how exclusive we were...because we’re not a club, we are a community. We should be anyway”*

*“Things have been contentious and fraught in the last few years since Tenyah. A lot of people have been hurt and everyone has reacted in different ways to that pain”*

*“It seems to me that a lot of people at Langham have felt that the theatre wasn’t broke, so they didn’t want to fix it. And I think that’s led us to where we are right now”*

*“I can’t properly express how the last 3 or so years have been for me, and I know I’m not alone. I know that people on all sides of this divide have felt that pain and that loss of what has been a really special place for a lot of us. It has really crushed me. Many still cannot understand where all the anger is coming from”*

*“Some of the written conversation over this last period of time has been shocking, both ways. And I don’t think I’m revealing any secrets whatsoever as it’s been all over social media. Nobody is an angel here. I want to be clear, nobody is an angel”*

*“Langham has gone through a messy and difficult process these last few years, but I think that’s also because people care about this theatre and see that we need to fix it. We need to address the rot””*

*“Yet at the same, there is this core group of people who have been at Langham for a very long time who think there isn’t and there never really was a problem at Langham, and think that the people shouting about the problem, ARE the problem”*

*“I try to remind myself that despite the difference, we’re all kind of coming at this from a place of love. I genuinely believe that MOST people have the best of intentions because they love that theatre (Langham) so much”*

*“Langham now, in my mind, is like this black cloud of anger and tension and misunderstanding. Just a storming cloud. It’s just really sad. It’s just really sad to me”*

*“Sometimes it feels like the people with the resources and time to support the theatre, the ones that have been part of the theatre the longest, are just waiting for us to be done with our trouble-making, so that they can swoop back in and go back to how things were”*

*“I recognize we have a systemic problem at Langham, a culture at the theatre that would rather protect its directors – and tell the people experiencing horrible things under them to just push through because that director ‘gets good results’. That’s the culture at the theatre”*

*“There have been lots of people over the years who have helped build Langham and helped create the theatre it is today - with their talent and with their time – but that doesn’t excuse terrible behaviour from anyone, on the Board, on a committee, in administration. Their guidance over the years doesn’t make that behaviour acceptable. But that’s the general culture at the theatre, and although it’s been a wonderful place for me for many years, that culture exists. And it’s not a wonderful place for everyone”*

*“Some people would join Langham with great skills, and we wouldn’t want to lose them, but they didn’t have good people skills...and we’d end up making room for jerks. There were also these skilled people that would volunteer a tremendous number of hours, but whose egos needed a lot of massaging”*

*“I think a lot of the resistance to change comes from ignorance, and a lack of education, a lack of exposure. These people are not uneducated people, but their experience in life is very narrow”*

*“There’s this atmosphere at Langham, like people care, but there’s also this blind spot. They’re not willing to accept that they may be wrong”*

*“I walked away from Langham because my values were no longer aligning with what was going on at the theater, but I became a member again because I wanted to vote in*

*this new Board. I wouldn't have asked to be a part of this audit process if I was going to completely turn my back and walk away. I want to see Langham succeed. I want to see it change"* Introduce this quote at introduction PG??

*"I've been in the room many times at Langham with little ladies with English accents saying, 'why are there so many immigrants nowadays?'...it was a common occurrence to have people use really inappropriate language. I don't want to sound ageist, but these mostly elderly people were the same ones who talked down to me like I was a child when I spoke up. And I'm younger, but not that young"*

*"Despite some people being extremely hostile, there were a number of people at Langham who would listen, and wanted to learn, and wanted to change"*

*"There are so many good people who want things to be better at Langham, but the people who won't change, have too much power. It's a microcosm of the world right now"*

*"I recognize that I've had a lot of disagreements over the years, with a lot of people in the Langham community, about a lot of things, but everyone there loves theatre and community, and they're always approaching it from that place of love. And it is a fierce, fierce love, and I share that love too"*

### **The feeling of belonging at Langham & barriers to belonging:**

- *"Until recently, I felt a great sense of belonging at Langham. My Langham Court Theatre friends were some of the first people I told my most exciting personal news"*
- *"So many people at Langham, with a lot of skills have felt driven out. They've felt they no longer have a place there"*
- *"When I look back at my time at Langham, I recognize kind of how lucky and privileged I've been. I was given a lot of opportunities based on my talent on stage and forged some of the strongest relationships in my life through my involvement with that theatre. I'm only now recognizing that that was a privilege not everyone enjoyed."*
- *"I've started to see in the last few years the many barriers to participation at Langham"*
- *"I've made a conscious choice to speak up about the much-needed change we need to make at Langham, which has caused some damage to my reputation in the community where I know I'm liked and respected. But I want to use my voice in that position, I have to. I didn't always feel I had the power before. But many at*

*Langham tell me they feel I've betrayed an organization that's supported me and given me so much. How dare I turn my back on them"*

- *"I'd like to reiterate that many people, including people who look like me - blonde hair, blue eyes - have felt like outsiders at Langham. We are not part of the same faces you see on stage time and time again. I sometimes go to auditions and think, 'What am I doing here? Why am I even bothering?'"*
- *"Yes, change is bumpy. Sometimes, it's painful. But it's all good. I wish people would just hang on for the ride and use their voice to be heard, instead of all this ugliness"*