



POLICY

Anti Racism Action Plan 2023.2024.2025

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A Message from the General Manager & CEO

At the St. Lawrence Parks Commission (SLPC), we are committed to providing a safe, and respectful space where all backgrounds and experiences are embraced.

As an Agency of the Province of Ontario reporting to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS), the SLPC has a primary role to play in addressing and dismantling racist systems and structures. We recognize the histories of colonialism and the systemic racism barriers of the longstanding inequity for Indigenous, Black and racialized people in our community.

Looking ahead to the future, the SLPC has the responsibility to lead by example. We envision a racially equitable and inclusive workplace that commits to making anti-racism a priority. To create change, we must re-examine and expand our own thoughts, perspectives, programs, policies and procedures.

As the General Manager and CEO of the SLPC and Executive Champion of this plan, I am proud of, and committed to the SLPC Anti-Racism Action Plan brought forward, so we may ensure that all members of our community including employees, and guests are served equitably.

I want to thank our passionate group of employees who have volunteered to be part of a cross-functional team to advance this plan forward. This plan is a living document and will be reviewed and updated continuously. We will take a collaborative approach, seeking the valuable perspectives of employees, guests, and stakeholders with lived experiences, and ensure their voices are heard through the actions in this plan.

This is a continuous journey that we must strive towards to further eliminate biases and demonstrate empathy, compassion, and respect to all aspects of what we do for the Commission, as it is a reflection of our society and our history.

Together we can make the SLPC a more diverse, welcoming, and accessible space that redefines and acknowledges its past, present, and future for bold, meaningful, and positive lasting change.

Holley Kew, General Manager & CEO
St. Lawrence Parks Commission



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The St. Lawrence Parks Commission acknowledges that we share the ancestral and traditional territories of the Kanyen'kehà:ka (Mohawk), Michi Saagiig (Mississauga) and Wendat (Huron) Nations, displaced by the Crawford Purchase of 1783 and the St Regis and Oswegatchie purchases of 1784.

For far too long, Indigenous voices have gone unheard, and thousands of years of rich history and culture overlooked. From the earliest contact with Europeans, Indigenous people were important friends, partners, and allies.

We share common visions as stewards of the land and water, and keepers of our stories and our past. We commit to building a new relationship with the original peoples of this land – a relationship based in honour and mutual respect. We will be guided by the principles of understanding and right action as we rebuild and strengthen our personal and institutional relationships with our Indigenous friends and neighbours.

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Public Service (OPS) Anti-Racism Policy, Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan and the Anti-Racism Directorate's Roadmap to Racial Equity in the Ontario Public Service outlines a whole-of-government approach to identify and address systemic racism. Anti-racism involves consistently assessing structures, policies, and programs, and through monitoring outcomes, ensuring they are fair and equitable for everyone.

St. Lawrence Parks Commission's (SLPC's) Action Plan is built upon these principles and will inform next steps in attracting and developing diverse talent as well as the creation of training and awareness initiatives that will support staff in their day-to-day interactions and develop cultural competencies. The plan will guide policy and program development that is reflective of the cultural makeup of the guests who visit SLPC properties and ensure engagement with key community partners and subject matter experts on thoughtful and sustainable approaches to Anti-Racism.

SLPC's goal is and continues to be to create a welcoming, safe, and inclusive place for all, to make every day the best day for those who work at and visit SLPC.



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VISION

The St. Lawrence Parks Commission (SLPC) provides an inclusive, safe, and welcoming space for employees, community members, and visitors. The SLPC is committed to maintaining an organizational culture that celebrates inclusivity and equality for staff, and the larger community.

We will embrace and amplify the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of underrepresented communities, including Black, Indigenous, and racialized people, which are woven into the fabric of the entirety of the SLPC.

Through acknowledgment and active reflection, listening, learning and ongoing dialogue, the SLPC will dismantle individual, systemic, and institutional racism. The St. Lawrence Parks Commission will ensure all employees feel safe and supported while advancing an inclusive, diverse and equal approach to all business processes, partnerships, and strategies.

We, SLPC, hold accountability for and acknowledge:

- that we function based on colonial structures which are inherently racist and present-day inequities are rooted in historical legacies such as the enslavement of Black/African people and the colonization of Indigenous peoples in Canada and globally.
- the past and present culture, processes, and policies within the SLPC have systemically neglected underrepresented communities and have failed to empower and support those voices.
- that to build and grow an organizational culture that actively prioritizes anti-racism, an intergovernmental collective approach is essential. The SLPC will utilize its privilege and influence to advocate for change within the Ontario Public Service and the MHSTCI to enact change and growth as an organization.
- there has been a lack of anti-racism competency and education.
- that there has been a lack of diversity in the SLPC staff complement and that there are systemic barriers that must be investigated, understood, and acted upon to realize a more diverse staff complement.
- the intersectional layers involved in anti-racism as we work towards changing institutional norms in our business practices.
- that we hold responsibility to our local and broader communities to provide safe spaces that represent, involve, inform, and celebrate the lived experiences of its people.

It is through this acknowledgement of complicity and accountability that we move boldly forward with a strong commitment of building an equitable environment of belonging.



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PRIORITIES

DIVERSIFY THE TALENT PIPELINE (Lead: HR, Hiring Managers)

To implement recruitment strategies that attract diverse candidate groups and strengthen and/or expand SLPC's talent capacity.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with HR Strategic Business Unit to review and develop recruitment tactics that best attract and break down barriers for Indigenous, Black, and racialized candidates.
- Promote and support the use of racially diverse and racially conscious hiring panels.
- Enhance collection of socio-demographic data to inform decisions on building internal capacity.
- Actively create an environment that supports racialized employees to attain career aspirations.

INCLUSIVE POLICY AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (Lead: Business Units)

To undertake robust policy and program review and development including initiatives that identify and remove systemic barriers.

Strategies:

- Develop cultural sensitivity best practice guidelines and new informed judgement matrix to Park regulation enforcement.
- Develop tourism strategies that are welcoming for all cultures who visit SLPC.
- Consult with leaders of various cultural communities and subject matter experts when developing programming.
- Evaluate programming to ensure narrative is relevant and inclusive to Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) and their communities using tools such as diversity audits.

BUILDING COMPETENCY – EDUCATION AND AWARENESS (Lead: Wellness committees, HR, Senior Leadership Team)

To educate and build awareness of SLPC's diverse customer base, individual bias, and systemic racism through training initiatives, giving staff the tools to be better equipped to identify and challenge racism.

Strategies

- Develop and implement multi-year, multi-cultural sensitivity training for staff.
- Develop SLPC Learning Toolkit for staff
- Support staff training on unconscious bias awareness and how it contributes to racism.



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COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS (Lead: Business Units, Senior Leadership Team)

To collaborate with community partners, cultural leaders, and other ministries across the Ontario Public Service on anti-racism initiatives.

Strategies:

- Engage in partnerships with municipalities that span SLPC properties on anti-racism initiatives.
- Partner with Ministry of Indigenous Affairs on public education campaigns that inform and educate Indigenous history across SLPC properties.
- Engage in thoughtful, meaningful discussions with community stakeholders and cultural leaders to ensure their voice is heard through the actions of the plan.
- Open and transparent sharing with stakeholders with respect to ARAP actions and results.

CHALLENGES

Attraction of BIPOC Candidates

Most of the SLPC workplaces are in areas where BIPOC representation is comparatively low among the general population.

This should not imply that no further action can be taken to increase diversity and inclusion, but rather it is suggested that the SLPC should be prepared for the possibility that greater diversity and inclusion may not reach desired levels due to circumstances that are beyond the current resources, and control of the SLPC.

As a point of comparison and discussion, included below is racial demographic data from Statistics Canada – 2016 census for the local areas in which most of the SLPC Business Units are located.

<i>Demographics</i>	Cornwall	Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry
<i>Total Population</i>	46,589	65,353
<i>Total “Aboriginal Peoples” Population</i>	1850 <i>(3.97% of Total Population)</i>	4,695 <i>(7.18% of Total Population)</i>



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<i>Total “Visible Minority” Population</i>	2,655 <i>(5.69% of Total Population)</i>	3,660 <i>(5.6% of Total Population)</i>
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<i>Demographics</i>	Brockville	Leeds and Grenville
<i>Total Population</i>	21,346	100,546
<i>Total “Aboriginal Peoples” Population</i>	700 <i>(3.27% of Total Population)</i>	300 <i>(0.29% of Total Population)</i>
<i>Total “Visible Minority” Population</i>	800 <i>(3.74% of Total Population)</i>	1430 <i>(1.42% of Total Population)</i>

<i>Demographics</i>	Kingston	Leeds and the Thousand Islands	Frontenac
<i>Total Population</i>	123,798	9,465	150,457
<i>Total “Aboriginal Peoples” Population</i>	4,145 <i>(3.34% of Total Population)</i>	310 <i>(3.27% of Total Population)</i>	5,210 <i>(3.46% of Total Population)</i>
<i>Total “Visible Minority” Population</i>	11,060 <i>(8.93% of Total Population)</i>	95 <i>(1.00% of Total Population)</i>	270 <i>(0.17% of Total Population)</i>



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Transportation

Public transportation to SLPC's respective locations is an identified challenge, which could reduce the number of candidates living in urban centres applying to vacancies. This could have a direct impact on BIPOC candidates who live in larger urban centres.

The average person working in Ontario lives within less than 30 kms from their workplace.

Ride shares as well as other possible pilot projects for rural transportation will need to be looked at in detail. SLPC is aware of one local transportation pilot project serving the Leeds and Grenville area and is looking into possible partnership opportunities.



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DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

An evidence-based approach will be used to identify areas of focus and results.

Quantitative data will include but not be limited to:

- OPS Employee Experience Survey
- Employee sociodemographic data collected
- OPS Pulse Survey
- Recruitment metrics – new hire data
- Succession Planning metrics and associated career opportunities

Qualitative data will include but not be limited to:

- Positive impacts from inclusive policy and program development and tourism strategies
- Visitor comments and dialogue, ensuring it is reflective and inclusive of under-represented groups

REPORTING

SLPC will report annually to the Anti-Racism Directorate on progress of this plan each year.

OUR COMMITMENT

- We will remain accountable to all priorities in this plan.
- We will take pro-active steps to embed anti-racism through policy and program development.
- We commit to looking at things differently, taking active, conscious steps to combat racism, learning together as an organization and leading change.
- We will communicate often to all staff, Board of Commissioners, bargaining agents and other stakeholders on the progress and achievements in this plan.



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ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

- A revised SLPC Land Acknowledgement was officially launched on September 27, 2023 .
- Upper Canada Village has engaged with the BIPOC community on work related to Black History Program Development. The first iteration of this exhibit was launched in the summer of 2023.
- Through a partnership with the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, the SLPC hired two Indigenous research students for the summer of 2022. The students were hired to conduct research projects in support of Fort Henry and Kingston Penitentiary programming.
- Hired a Cultural Advisor to assist the Working Group in accomplishing the early goals of the Plan.
- SLPC participated in the Kingston Employment and Youth Services (KEYS) Inclusion Charter initiative on an Inclusive Hiring Practices Review to promote employment practices (job postings, interview procedures, and other hiring-related practices) and provide strategies that will improve inclusion, diversity, and equity in the workplace.
- Applied Diverse Interview Panel (DIPP) initiatives when recruiting new staff. The DIPP involves the participation of individuals of varying orientations and opinions, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, skills, experience etc., on interview panels.
- Participation on the Ministry’s Building Anti-Racism Competencies Sub-Committee Joint Working Group to share knowledge and resources in the implementation of initiatives from the Anti-Racism Directorate.
- Research was conducted on Islamic Cultural practices to ensure that Parks’ proposed addition of Ablution Stations to the washroom facilities at Brown’s Bay Campground conformed to the requirements prescribed by Muslim culture.
- Promoted EDI educational materials and resources to staff, including two dedicated landing pages for staff education on the SLPC website.
- Rolled out the ARCC Module “Exploring the Roots of Racism” on LearnON and Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Anti-Racism Module “Call it Out” on Cybertrain
- Unconscious Bias Training for Managers took place in October 2020



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- Staff Diversity Training - Awareness of the Islamic culture delivered by Imam Majed Jarrar in October 2020.
- Comprehensive survey of all SLPC holdings, including land holdings, plaques, memorials, et cetera, to identify potentially problematic material, and create a recommended process for addressing controversial material culture.
- Fort Henry has developed new Black and Indigenous exhibits and program enhancements to be showcased in 2024.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accountability: In the context of racial equity work, accountability refers to the ways in which individuals, organizations and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions and acknowledge the values and groups to which they are responsible.

Anti-racism approach: Anti-racism is a process, a systematic method of analysis and a proactive course of action rooted in the recognition of the existence of racism, including systemic racism. Anti-racism actively seeks to identify, remove, prevent, and mitigate racially inequitable outcomes and power imbalances between groups, and change the structures that sustain inequities.

Bias: A predisposition, prejudice, or generalization about a group of persons based on personal characteristics or stereotypes.

Colonialism: Is a practice of domination which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism, such as in the case of Canada, is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land.

Colonization: The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the Indigenous people of an area.

Culture: The customs, beliefs, behaviours and/or achievements of a particular time and/or people; behaviour within a particular group.

Cultural Competence: An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, particularly in human resources, non-profit organizations, and government agencies whose employees work with persons from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Cultural competence has four components: awareness of one's own cultural worldview, attitudes towards cultural differences, knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, cross-cultural skills (developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures).



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Diversity: The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within an individual, group or organization. Diversity includes such factors as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, educational background, and expertise.

Equity: Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. As distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life.

Inclusion: Appreciating and using our unique differences – strengths, talents, weaknesses, and frailties - in a way that shows respect for the individual and ultimately creates a dynamic multi-dimensional organization.

Inclusive: Inclusive processes, policies, services, programs, and practices are accessible to and useable by as many people as possible, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, language, etc. An inclusive environment is open, safe, equitable and respectful. Everyone can enjoy a sense of trust, belonging and involvement, and everyone is encouraged to contribute and participate fully.

Indigenous: Means 'native to the area'. Currently the preferred collective name for the original people within Canada and their descendants. This includes First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit.

Informed Judgement Matrix:

Intersectionality: The way in which people's lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations, which, together, can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers, opportunities, and/or power imbalances. In the context of race and Indigenous identity, this means recognizing the ways in which people's experiences of racism or privilege, including within any one group, may vary depending on the individual's or group's relationship to additional overlapping or intersecting social identities, like religion, ethnic origin, gender, age, disabilities, or citizenship and immigration status. An intersectional analysis enables better understanding of the impacts of any one systemic barrier by considering how that barrier may be interacting with other related factors.

Oppression: Refers to discrimination that occurs and is supported through the power of public systems or services, such as health care systems, educational systems, legal systems and/or other public systems or services; discrimination backed up by systemic power.

Privilege: Unearned advantage (i.e., access to social, economic, and political benefits) afforded to the "socially dominant" group; White privilege – refers to those unearned advantages granted to people who are deemed White.

Race/Racialized/Racial identity: Race is a term used to classify people into groups based principally on physical traits (phenotypes) such as skin colour. Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences that society has created (i.e., "socially constructed"), with



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significant consequences for people's lives. Racial categories may vary over time and place and can overlap with ethnic, cultural, or religious groupings.

Racial disparity: Unequal outcomes in a comparison of one racial group to another racial group.

Racial disproportionality: The overrepresentation or underrepresentation of a racial group in a program or system, compared with their representation in the general population.

Racial equity: Is the systemic fair treatment of all people that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone.

Systemic racism: Consists of organizational culture, policies, directives, practices, or procedures that exclude, displace, or marginalize some racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. This is often the result of institutional biases in organizational culture, policies, directives, practices, and procedures that may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantaging others.