



**RADICAL IMAGINATION:
GETTING YOUR BOARD **ON BOARD** WITH PAY EQUITY**

WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?

Pay Equity is compensating workers without discrimination.

WHAT IS ARTS WORKER CARE?

**Arts Work is Labor,
and that labor should be as well compensated
as any other valuable labor.**

OPENING QUESTION:

Think of a moment (or type of moment) where you have encountered resistance yourself. What do you need to get on board with something new to you? Something that is challenging to you?

- **Understanding and compassion**
- **data and execution plan**
- **Validation, empathy, and trust**
- **A clear vision**
- **Timelines**
- **Need to understand the details of what is expected**
- **time & opportunity for reframing big picture**
- **Time to mull. And mulling over some “evidence” helps. Doesn’t necessarily need to be data.**
- **The “fear of the past” is a real thing**

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP, PLEASE:

- **Get settled (~2 minutes)**
 - Introduce yourselves (names, pronouns, one sentence: what brings you to this conversation tonight?)
 - Identify a Shepherd (to guide the conversation) and a Scribe (for the slide!)
- **Discuss (~10 minutes)**
 - What are the obstacles that we have experienced (or worry about experiencing) when we're thinking about advocating to our board members about art worker care?
- **Distill (~3 min)**
 - Identify a spokesperson to shareback with the full group 3 of your biggest and boldest ideas (maybe at least one is free/low cost?)

BREAKOUT GROUP 1

*Please use the space below to capture notes, talking points, brainstorming from your group's discussion.
If you run out of space, duplicate this slide and continue!*

What are the obstacles that we have experienced (or worry about experiencing) when we're thinking about advocating to our board members about art worker care?

- **Reticence to discuss / Money can be difficult to talk about**
- **Concern over affording / grow responsibly / avoiding deficit spending**
- **Is this sustainable?**
- **Need to consider all of the details of the plan to pay equitably**
- **Reticence to talk about money**

BREAKOUT GROUP 2

*Please use the space below to capture notes, talking points, brainstorming from your group's discussion.
If you run out of space, duplicate this slide and continue!*

What are the obstacles that we have experienced (or worry about experiencing) when we're thinking about advocating to our board members about art worker care?

- **Budgets are often already accounted for so hard to add to it**
- **We're on shaky ground coming out of pandemic so how to take risk**
- **Some corporate board reps who want to cut costs look to staff first**
- **Need some tactics in place before moving forward e.g. HR manual**

BREAKOUT GROUP 3

*Please use the space below to capture notes, talking points, brainstorming from your group's discussion.
If you run out of space, duplicate this slide and continue!*

What are the obstacles that we have experienced (or worry about experiencing) when we're thinking about advocating to our board members about art worker care?

- **Having conversations in a way that doesn't feel like money has to come from other people's pockets to increase pay equity and promotes security**
- **Explaining why artists deserve a living wage during sabbatical, especially to folks without theatre backgrounds**
- **Navigating talking with folks who care more about the "get" than the "give"**
- **Not much experience being in front of or engaging with the board**
- **What to do when someone's perception of the value of the work is different than reality**
- **The fear of being told "no"**
- **There are no models on how to do it differently, facing inadequacies from the past**
- **Board adjacent, grants and access to resources are difficult right now**
- **Navigating other obstacles due to pandemic**

CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGE: Stakeholders have trouble navigating risks because of fear, past org history, or other qualms.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

- **Having a clear plan.**
 - Processes and structures for monitoring the plan over time.
 - Flexibility - the plan will change and evolve
 - Working in phases - this work takes time!
- **Giving space and time for conversation, consideration, for people to work through their questions.**
- **Seeking alignment on all levels - leadership, staff, and board.**
 - Idea of a layer cake - there are different groups of people at different levels vetting an idea before it gets brought to a full group.
 - Establish committees before presenting to the full group.
 - Have side conversations
 - Give yourselves “hem & haw” time
- **Acknowledging past harms, histories, as we make new systems. Focus on repair.**
- **Weigh the risks together.**
 - There is risk of NOT paying people properly
 - TRUST - Reputation and willingness of artists to work with you.
 - Legality/misclassification of people (1099 contractors)
 - That risk falls on the board - fiduciary responsibility
 -

Example: paying someone any amount when we weren't paying them anything before

CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGE: Where do we start?

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

- Where do you have expertise?
- Who in your network has expertise or resources?
- What is the easiest? What can we do right now that requires little or now resources?
- What are the tiny steps we can take?
- What is in the purview of the staff vs the purview of the board?
- Sit down and dream.
 - It is harder to get people on board with panic than it is to get them on board with passion.
- Having a clear sense of what we're trying to do. (it can take years!)
- Start with one goal or deliverable. What's the first thing that leads the way?
- Talk to your artists.
 - Seek to understand the stresses and needs.
 - More information makes decision-making easier.
 - Communication can build trust.

CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGE: We don't have the capacity to do this.

SOLUTIONS:

- Acknowledge that it takes resources - time, money, expertise, knowledge, training, effort.
- Think in phases: it's a long journey and we can take tiny steps over time.
- Build for replicability.
 - Can the work we're doing survive over time?
 - Idea: having a set of shared values. If folks (board, staff, volunteers) share these values, it's easier to keep folks on the path. If we get off-course, we can always return to these values. Doesn't matter what time someone joins the org - we have a shared foundation.
- Tailor your efforts to specific people or groups.
 - This takes time and thought, but ultimately gets the full group to move in the same direction.
- DREAM. Be intentional about zooming in and out. Don't get stuck with one particular lens/focus.
- Funders need to take a leadership position - some funders now have requirements that require minimum wage, but there is no help from the funder to support (AND SUSTAIN) that wage.
- If there are no good models to look at, look outside of your industry. Who's leading these conversations elsewhere?

CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS: Education

CHALLENGES THAT MIGHT BE SOLVED WITH EDUCATION:

- The nonprofit theatre data we have access to is bad.
 - We need different benchmarks - look outside the field.
- Establishing organizational infrastructure - what does staff look like? How can we build it?
- Clarity around money numbers - minimum wage, inflation, costs of living, phases of increase.
- Training in non-profit finance
 - Ability to share financial information to non-finance folks.
 - How do we tell the financial story of our organization?
- How to advocate for yourself and those around you.
 - Grappling with fear of getting “no” when you ask for something.
 - Advocating for folks who aren’t in the room. Board members advocating to other board members, board advocating to potential donors, advocating to funding organizations, etc.
 - Board education - especially with small orgs, this could be the first time someone is on a board.
 - How do you understand the value of the people around you and look at your networks?
- Capacity. Staff and board members (volunteers) and deciding how to best use your time. How do we plan something so we can bring people along who join us later?
- Create a dream budget. Show us what it looks like to pay people better, even if the numbers seem unachievable right now.



THANK YOU!!!