

rising

LEADERS OF COLOR

2021
NEW YORK, NY



DEVELOPED AND ADMINISTERED BY **Theatre Communications Group**
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE Howard Gilman Foundation

Overview

Since 2016, Theatre Communication Group's **Rising Leaders of Color (RLC)** program has nurtured, supported, and uplifted 44 Black, Indigenous, Asian American-Pacific Islander, Latinx, Middle Eastern-North African, and Mixed-race early-career leaders from across the country.

Clarifying Language

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Black theatres, Indigenous theatres, and Theatres of Color (BITOC) are terms used here for solidarity purposes representing a multiplicity of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. TCG acknowledges that the terms "BIPOC" and "BITOC" are imperfect, not universally embraced by People of the Global Majority, and that language is in a constant state of reimagination and redefinition. For reference, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color represent over 80% of the global population. It is possible that during the program period, the language used by TCG may shift again.

RLC develops and highlights highly talented early-career Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leaders across the U.S. who are committed to initiating and upholding equitable practices in the theatre field. The program acknowledges that leadership takes place throughout the theatre field and its related sectors. With that in mind, the program supports leaders working in all areas of the theatre field, including but not limited to acting, administration, casting, craft areas, design, directing, dramaturgy, literary management, producing, stage management, technical production, and theatre criticism/journalism.

RLC is an expansion and re-envisioning of TCG's Young Leaders of Color program (YLC) which launched in 2008. Through the RLC, SPARK Leadership Program and other professional development programs, TCG has been changing the face of the theatre field by nurturing and supporting an intergenerational network of BIPOC at various stages in their careers.

The commitment to serve BIPOC and BITOC is not new to TCG and spans decades. Central to TCG's work is the belief that eliminating racism and improving equity, diversity, and inclusion in the U.S. theatre field is essential to the vitality of theatre as an

art form. To that end, TCG is fully committed to supporting a wide range of aesthetics, perspectives, organizational sizes, and structures as well as

Overview cont.

celebrating all areas of identity including gender, race/ethnicity, nation of origin, class, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religion/spirituality.

TCG, celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2021 as the national service organization for theatre, was originally founded to help shape the U.S. regional theatre movement, with new areas and cities across the country becoming hubs for theatre-making and makers. In 2020, a reframed mission and strategic plan was forged and adopted against the backdrop of a global pandemic and an uprising against white supremacy. This mission, “**To lead for a just and thriving theatre ecology**,” speaks to the necessary urgency to act and lay the groundwork that will ensure lasting, positive change. Alongside the mission, TCG’s recently articulated strategic plan unequivocally centering BIPOC is the framework for developing mission-directed programs and services.

TCG’s grantmaking and scholarships are designed to support the work of individuals and institutions and advance the theatre field. The grants and subsidies that TCG awards both address the immediate needs of TCG’s constituency as well as leveraging unique opportunities for fieldwide capacity-building. TCG distributes approximately \$1.5 million per year through philanthropic partnerships with foundations, individual donors, and sponsors. Since 1961, TCG has awarded over \$43 million in direct support to the field by providing over 900 awards to organizations and over 1,300 individuals.

Program Description

Funded in part by the Howard Gilman Foundation, an organization that supports performing arts organizations in New York City, this year's **RLC** will form a cohort of eight highly talented early-career BIPOC leaders based in New York City who are advancing their careers in the U.S. not-for-profit theatre and related sectors, are committed to advancing an equitable theatre field, and demonstrate strong potential to become change agents impacting the field in a significant way.

The program combines **practical skills building, professional connections and opportunities to develop empowering relationships, as well as tools and resources to navigate a career in the theatre field as a BIPOC leader.**

Activities include:

- Workshops throughout the year designed to strengthen the participants' leadership skills, provide a catalyst for personal growth, and to inform participants of the current state of the field (workshops specifically tailored for the **RLC** 2021 cohort and additional programming with peers in other TCG professional development programs);
- Regular all-cohort meetings;
- Introductions to individually identified thought partners;
- Individual coaching sessions with specialists and TCG staff;
- Access to veteran leaders of the field and a national network of peers.

Due to continuing health and safety restrictions, program activities will take place online and span from May 2021 through June 2022.

The first activity is a required orientation meeting in early May 2021 (see **Timeline** section below). In addition, all **RLC** are required to participate in professional development workshops, sessions, and events during TCG's National Conference May 13-14 and 20-21, 2021. A detailed Conference schedule and agenda will be distributed at the time of notification and in advance of each event.

Following that, **RLC** will take part in Values Clarification training, central to all TCG's professional development programs, to explore how an individual's values can serve to sustain a career in the theatre field over time.

Program Description cont.

The curriculum will also include training designed to deepen the participants' analysis of racial equity and identifying where they can serve in allyship within the theatre field and beyond. TCG recognizes the unique journey early-career BIPOC leaders experience in the theatre field and will provide areas of support and guidance during the program period and beyond. TCG, along with its program advisors, will help participants navigate challenging situations in the workplace and identify ways in which their differences can be used as strengths to help them exercise model leadership.

The **RLC** cohort will be highlighted in *American Theatre* magazine and during TCG's National Conference. Participants will also receive a 1-year complimentary [TCG Individual Membership](#), including access to *American Theatre* magazine, TCG Books discounts, and more.

Timeline

RLC participants must commit to attend and participate in all program activities listed above as well as scheduled program workshops, webinars, and meetings, and are required to treat all scheduled activities as professional obligations. TCG will provide a detailed curriculum to participants during orientation.

Application and Recommendation Deadline

Monday, April 5, 2021, 12:00pm Noon Eastern Time

Finalist Interviews

Week of April 19, 2021

Applicant Notification

Week of April 26, 2021

Orientation Meeting

Thursday, May 6 & Friday, May 7, 2021 (Exact times TBA)

RLC and Peer Cohorts Workshop

Monday, May 10, 2021 (Exact time TBA)

TCG National Conference

Thursday, May 13 & Friday, May 14, 2021

Thursday, May 20 & Friday, May 21, 2021

Additional RLC Professional Development Activities

June 2021 – June 2022

Eligibility & Selection

ELIGIBILITY

RLC Applicants must:

- Be based in New York City (any of the five boroughs) at the time of application;
- Have been working in the theatre field or related sector(s) for approximately 3-8 years;
- Have taken a leadership role in the theatre field (including but not limited to artistic, production, administration, education, and theatre criticism/journalism), a performing arts organization, a community-based organization, or at an arts publication;
- Self-identify as BIPOC.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed based on the following and must demonstrate:

- Talent, skills, and professional experience as an early-career leader;
- Evidence of maturity, flexibility, and ability to adapt to change;
- Degree to which the program will impact the participant's career as a leader;
- Potential to take on greater leadership responsibilities;
- Potential to become a change agent impacting the theatre field in a significant way;
- Commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion and to eliminating racism;
- Commitment to a career in the not-for-profit theatre.

Based on the above **Selection Criteria** and through a competitive selection process, a panel of theatre professionals will identify applicants who clearly demonstrate alignment with the goals and intent of the program. Applicants must clearly articulate why this is the right time in their career to participate in the program and how this program will impact them and advance their career in the theatre field. Finalists will be interviewed by the selection panel, and participants will be selected based on both the written application and the interview.

Eligibility & Selection cont.

This program is created for BIPOC leaders based in New York City who are early in their **leadership** trajectory. Eligible applicants may have previously been a working professional in an area of theatre and/or related sectors and have now sharpened their focus on a career in a leadership position. Others may be recent graduates of universities and/or training programs, but a degree is not a requirement. Those considering this program who are still enrolled as a full-time student or who have a substantial body of work as a leader will not be competitive.

RLC defines a leader as an individual who has had experience leading staff, organizations and/or communities, with decision-making and financial responsibility. Leaders are also those who have led artistic projects and processes, programmatic initiatives, and those charged with documenting and reflecting the work of the field. The program acknowledges that leadership takes place in all areas throughout cultural and performing arts organizations and the field at large. With that in mind, the program supports leaders working in all areas of the theatre field, including but not limited to acting, administration, casting, craft areas, design, directing, dramaturgy, literary management, producing, stage management, technical production, and theatre criticism/journalism.

Submission

ONLINE APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021, 12:00PM NOON EASTERN TIME

Note on Accessibility

If you would like to request an alternative method and/or format to submit an application and/or recommendation, please contact Josh Smalley, TCG Artistic & International Programs Associate at jsmalley@tcg.org or 212-609-5964.

1. Complete the [RLC 2021 Online Application Form](#) via the TCG Grants Online Portal. To start a new application, click this link:
https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_1933?SA=SNA&FID=35079.

Applications must be developed and submitted by the applicant. The online form requires applicant information, answers to six narrative questions (250-500 words), and recommender information. The form also requires the applicant to upload a PDF resume/CV (1-2 pages). Please name the file as follows: **"ApplicantLastName_ApplicantFirstName_Resume.pdf"**

Failure to assemble and submit application materials properly by the deadline may result in the application being considered ineligible for review. Users have the option to save and return to an in-progress application. To return to an in-progress application, log into the [TCG Grants Online Portal](#).

2. After an applicant reviews & submits the [RLC 2021 Online Application Form](#), they will receive an Application Confirmation Email within an hour of submission. Applicants who cannot provide proof of application submission by the deadline will not be eligible. If you do not receive an Application Confirmation Email, please email Josh Smalley at jsmalley@tcg.org. **NOTE:** Confirmation emails will be sent from *mail@grantapplication.com*, so be sure to check your spam folder.
3. The selection panel requires two letters of recommendation that address why you are a strong candidate for the [RLC](#) program. **The applicant is responsible for contacting two recommenders and sharing the [Recommender Instructions](#) (see section below).**

Recommendations should be submitted by the recommender, not the [RLC](#) applicant. **Recommenders should submit their letters directly to TCG by emailing a PDF file (1-2 pages) to Josh Smalley at jsmalley@tcg.org by the application due date of **MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021, 12:00 PM NOON EASTERN TIME.****

Recommender Instructions

Dear Recommender: You are being asked to provide a recommendation for a candidate for the **Rising Leaders of Color (RLC) Program**. The overall intent of **RLC** is to nurture and support a more diverse and inclusive landscape in the U.S. theatre by supporting the professional development of highly talented early-career BIPOC leaders who are committed to upholding equitable practices in the theatre field.

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In addition to your overall assessment of the candidate, please describe at least one example in which you have experienced this candidate's leadership skills and their potential to become change agents impacting the theatre field in a significant way. You should also address your experience of the applicant's maturity level and ability to adapt to change. It is possible that members of the selection panel will not be familiar with the applicant's work —therefore, your assessment will carry considerable influence.

NOTE: Your letter must not exceed two pages and should include your name, title, and email address. Additional pages will not be forwarded to the panel.

Please save your file as a PDF and name the file as follows:

"ApplicantLastName_ApplicantFirstName_RLC_REC.pdf"

The recommender (not the applicant) should email the typed and dated letter to: Josh Smalley, TCG Artistic & International Programs Associate, jsmalley@tcg.org no later than **Monday, April 5, 2021, 12:00PM NOON Eastern Time**. Unsigned and/or late recommendations will not be accepted.

RIISING LEADERS OF COLOR 2021 is supported in part by the Howard Gilman Foundation. Support for alumni activities is supported in part by Hearst Foundations and Walt Disney Imagineering.



Howard Gilman believed in the power of the arts to transform lives. The Howard Gilman Foundation honors his legacy by supporting the most robust, innovative, and promising performing arts organizations in New York City.
www.howardgilmanfoundation.org

HEARST *foundations*

The Hearst Foundations are national philanthropic resources for organizations and institutions working in the fields of Education, Health, Culture and Social Service. The goal of the Foundations is to ensure that people of all backgrounds have the opportunity to build healthy, productive and inspiring lives. The charitable goals of the Foundations reflect the philanthropic interests of William Randolph Hearst. www.hearstfdn.org



Walt Disney Imagineering is the creative engine that designs and builds all Disney theme parks, resorts, attractions, and cruise ships worldwide, and oversees the creative aspects of Disney games, merchandise product development, and publishing businesses. <https://disneyimagination.com>

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, leads for a just and thriving theatre ecology. Since its founding in 1961, TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to over 700 Member Theatres and affiliate organizations and over 7,000 Individual Members. TCG reaches over 1 million students, audience members, and theatre professionals each year through its programs and services. The Global Theater Initiative, TCG's partnership with the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute. TCG believes its vision of "a better world for theatre, and a better world because of theatre" can be achieved through individual and collective action, adaptive and responsive leadership, and equitable representation in all areas of practice. TCG is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. www.tcg.org