

To Members of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee, Arts Advisory Committee and Council Members of the **Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee**

H'art has been busy and felt that providing you a copy of our recent letter to the Arts Council will provide you with a quick update to let you know we are still moving forward to support ensuring public funded arts endeavours and initiatives are inclusive ,thank you for all the work you have been doing!
Katherine

February 22, 2021

Director Kingston Arts Council

Dear Kirsi,

It's hard to believe that we're almost at the end of February. I hope that you have been staying well during this whirlwind start to 2021.

I wanted to say congratulations to you and the Arts Council on your new strategic plan, and the focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion—especially as it pertains to disability arts. I'm excited to see how many individuals and organizations in Kingston are shining a spotlight on this area of the arts.



As you know, H'art Centre has been advocating for disability and mixed ability arts for the last 23 years. Our H'art Studio program has seen so many talented artists in many disciplines come through our doors, and we have grown far beyond the small storefront where we first started. Our most recent advances have seen the development of our Inclusivity Guide—an online tool (and living document)—currently available on our website. It is already receiving positive community interest and input. I know Felix requested access when we first launched, and we would welcome any feedback that they have—or that you and Laura may have if you have had a chance to see it.

H'art will be contributing our work on the Inclusivity Guide and our MixAbilities Inclusive Arts Training to the City of Kingston's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiative to further its corporate and community awareness and to inspire action. We will provide information and links to our website to Kingston Council, Cultural Services, the Arts Advisory Committee, and the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee to both our Inclusivity Guide and our MixAbilities training to the work that H'art has been doing and continues to do.

In addition, we are planning to run introductory MixAbilities training sessions this spring to build on an artist roster that we established several years ago for our H'art Accessible Arts Program (HAAP) which could complement the relationships you are building with the school boards and within the community.

H'art is passionate about advocating for the inclusion of everyone in the arts, and I would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with you and your team as we move into 2021. I would look forward to scheduling some time to talk about how H'art might be able to support the Kingston Arts Council's objective to support and engage the disability arts community.

Sincerely,

Katherine Porter
Executive Director
H'art Centre

Cc: Colin Wiginton, Cultural Services, City of Kingston

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