

# THON™ 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Impact Report

The following report outlines the steps that THON™ took in 2021 to improve upon our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. To see how we are continuing these efforts, please visit the THON 2022 Action Plan.

## I. THON Action Plan

- a. An equity framework for THON 2021 and beyond was created and presented to all directors, captains, and committee members.
- b. The updated version of this action plan for THON 2022 can be found here: <https://THON.org/category/releases/>

## II. Committee Member Applications

- a. Randomized the committee first-year applicants were placed on.
  - i. This prevented individuals from being selected for a committee perceived as more or less desirable based on any personal characteristics. This decision was based off the understanding that any Penn State Student can be a great THON Volunteer on any committee.
- b. Removed references, resume, and GPA requirements from first-year Committee Member applications.
- c. Returning committee member selection occurred before interviews in order to “blind” the process.
  - i. Returning applicants were given the opportunity to apply for whichever committee they chose, however the decision upon which committee they were selected for was based off of applications, in order to “blind” the selection process.
  - ii. Interviews were then given to applicants by the committee they were chosen for in order to determine which captain within that committee the applicant would be placed with.
- d. Narrowed first year application to two open ended questions, neither of which required prior THON knowledge.

## III. Committee Member Meetings

- a. Standardized content of meetings across all committees to ensure all volunteers were being given equally fulfilling and enriching experiences.

## IV. DEI Focus Group

- a. A focus group was created that included representatives from all committees and met weekly to discuss THON's DEI efforts.

## **I. DEI Trainings**

- a. All captains and directors attended a training on DEI by Charleon Jeffries, the director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for Penn State's Division of Development and Alumni Relations.
- b. All captains and directors attended a training on DEI by Brian Patchcoski, the assistant vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion in Penn State Student Affairs, formerly of the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity.
- c. All captain committees and the Executive Committee attended Intercultural Development Inventory sessions.
- d. All captains and directors attended an Inclusive Language Workshop.
- e. All captain committees completed bi-weekly DEI discussions led by the DEI Focus Group representative on their committee.

## **II. THON Community Roundtables**

- a. DEI Focus Group held THON Community Roundtables; discussions open to anyone about making THON a more inclusive organization.

## **III. Organization Dancers**

- a. THON Weekend Dancer application awarded a set amount of dancer spots to new and/or small organizations based on criteria other than fundraising or family engagement.

## **IV. Finances**

- a. A fund was created to cover the costs of mandatory expenses that volunteers are not able to cover themselves.
- b. All merchandise (including on-shift shirts) was optional for committee members for THON 2021.

## **V. Reporting**

- a. Created an anonymous form to report issues and concerns relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- b. These reports were read by the Executive Director, Communications Director, and DEI Programs Coordinator to find areas of improvement.

## **VI. Creation of new DEI-focused positions**

- a. Three new Communications Captain positions were created for THON 2022 to focus on DEI initiatives: DEI Programs Coordinator, Volunteer Development Liaison, and University Relations Liaison.