

## TOPIC: Race and Equity

### POSITION STATEMENT

Virginia wants every traveler to enjoy their visit to Virginia.

### SUGGESTED USE

- What are you doing to make the travel experience in Virginia more inclusive?

### CORE MESSAGES

- Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) has invested in research designed to better understand under-prioritized traveler groups and emerging traveler groups.
- We are including diverse perspectives on our team so that those perspectives are included throughout the work of our organization.
- We have been incorporating more diversity into tourism communications so that travelers, especially Black travelers, see people like themselves visiting Virginia and feel welcome.
- DMOs, sites and attractions are working to improve traveler experience of under-prioritized audience segments at their locations.
- Historical sites are broadening their historical narrative to be inclusive of multiple voices.
- The state of Virginia has implemented initiatives focused on making the state more welcoming and inclusive.

### PROOF POINTS

- VTC sponsored a global travel study, *The Black Traveler: Insights, Opportunities & Priorities* by MMGY Global, which benchmarked the size and spending power of the Black travel market in the U.S.
- VTC sponsored a study by Wilkening Consulting, *Americans, Our History and the 250th*, which found that there is a growing population segment that values inclusive experiences and has an additive approach to history.
- VTC sponsored a study by Share More Stories, *The Black Travel Experience*, which analyzed the Black traveler experience in Virginia to help sites and

destinations better understand this audience segment and engage with Black travelers in a more authentic and equitable way.

- VTC created an advisory committee, in addition to partnering with consultants and contractors, to bring more of the Black perspective to the work of the organization.
- As of 2020, the Virginia Is For Lovers brand showed 40% Black representation in campaign deliverables, 50% representation in banner ads, 50% in print ads, 33.33% in commercials, 14% influencer representation, 60% on a VTC-sponsored and produced podcast, and 5% representation on media/press trips.
- Industry professionals across the state have participated in educational sessions designed to help the industry better understand the Black traveler experience and how to improve it at their locations.
- Examples of how sites/organizations are bringing to light parts of the historical narrative that have been underheard include the movie *Harriet*, Monticello's traveling exhibition "Paradox of Liberty: Slavery at Jefferson's Monticello"; Montpelier's exhibition "The Mere Distinction of Colour"; the archeological dig at Colonial Williamsburg to uncover one of America's first Black churches; as well as exhibits at Mount Vernon, Fort Monroe, American Civil War Center, and Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.
- With Governor Northam's creation of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2019, Virginia is becoming a national exemplar in addressing the historical injustices and inequities that have existed for the last 400 years within all systems across our Commonwealth.

## AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

- Black travelers
- Non-Black travelers interested in inclusive experiences