



Makom Anti-Racism Statement and Plan

נברא אדם יחידי... ומפני שלום הבריות, שלא יאמר אדם לחברו אבא גדול מאביך.

The first human was created alone... for peace among humanity, so that one person can't say to another: "My ancestors are greater than your ancestors."
—*Mishnah, Sanhedrin 4:5*

Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism is an inclusive community fusing Jewish tradition and progressive values through spirituality, learning and culture. Makom inspires diverse participants to explore together how Judaism can meaningfully enrich our lives.

In light of the generations-old and continuing racism against Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in Canada, Toronto, and the Jewish community, we re-commit ourselves to building an inclusive and diverse community that actively welcomes Jews and non-Jews of all racial and ethnic backgrounds and that promotes everyone's equality, dignity, and welfare.

Because "לא המדרש הוא העקר, אלא המעשה" – Expounding is not the essence, action is" (*Mishnah, Avot 1:17*), we will work toward achieving this vision through the following concrete steps, guided by the pillars of [No Silence on Race](#).

1. Education & Programming

תלמוד גדול שהתלמוד מביא לידי מעשה.

Study is great, for study leads to action
—*Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 40b*

We are committed to representing a diversity of Jewish cultures in our programming. We will explicitly recognize the various traditions in which we pray and celebrate together and acknowledge multiple cultures' approaches to Jewish practice. We will challenge ourselves to arrive at a practicable approach to balancing the values of representing a greater range of musical modes of prayer as well as the musical autonomy of our lay prayer leaders and their authentic traditions.

In our adult education classes, we will pay attention to the diverse origins of traditional Jewish sources and their authors. For example, in workshops and classes, we will intentionally study texts from Sepharadi and Mizrahi authors, as well as Ashkenazi sources. We will work with our Makom Afterschool (elementary grades) and Makom ATID (middle school) educators regarding

ways to be more deliberately inclusive in curricula, educational materials, and educational practices.

Makom plans to offer a community workshop on Jewish diversity, anti-racism in a Jewish context, and reaching beyond Ashkenormativity, in 2021.

2. Allyship

תְּקוּנָא קְדָמָא, תְּקוּנָא דְגַרְמִיָּה, לְאַשְׁתְּלָמָא. תְּקוּנָא תְּנַיִנָא, תְּקוּנָא דְהַאי עָלְמָא.

The first repair is the repair of the self for its perfection. The second repair is the repair of this world.

—*Zohar* 2:215b

We invite Makom members and participants to “make a personal pledge to the work of allyship and to devise a personal plan of... ways they will work towards becoming strong allies and leaders in the creation of more inclusive and equitable Jewish spaces” (No Silence on Race pillar #1). This includes doing the difficult work of examining our own assumptions and biases about who is a Jew and committing to rectifying these in our thoughts and actions. The aforementioned community anti-racism workshop will launch and support this work.

3. Partnerships

טוֹבִים הַשְּׂנִים מִן־הָאֶחָד אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלְהֶם שְׂכָר טוֹב בְּעֵמָלָם.

Two are better than one, for they get good reward for their toil.

—*Tanakh/Bible*, Kohelet/Ecclesiastes 4:9

In order to further our anti-racism work and to bolster our accountability to realizing our goals, we will partner with other Jewish organizations. Representatives from Makom and our partner organizations will meet to support one another, set goals, brainstorm programs, and collaborate.

4. Communications

שְׁתִּיקָה כְּהוֹדָאָה.

Silence is like acquiescence.

—*Babylonian Talmud*, Yevamot 87b, 88a; Bava Metzia 37b

We will highlight the diversity of the Makom community through the text and images on our website and social media platforms. We will also use our website to direct visitors to resources on Jewish diversity and anti-racism.

5. Indigeneity and De-Colonization

כִּי יִגְר יְהִי זָרְעֶךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם.

Your offspring will be strangers in a land not theirs.

—*Torah*, Bereishit/Genesis 15:13

As settlers on the land now called Canada, Jews are called to reckon with our relationship to Indigenous, Aboriginal, and Metis peoples. We commit to developing an action plan in 2021 to address decolonization in the context of our community, including in our programming, education, and prayer services.

Makom is proud to join the call to action from No Silence on Race and we commit ourselves to realizing these five goals in 2021 to build a more diverse and inclusive Jewish community.