

Annual Benefit Report 2017

Turnstile Tours, Inc.
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Brooklyn, NY 11218
New York State statute A4692-a, Article 17, Section 1708

Introduction

Who are we?

Turnstile Tours is a New York City-based social enterprise that researches, develops, and operates intensely-researched, site-specific tours and public programs in partnership with non-profit organizations, and consults with government and non-profit institutions on public engagement and place-making initiatives, including the development of tours, programs, and exhibits.

What is this report?

Turnstile Tours was incorporated in New York as a benefit corporation on May 9, 2012. New York's benefit corporation statute provides a legal framework for for-profit companies that seek to create a general public benefit, defined by the state as "a positive material impact on society and the environment." In an effort to ensure accountability and transparency, all benefit corporations in New York are required to post a benefit report annually on their respective areas of general public benefit based on a third-party assessment standard. Based on analysis of Turnstile Tours' operations during the calendar year of 2017, this benefit report provides an introduction to the company itself; insight into the company's pursuit of general and specific public benefits in 2017; and quantitative and qualitative analyses of the company's performance measured against the metrics of the B Impact Assessment, a third-party standard that evaluates overall social and environmental impact, and the results are outlined below.

In addition to a legal commitment to make a positive material impact on society and the environment, Turnstile Tours has defined specific areas of public benefit through establishing a clear mission statement, as well as core commitments to guide the company in living up to that statement. As part of our public benefit mission, Turnstile Tours partners with non-profit organizations based in local communities, and dedicates at least 5% of total tour ticket sales towards supporting select non-profit partners. Through tours, public programs, and related multimedia content, Turnstile Tours seeks to raise awareness about the missions and work of our non-profit partners. In 2016, we launched Turnstile Studio, the consulting arm of our company that enables us to share our skills and talents to support cultural institutions and non-profit organizations through content production, historical research, curriculum design, training services, and technical assistance.

Mission Statement

Turnstile Tours seeks to advance public knowledge about the meaning of place, foster connections and understanding between people of diverse backgrounds, and inspire and reflect a culture of community participation through providing and supporting welcoming, well-researched, inclusive, and engaging educational experiences and resources to people of all ages and abilities.

Core Commitments:

- **Conduct original research**

Turnstile Tours conducts original scholarly research with primary sources, including archival and field-based research, and documents place-based stories, both historical and contemporary, that are underrepresented in the public realm.

- **Contribute to public history**

We incorporate original research into projects, including tours, exhibits, public programs, and multimedia content, and are committed to depositing primary source materials in publicly-accessible archives for posterity.

- **Encourage cooperative learning and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and inclusivity**

We create experiences that facilitate active participation and are inclusive of and accessible to people with a wide range of learning styles, abilities, backgrounds, and knowledge.

- **Support non-profit partners**

Turnstile Tours contributes at least 5% of all ticket sales to select non-profit projects or organizations based in our local communities, educates the public about partners' missions and activities, and provides opportunities for customers and other Turnstile stakeholders to connect with and support projects that support community-building and place-making.

Turnstile Tours: Sharing How NYC Works

2017 was an exciting year for growing and deepening our relationships with our non-profit partners and expanding our reach to new audiences and organizations.

- Turnstile Tours operated a total of 448 public and private group tours for 5,934 visitors in 2017. We continued to be strong with the local market, with **64% of all visitors coming from New York City, and 76% from the metro area**. Additionally, for our tours offered in partnership with public institutions on public property (Brooklyn Navy Yard, Brooklyn Army Terminal, NYC Public Markets, and Prospect Park), 25% of visitors came from the local catchment area (defined by adjacent ZIP codes) for each of those facilities. This reinforces our commitment to “inspire and reflect a culture of community participation” by educating and engaging local people with the public assets in their communities.
- In July 2017, Turnstile Tours became a **certified New York State and New York City Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)**.
- **Turnstile Tours expanded its educational and career pathways-oriented programming at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 2017**. We achieved this goal by hosting a wide range of Inside Industry tour programs that featured visits to 20 different tenants at the Yard, including businesses that specialize in furniture making, architectural design and fabrication, space suit design, Spanish-language media, urban agriculture, and 3D printing. Turnstile Tours continued to work with BLDG 92 to host tours with a focus on reaching schools and universities, local nonprofits, and community members. Turnstile continued to support Brooklyn Historical Society’s after-school and teacher workshop programs at the industrial facility and also offered a series of orientation tours for students affiliated with Brooklyn STEAM Center, a career and technical education high school that will be opening in the Yard. Turnstile also led a series of free tours on community days for local families.
- In 2017, our company adopted the tagline, “**Sharing How NYC Works,**” to emphasize our renewed commitment to workforce development, career exploration and exposure, and highlighting the stories of New York City manufacturers, as well as our longstanding mission to take New Yorkers “behind the scenes” to learn how their city’s industry and infrastructure “works.”
- In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the opening of Brooklyn’s iconic Prospect Park, **Prospect Park Alliance partnered with Turnstile Tours to offer a series of public guided tours** that explored the many layers of history in the Park’s landscape, from the visions of the Park’s designers, to ways in which ordinary New Yorkers have utilized it, to recent and ongoing restoration projects and public programs. Turnstile

Tours also provided original research about the Rose Garden and led tours as part of a community visioning process to re-imagine this section of the park. This limited-run tour series was so successful that Prospect Park Alliance asked us to continue the tours in 2018.

- Turnstile Studio expanded its work to support capacity building of nonprofit organizations through consulting services. Projects included the completion of an historical infographic mural in the Essex Street Market, for which our team provided archival materials, historical photographs, maps, and research from primary sources from various archives across New York City. Turnstile Studio was also contracted by Brooklyn's **Green-Wood Cemetery to develop and conduct a customized professional development workshop for their tour guides and staff**, with a focus on techniques and best practices for providing an inclusive and engaging experience for all visitors. Turnstile's team also produced training materials and resources for future workshops, as well as a report with recommendations related to visitor engagement on tours of Green-Wood based on tour observations, assessment of online and printed visitor materials, and best practices across the museum and tourism fields. We were also hired by the **New York State Council on the Humanities to lead a half-day training workshop for their Public Humanities Fellows on project management and strategies for effectively engaging community organizations for their fellowship projects**.
- In July 2017, the Moore Street Market community suffered two terrible losses. Daytoine Shaw, manager of Reconnect Bakery, died suddenly, which was a huge loss for the organization, the market, his family and friends, and all of the young men he trained and mentored through Reconnect. That same month, we also lost Angelo Santiago, owner of neighborhood institution Anibal Meat Market, who died after a battle with cancer. We are thankful that we had the opportunity to work with these great community leaders, and our tours in this neighborhood are dedicated to their memories.

Measuring Impact: B Impact Assessment

New York State requires all benefit corporations to select a third-party standard for assessing performance in their specifically-defined area of public benefit. We are using B Lab's categories of evaluation for this benefit report. The B Impact Assessment measures the company's practices and outcomes in five main areas, which will be discussed below:

- Governance
- Workers
- Community
- Environment
- Impact Business Models

❖ Governance

This section of the B Impact Assessment evaluates corporate structures, policies, and practices that are in place to define, measure, and evaluate the impact and implementation of the company's social mission. Corporate accountability and transparency with stakeholders are the two major areas of focus in the Governance section. Turnstile Tours is structured as a benefit corporation, and the following information provides an overview of how social impact is built into the foundational structure of the company.

General public benefit

- Turnstile Tours' commitment to social impact is reflected in the company's Articles of Incorporation and the by-laws. Turnstile Tours incorporated on May 9, 2012 in New York as a benefit corporation, broadly dedicating itself in the Articles of Incorporation to creating "general public benefit," which is defined by the state as having "a positive material impact on society and the environment." As a benefit corporation, Turnstile Tours is dedicated to an annual review of its overall social and environmental performance through conducting an assessment based on third-party standards.

Specific public benefit

- Beyond creating general public benefit, benefit corporations may also designate a specific public benefit based on seven categories defined by the New York state statute. While Turnstile Tours aims to have an impact that creates benefit in several of these areas, including preserving the environment and serving low-income communities, the company identified "promoting the arts, sciences, or advancement of knowledge" as its primary focus in its by-laws. This area of specific benefit is adapted and incorporated into the mission statement, operations, and performance evaluation of the company.

Turnstile's Mission Statement

- Turnstile Tours has integrated an explicit commitment to social impact into its corporate mission and by-laws and includes the mission on its materials and website: "Turnstile Tours seeks to advance public knowledge about the meaning of place, foster connections and understanding between people of diverse backgrounds, and inspire and reflect a culture of community participation through providing welcoming, well-researched, inclusive, and engaging educational experiences and resources to people of all ages and abilities."

Corporate Accountability and Transparency with Stakeholders

- Turnstile Tours **published its fourth annual benefit report**, which covered the calendar year of January 1 – December 31, 2016. The benefit report provided clear statements of mission, goals, and values; descriptions of our mission-related activities; quantifiable targets and results related to our mission; consistent variables of measurement that allow for comparisons from year to year; and third-party validation of the company's mission performance.

❖ Workers

This section of the B Impact Assessment evaluated Turnstile Tours' worker compensation, benefits, and work environment. Some notable achievements included:

- By the end of 2017, Turnstile Tours had **four hourly employees and one working owner**. As with the previous year, we consciously decided not to hire an additional staff member in order to guarantee more hours for the individuals who are on staff.
- In 2017, Turnstile Tours participated in the pilot group of the **Best for NYC Changemaker program**, which encouraged companies to enact positive changes that emerged from the Best for NYC Challenge assessment. We pledged "to hire job seekers who face barriers to employment or who are placed through a workforce development program." We met with the Brooklyn Navy Yard Employment Center and developed an Inclusion & Diversity Policy aimed at reaching a broader pool of job applicants and diversifying our workforce. For this effort, Turnstile Tours was awarded the 2017 Best for NYC Changemaker Award from the New York City Mayor's Office of Workforce Development and B Lab.
- **Our company's lowest hourly wage in 2017 was \$20 per hour**, more than 65% above the minimum wage, and above the travel and hospitality industry hourly

employment average. As most staff are paid on a per-tour basis, rather than an hourly wage, the **average hourly rate across the company was \$34.39 per hour.**

- **The pay ratio between our highest-paid and lowest-paid worker was lower than 5:1.**
- In March 2017, **we moved into a new office at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.** This is a shared office space with the Brooklyn Grange and the nonprofit City Growers. By moving out of our home office, we now have a space that is more convenient and accessible for our staff to work out of. The office is equipped with three workstations, meeting spaces, and a library accessible to staff for training and research purposes.

Areas of Improvement:

- As we operate programming in diverse communities, in 2018 we plan to implement our Inclusion & Diversity Policy for all future hires, which will enable us to reach beyond our social networks and access local talent through workforce development organizations and local universities.

❖ Community

The portion of the assessment looks at community engagement through charitable giving, volunteering, local economic development, and working with local suppliers. Turnstile Tours is structured to benefit non-profit partners through financial and in-kind contributions, as well as through public education, volunteerism, consulting, and technical assistance. As demonstrated below, community engagement is central to our mission and work. Accomplishments in 2017 included the following:

- **In 2017, Turnstile Tours continued to nurture its existing partnerships with a wide range of local non-profit organizations on tour and public programming.** For our regularly offered public tour programs, in-kind support was provided to the Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at BLDG 92, the Brooklyn Army Terminal, the Essex Street Market Vendors Association, Prospect Park Alliance, and the Street Vendor Project of the Urban Justice Center.
- **When visitors buy a ticket, they're also supporting these partner organizations.** We have a stated commitment as a company and to our customers to contribute at least 5% of our total sales to select non-profit organizations. In 2017, we contributed \$10,118, or **6.7% of total revenue**, to nonprofit organizations. In addition to our structured partner donations, in the wake of Hurricane Maria, we donated 100% of ticket sales for four days to the Hispanic Federation Unidos fund, which amounted to \$567.

- **In terms of economic impact, 73.8% of Turnstile Tours' expenses** (excluding labor, per the standards set in the B Impact Assessment) in 2017 **supported local independent businesses and organizations**, the vast majority of which are based in New York City. 17% of Turnstile Tours' expenses supported locally-owned and operated street vendors and public market vendors.
- **10% of tours were reviewed and accredited by the American Institute of Architects** to issue continuing education credits for qualified designers, engineers, and architects for select tours, including the Brooklyn Army Terminal Walking Tour, and the Sustainable Architecture & Industry Tour, Urban Ecology Tour, and Inside Industry Tours at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. These accredited tours made up 9.4% of Turnstile Tours' total visitorship.
- **In 2017, 45.6% of all private tours visitors came with educational or non-profit groups**, and the vast majority of these tours were offered at a discounted rate. This proportion of educational visitors has increased every year since 2012, when these groups made up just 12% of visitors.

❖ Environment

This section looks at the company's environmental impact through areas including energy use, operations, supplies, and waste, as well as environmental education. Because Turnstile operates out of a home office, and we do not produce a product in a traditional sense, measuring our environmental impact can be a challenge using this assessment.

- **Environmental education** was a significant part of our tour programming in 2017, with **8.8% of all visitors joining an environmental- or sustainability-focused tour**, such as the Sustainable Architecture and Industry and Urban Ecology Tours of the Brooklyn Navy Yard.
- Our new shared office has a **recycling program** paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, metal, electronics, as well as compost, which is processed just one story above us at the Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm. Turnstile Tours considers environmental impact when purchasing and printing paper-based materials. We recycle supplies in the office, including printing on scrap paper, purchased primarily recycled paper, and our printing supplier for marketing and tour materials uses vegetable-based inks.

❖ Impact Business Models

As a registered Benefit Corporation, Turnstile Tours was founded with a social enterprise model built into its corporate mission and structure, as was discussed in the Governance

section above. Analysis of Turnstile Tours' performance in 2017 qualified the company for credit in three main categories defined by the B Impact Assessment:

- ***Benefiting consumers through the support of general knowledge, art, or cultural heritage:*** Turnstile Tours is dedicated to advancing public knowledge through its mission statement, has defined advancement of knowledge as its specific area of impact, and evaluates performance in this realm through tracking customer feedback, supporting the work of non-profit partners and cultural institutions, and conducting original research to be publicly archived and disseminated.
- ***Conserving the environment through providing information to solve environmental problems:*** Many of our tour programs have a strong focus on issues related to the environment and sustainability. Turnstile also engages a sustainability expert who searches for ways to integrate these topics into all of our tours and programs.
- ***Donating at least 2% of sales to charity:*** Turnstile Tours has an official policy to set aside 5% of all revenue from public and private tours to support select non-profit partner organizations, and in 2017, 6.7% of revenue going to non-profit organizations.

The best way to demonstrate how Turnstile Tours has a lasting impact is by providing concrete examples that relate to each of our four core commitments.

- **Commitment to original research:** We regularly conduct research archival- and field-based research to uncover historical and contemporary stories we feel are underrepresented in the public realm. We work with our partners to conduct and archive oral history interviews with people who have connections to the sites where we work. We continue to disseminate our research through social media and our blog, where we have crafted dozens of articles that not only contribute to the public record about these sites, but also contain information about primary source material for future research.
- **Contribute to public history:** We incorporate original research into projects, including tours, exhibits, public programs, and multimedia content, and are committed to depositing primary source materials in publicly-accessible archives for posterity.
- **Encourage cooperative learning and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect:** We create experiences that facilitate active participation and are inclusive of and accessible to people with a wide range of learning styles, abilities, backgrounds and knowledge.
- **Support non-profit partners:** In addition to providing significant contributions of volunteer time and money to our non-profit partners, we also work to expand their mission and capacity, and reach a wider audience.