



leeway foundation

PIA AGRAWAL NAMED INCOMING LEEWAY FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Pia Agrawal

Philadelphia, PA, Monday, December 17, 2024 — Leeway Foundation We, the Leeway Board of Directors, are delighted to announce that Pia Agrawal will join the Leeway Foundation as our new executive director beginning January 27, 2025.

Pia is a seasoned arts administrator and grantmaker with a demonstrated passion for curating and resourcing community-based arts and artists. She has brought this passion to cities around the country, including several years working in Philadelphia’s arts and culture sector. Most recently, Pia served as the executive director of Staten Island Arts, an organization that funds local arts and culture work and provides arts programs that highlight local artists (see below for Pia’s full bio).

Germaine Ingram, chair of the search committee and longtime board member, said about the search: *“This search process affirmed Leeway’s purpose and values. We had to envision the challenges and opportunities ahead, along with the qualities of leadership needed to guide Leeway forward with vigor, vision and grace. Pia Agrawal embodies the powers and habits of heart and mind that will ensure Leeway’s ongoing prowess in supporting opportunities for women and trans artists and putting the arts in service of building healthy, caring communities.”*

Pia shared the following thoughts on her new role:

“A common thread throughout my career has been advocating for artists and I am honored to bring this energy back to the city I called home for so many years. I look forward to working with the

Leeway staff, board, and communities of artists as we foster the future of the foundation and continue to build on Denise's incredible legacy."

We thank our volunteer search committee members, Denise Beek, Irit Reinheimer and Sage Crump for their time and care in this process. And we are especially grateful to our committed outgoing executive director, Denise Brown, for her leadership during the search process. To ensure a smooth transition, Denise will step into the role of executive advisor in 2025.

In the new year, we will have opportunities for Pia to meet with our beloved community members. We know you will join us in extending a warm welcome to Pia as she helps Leeway begin a new chapter in our collective commitment to supporting arts in social change.

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PIA AGRAWAL BIOGRAPHY

Before she joins Leeway as Executive Director, Pia Kishore Agrawal served as the Executive Director of Staten Island Arts, the arts council for the borough of Staten Island. Previously, Agrawal served as the inaugural Curator of Performing Arts at the Momentary, a multidisciplinary contemporary art space satellite to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, AR. From 2014-18, Pia was the Program Director at the University of Houston Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts where she produced the Center's public programming including the annual Mitchell Artist Lecture and site-specific CounterCurrent festival. Prior to her work in Houston, Pia served as the Programming Director of FringeArts (Philadelphia, PA). Agrawal has been an advisor with the New England Foundation for the Arts's National Theater Project and has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, Creative Capital, the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, and the MAP Fund, amongst others. She is the inaugural board chair of Rendezvous, a Houston, TX-based nonprofit supporting the creation of interdisciplinary artwork that examines the rich diversity of queer experiences. Agrawal is a graduate of Haverford College with a BA in sociology and lives with her blind cat, Butchie.

ABOUT LEEWAY FOUNDATION

The Leeway Foundation supports women, trans*, and gender nonconforming artists and cultural producers working in communities at the intersection of art, culture, and social change. Through our grantmaking and other programs, we promote artistic expression that amplifies the voices of those on the margins, promotes sustainable and healthy communities, and works in the service of movements for economic and social justice. For more information about Leeway, its grant programs, grantees, and events, visit leeway.org.

**Leeway is a trans-affirming organization committed to gender self-determination, and we use the term "trans" in its most inclusive sense, as an umbrella term encompassing transsexual, transgender, genderqueer, Two-Spirit people, and anyone whose gender identity or gender expression is nonconforming and/or different from their gender assigned at birth.*

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