

# Operationalizing Racial Justice in Non-Profit Organizations<sup>1</sup>

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*This paper is dedicated to Lila Cabbil (1944-2019), known by many as Mama Lila.  
She was a friend who consistently sounded a clarion bell with love,  
that we must speak our truth and act with accountability for racial justice.*



This is a pivotal moment. #BlackLivesMatter is finally being widely embraced instead of challenged and may be the largest movement in U.S. history,<sup>2</sup> with unprecedented uprisings happening globally. There are active discussions and steps being taken in communities to defund the police and transform public safety. Symbols of the confederacy are being removed and sports logos that denigrate Native Americans are being changed. Organizations' and corporations' letters of support of #BlackLivesMatter are being questioned to ensure the words are backed up with actions. White leaders and predominately white organizations are being called out for not addressing racism and white dominant culture.<sup>3, 4, 5, 6</sup> The stark medical and economic impact of COVID-19 on communities of color are beginning to be discussed, using a structural analysis and naming the racist policies and their impact over generations.<sup>7</sup> All of this is building momentum to lead to a point of no return. As Indian author and activist Arundhati Roy describes, we are in a portal, a gateway between two worlds. Roy offers, "We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it."<sup>8</sup> *What door will (or has) your organization walk(ed) through?*

At this pivotal moment, the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) approach and framing are no longer relevant. Diversity and inclusion played a role in this work, but their outcomes are very limited and do not address nor lead to dismantling structural racism<sup>9</sup>. The DEI approach does not address entrenched and accumulated racialized inequities in all qualities of life (such as health, housing, education, public safety, and work). The DEI approach does not focus on shifting power. Continuing to embrace the DEI approach at this point leads to a need to understand what is underneath it by asking three questions: 1) what is the organization actually risking and changing to reflect DEI values? 2) is whiteness being centered by using this frame? and 3) whose comfort is being privileged? Now is the time to act on our

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<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Larry, Quoctrung Bui, and Jugal K. Patel. "[Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History](#)," *The New York Times*. (July 2 2020).

<sup>3</sup> LC Voices, "[An Open Letter in Response to Ben Hecht's 'Moving Beyond Diversity to Racial Equity'](#)," *Medium*. *Medium*, July 6, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Spencer, Whitney, "[An Open Letter & a Call for True Healing Justice](#)," *Medium*. *Medium*, Jun 19, 2020.

<sup>5</sup> HEAL Food Alliance, "[An Open Letter from BIPOC Leaders in Food & Agriculture to Food Systems Funders](#)," *Medium*. *Medium*, Jul 10, 2020,

<sup>6</sup> Tyson, Ruth, "[An Open Letter to the Union of Concerned Scientists: On Black Death, Black Silencing, and Black Fugivity](#)," 2020.

<sup>7</sup> "[In a Pandemic, All Some People See Is Your Color](#)," Calvin Baker, *The Atlantic*, June 2020. "[COVID-19 and the Color Line](#)," C. Gordon, W. Johnson, J. Purnell, J. Rogers, *Boston Review*, May 1, 2020. "[Black Communities Are on the 'Frontline' of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Here's Why](#)," Anne Branigin. *The Root*. March 31, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Roy, Arundhati. "[The Pandemic Is a Portal](#)," *Financial Times*. (April 3 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Please use the [www.racialequitytools.org](https://www.racialequitytools.org) glossary for clarity on the terms listed in this document. The glossary can be found at <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary#>

commitment to justice, to interrogate how the system of white supremacy is operating, to be bold and take significant risks, and to work collectively for organizational transformation. It is well past time to operationalize racial justice.

For nonprofit organizations who have decided to start a change process in order to integrate their value of racial equity in their policies, practices, culture and ethos, and for those who have already started and want to deepen and sustain the work, this document will provide reflections to five commonly asked questions and share a curated list of resources. I encourage you to review the resources on various topics, including racial equity organizational assessments, recruiting and hiring, accountability, caucusing and other topics. Go beyond looking at the resources, and explore the website of each organization that produced them. Learn about their analysis and approach and discover other resources they produced. Part of investing in your own racial justice change process is increasing your knowledge of the work happening across the country. Widening your community and deepening your relationships with co-conspirators, leaders, and activists is critical to sustaining your work.

The five questions that will be discussed are:

1. How do we get started becoming a racially just organization?
2. How do we deal with conflicts and tensions that will happen in a racial equity change process, especially when they are complicated by power dynamics?
3. What can we expect may be included in an organization's roadmap for racial justice?
4. What are ways to measure progress and be accountable to the communities and people we work with?
5. How do I choose what tools and resources to use in our work of becoming a racially just organization?

Throughout this document there are times that I use the term racial equity and other times I use racial justice. OpenSource Leadership Strategies has a clear stated definition of racial equity: "a mindset and method for solving problems that have endured for generations, seem intractable, harm people and communities of color most acutely and ultimately affect people of all races. This will require seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing the work differently. Racial equity is about results that make a difference and last."<sup>10</sup> Racial equity work is about identifying and interrogating the practices that are creating and/or reinforcing racial inequities and white dominant culture. The Center for Assessment and Policy Development describes the results of racial equity as "[when] one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares...we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation."<sup>11</sup>

Operationalizing racial justice means reimagining and co-creating a just and liberated world and includes:

- understanding the history of racism<sup>12</sup> and the system of white supremacy and addressing past harms,

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<sup>10</sup> This definition was developed by OpenSource Leadership Strategies, Inc. All work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Noncommercial. No Derivatives 4.0 International License.

<sup>11</sup> Center for Assessment and Policy Development, "Racial Equity." [www.racialequitytools](http://www.racialequitytools) Glossary.

<sup>12</sup> This definition is based on and has been expanded on the one described in Sen, Rinku, and Lori Villarosa. [Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens: A Practical Guide](#). Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (2019).

- working in right relationship<sup>13</sup> and accountability in an ecosystem<sup>14</sup> (an issue, sector or community ecosystem) for collective change,
- implementing interventions that use an intersectional analysis and that impact multiple systems,
- centering Blackness and building community, cultural, economic and political power of Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC), and
- applying the practice of love<sup>15</sup> along with disruption and resistance to the status quo.

In short, throughout this document racial equity will be used when describing a process, outcomes and a mindset, and racial justice will be used when referring to a vision of transformational change.

**“To love is transformational. . . To translate this to others . . . requires our whole hearts, minds, actions, and accountable systems. All of this is a profound act of resistance and culture shift. We are swimming upstream against the normative practice of checking off our to-do lists... **Love, when fused with power, is our tool for justice, freedom, and liberation.** ...Our very survival is wrapped in love and power. Our work is amphibious, living in the both/and, beyond the shores of the binary, colonized world of separation and othering.”**

~Shiree Teng & Sammy Nuñez, *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice*

### *Starting and Continuing the Racial Justice Journey*

The first questions to plan what we should do to operationalize racial justice include what policies need to change, what training is needed, how to talk about racism with trustees, and how to address past harms. Sometimes they all come up at once. These are good questions, and all of them are components of making progress. It can be challenging to determine where to begin or what should be the next phase in deepening racial equity work. There is no formula for how to align an organization’s commitment to racial justice with its policies, practices, culture, and ethos. Doing this work organizationally is also about building internal will. It is about living the value of justice so that even in the face of public feedback about an organization’s actions, the work continues. It is about taking risks in word and deed. It is about working with integrity and being accountable to people and communities most impacted by structural racism.

Sometimes organizations move forward on racial equity change processes by replicating the way we might create a program or set up a service for constituents. I invite you to start at a different place and first, ***re-imagine what a racially just organization would look like?***<sup>16</sup> Then the discussion to figure out how to begin or deepen the change process will open up a wide range of possibilities, and entry points and ideas that can be expansive about how to transform an organization to be racially just and liberated.

<sup>13</sup> [adrienne maree brown on creating the future](#), Alice Grandiot. Deem Journal. W/S 20.

<sup>14</sup> [Five Elements of a Thriving Justice Ecosystem: Pursuing Deep Equity](#), Sheryl Petty and Amy Dean, NonProfit Quarterly, April 13, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Teng, Shiree, and Sammy Nuñez. [Measuring Love on the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper](#). Latino Community Foundation (San Francisco, CA: 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Bazant, Micah, ["How to Reimagine the World."](#) *Forward Together*, 2020.

A racial equity organizational change process will disrupt and stretch the organization in sometimes scary, chaotic, and also unifying ways. It is important to have a healthy and candid conversation about taking on this work, especially for organizations who are just starting. Here are some **discussion questions for you to reflect on as a group:**

- **What risks is our organization willing to take to operationalize its value of racial justice? Is the organization open to being explicit about naming structural racism, anti-blackness, and the system of white supremacy?**
- **How are we preparing to increase using our voice to ensure our values are in alignment with our actions? How is our organization open to using its power and privilege to make a stand and/or use its voice and standing in the community for justice?**
- **How is our organization preparing for the potential disruption in work, while policies, practices, and culture are being transformed to align with the value of racial justice?**
- **What are the practices that need to be put in place for staff and trustees to support each other, especially during complex change and uncertainty? How will our organization invest in and center building relationships? What types of supports will be put in place for staff and trustees of color, since they are often burdened by the racial equity organizational change process – e.g., by its pacing, by whites’ hesitations, and by the consequences when truth about the impact of racism is shared?**
- **Is our organization building its backbone for examining everything the organization does using a racial equity analysis? Is our organization prepared to hear candid feedback and to listen to different points of view and hard truths?**
- **Is our organization prepared to end programs and services that are not moving toward racial justice, even if they have been successful and received affirmation and/or funding? Is our organization ready to examine policies, practices, and partnerships to see if they are reinforcing white dominant culture<sup>17</sup> or racial inequities?**
- **After reviewing policies and practices, if past or current policies or practices have reinforced inequities and/or caused harm is our organization willing to be transparent so credibility can be rebuilt and accountability is clear moving forward?**
- **How will our organization respond to stakeholders who may not agree with being explicit about racial equity, and/or centering racial justice? How is our organization preparing to deal with the potential backlash?**

This journey requires a deep investment organizationally and also individually. As you discuss the questions above as an organization, it is important for each staff and board member to also reflect individually on their own learning needs. Each person has a responsibility to create their own learning and action plan to contribute to the organization operationalizing racial justice, to have clarity on personal needs, and to ask for support from colleagues and the organization. Here are a couple of

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<sup>17</sup> “By “white [dominant] culture,” we mean the dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. Because it is so normalized it can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call U.S. culture or norms – a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But it operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what “normal” is – and likewise, what “professional,” “effective,” or even “good” is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, “at risk,” or “unsustainable.” White culture values some ways – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, western tradition – of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways. And it does this without ever having to explicitly say so.” Gulati-Partee, Gita, and Maggie Potapchuk. [“Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity.”](#) *The Foundation Review* 6, no. 1 (2014): 25-38.

## questions to begin to guide individual reflection:

- How am I embedding the values of racial equity and justice in what I do at work? What has been challenging? What is confusing? What supports do I need?
- How am I using my voice in ways that have been effective in talking about racism and racial equity? Are there times when my voice shakes or I am unsure of what to say? If so, what supports do I need? Have there been consequences when I have shared truths about the impact of racism? Going forward, how does the organization need to address the harm of those consequences and support me?
- In what areas do I want to deepen my knowledge and skills? What questions do I have? What issues am I struggling with in thinking about my role and contribution?

The journey is also about building individual will and confidence to do the heavy lift of disrupting and transforming the organization's current policies/practices/culture, leaning into learning and discomfort, being willing to take risks to act, and supporting others to collectively create traction in moving toward racial justice

## ***How do we get started becoming a racially just organization?***

A good place to start is by discussing the questions above for organizations and individuals and reading some of the organizational case studies listed in the Resource List below on page 18. The case studies are from different types of organizations and showcase various methods, processes, and pacing of the work based on organizational culture, demographics, past work, internal will and commitment, and leadership.

To determine the scaffolding you will need, reflect on past change processes, the learning supports needed for staff and trustees to deeply understand racism, the depth of internal commitment, the possible challenges (e.g. staffing, finances, external support) and assets of your organization, as well as its bandwidth. Each is a key consideration in guiding the design of your change process. Please note there is not step-by-step guide or a formula. As you will see from each of the case studies, there are three components consistently discussed in the early stages of a change process.

***Creating a racial equity leadership team (RELT)*** – In the change process, best practices call for establishing a leadership team.<sup>18</sup> This team needs to be diverse by departments, positions, identity groups, tenure, and informal/formal leadership. Invest in this team – provide time in people's schedules to participate, build their skills and knowledge, and ensure staff and other stakeholders have clarity about their role. Sometimes a team is created and is expected to do all the racial equity work in the organization. Sometimes they are formed without the authority or the relationship with those in positional power positions. Be explicit about the authority, decision-making autonomy, team responsibilities, and expectations of staff in the change process.

It is important to ensure the RELT is supported do their job. It is a heavy lift, especially emotionally, as this team takes the lead on guiding the process, and is often on the frontlines of addressing some of the challenges inherent in any racial equity change process - resistance, differing types of emotions,

<sup>18</sup> Here are two resources that discuss the equity leadership team's role: Keleher, Terry. [Racial Equity Core Teams: The Engines of Institutional Change](#). Racial Equity Alliance (2018). And Urban Sustainability Directors Network. [Driving toward Equity - Building a Racial Equity Team](#). 2015. [Equity and Driving Toward Equity – Building a Racial Equity Team](#), Urban Sustainability Directors Network.

and sometimes backlash. Specifically, ask what each team member needs to fully meet the expectations for their role; each person will have different needs based on their identity and positional role. Support can include things like adjusting job responsibilities, hiring outside coaches to provide support, compensation (e.g. monetary, personal days), and being able to take time to process after challenging situations. [See SAGE's video on their lesson.<sup>19</sup>] Be sure that support is provided equitably, keeping in mind the inequities of emotional labor Black, Indigenous and other People of Color experience by contributing to the organization's racial equity change process and that typically there are also different consequence for the risks taken. During an organizational change process a staff person of color shared, "people of color not only bear the brunt of harm from racism within the organization, they also bear the brunt of harm from the racial equity process – of white people's learning curves, of the slow pace of change, of missteps large and small all along the way."

One of the questions that usually comes up is whether senior leadership should be part of the RELT. Every organization's culture is different. For some, if an executive director is involved, everything will be centered on the executive director's opinions, even if dialogue and consensus building processes are in place. For other organizations, if the executive director is not present the work of the team will not be credible within the organization and it will not be able to make progress. There are also varying scenarios in between reflecting how power dynamics play out in an organization that are often not named nor addressed. It is important to have very candid conversations with different people in different parts of the organization to determine whether and which members of senior leadership should be involved in the RELT. No matter the decision, the full senior leadership team still needs to be in a parallel process of building their own knowledge, skills, and confidence. To create the needed level of change in the organization, and to sustain it, a strong relationship needs to be developed *between* the senior leadership team and the RELT. Each team has different roles and areas of focus in guiding the change process. Typically, both teams identify and work closely with consultants, acts as messengers and advocates for the process, keep the work visible within the organization, and support staff in collectively working for racial justice. Both leadership teams need to build their relationships with each other. The two teams need to experiment with new equitable practices, develop accountability practices with each other, and share about their progress and challenges so they can be a model for others in the organization.

Here are some questions to discuss about the RELT's role and authority, and to develop accountability practices with the senior leadership team:

- What decisions will the RELT have the authority to make?
- What is the communication protocol, e.g., do emails to staff need to be reviewed by the senior leadership team?
- What are practices the teams will adopt to transparently address power dynamics in their relationships and decision-making processes?

Setting up these equitable and accountability practices are not "one and done." The group needs to continue to check in on how interactions reflect equitable practices.

The Board also needs to create a racial equity leadership committee. Some organizations expand the job description of an established committee (e.g., the governance committee), while others establish an ad-hoc committee or change the bylaws to create a new committee. Whatever the decision within the structure of the Board, this committee plays a similar role to the staff RELT – guiding the process, communicating the Board's role and responsibilities, ensuring Board members are contributing to

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<sup>19</sup> Equity in the Center's Video Case Studies – scroll to SAGE, and watch the 2<sup>nd</sup> video, Internal Pushback <https://www.equityinthecenter.org/video-case-studies/>

operationalizing racial justice within the organization including examining Board bylaws and practices. Some organizations' Board and Staff RELTs meet on a regular basis to share learnings and support each other's work.

***Developing a common language and analysis*** – One of the other critical components of the change process is for staff and board to participate in training(s) and ongoing learning engagements to learn basic definitions (e.g. racial equity, racial justice, white privilege, power, white dominant culture, anti-blackness, oppression, system of white supremacy), to understand structural racism and the history of racism, and to be introduced to and practice using a racial equity analysis. Organizations sometimes bring in a consultant team to conduct the training. Others participate in public trainings or work with an established curriculum internally over the course of several months. Again, in each of the case studies listed below (see p. 18), organizations share their version of how the staff and board's knowledge and skills were built over time. Budget, time, scheduling, and culture were variables in deciding the path to developing shared language and analysis. In planning for training using external consultants, provide sufficient time for the facilitators to obtain baseline information about the participants and organizational issues, build relationships, and ensure post-workshop steps are planned.

While it is important to have a common language and analysis, especially prior to reviewing assessment results, skill building and knowledge development in order to operationalize racial justice is an ongoing process. One training is not sufficient. There needs to be an ongoing commitment to build staff and board's knowledge, skills, and confidence to talk about racism and white privilege and to operationalize racial justice. It is an investment of time and yet it is important to note that the education process can be disruptive institutionally and interpersonally.

As the organizational space opens up to have more conversations about racism, white dominant culture, and power, and an organization demonstrates its readiness for these changes, staff begin sharing their truths and the impact of inequities. This is challenging because as these truths are heard, sometimes for the first time at a staff gathering, many times the infrastructure is not yet in place to be fully responsive. In many organizations, there is not a feedback process or a muscle yet developed to address conflict. For many organizations this is a time when the process stops or slows down. And yet, this can be a breakthrough moment for an organization in holding a space and working collectively on how to be responsive in the moment and build the practices for the long term.

Finally, be prepared for what staff members might need immediately following a training process so that they can continue to process the concepts, reflect on colleagues' stories about the impact of organizational racial inequities, identify concerns about how future change may impact their job, and/or understand the risks and rewards in working toward operationalizing racial justice.

***Conduct a racial equity organizational assessment*** – The racial equity assessment process will be different based on the organization's size, budget, and what, specifically, the organization wants to learn more about. Some organizations focus on learning from staff about the impact of policies and practices, their individual and collective knowledge and skills, or ideas on making progress toward racial justice, and hopes for the change process. Some organizations conduct a parallel process with their board. Still other organizations want to learn from their stakeholders, including partner organizations, clients, alumni of programs, constituents, funders, and/or community stakeholders. There is a list of racial equity organizational change assessment tools on page 20.

Here are some questions you might want to learn more about through the organizational assessment process:<sup>20</sup>

- How explicitly does our organization use the terms race, racism, power, and white privilege in organizational documents, in conversations and internal and external communication?
- What are the assumptions and experiences about how change happens within our organization?
- What are staff and board members' experiences, perspectives, and knowledge about race, racism, white privilege, and white dominant culture? *(This provides baseline data on staff's and trustees' knowledge and skills, which can help inform the education sessions and be a benchmark for the organization.)*
- How do the policies, practices, and culture align with the value of racial equity, specifically looking at manifestations of white dominant culture in organizational policies and practices?
- What are staff and board's experiences with any racial inequities and/or harm that occurred in the workplace and what has been the impact and the organizational response?
- What are the organizational strengths, and opportunities for improvement in the racial justice change process?
- What ideas do staff and board members have about how to operationalize racial justice?

The assessment process is typically done by a third party to ensure confidentiality and to share data back in a way that honors voice from different identity groups. This is especially important if some identity groups are relatively small within the organization, so anonymity can be ensured and individual's truths can be shared through disaggregated data and themes. Prior to sharing data, as discussed earlier, it is important for staff and board to have developed a common analysis and language about racism, power, and white privilege. Skipping this step may escalate frustration with the change process and possibly cause harm. The knowledge-building process is an important time to work on developing relationships. You can also create a container to have hard conversations by adopting process norms.<sup>21</sup>

The data collected can help organizations see and understand different points of view, and the impact of policies, practices, and culture on different kinds of stakeholders and on members of different identity groups. It is helpful for the RELT and senior leaders to work with the consultant team to make meaning of the data and design a process to share the results and engage the staff and Board. After discussing the racial equity assessment, the staff and Board can create a roadmap prioritizing what needs to be addressed and determining action steps, roles, and a timeline. It is critical to have a commitment and a process to act on what is learned through the data assessment. If people are being asked to share their truths and the impact of racial inequities within the organization, the organization is accountable for stepping up and working to address what is learned and, more importantly, co-creating a vision of a racially just organization.

Following the assessment, it is critical to co-create a long-term roadmap and build the internal will and infrastructure for the change process to be sustained. For some organizations, the next steps chosen are transactional tasks (e.g. changing hiring process, providing training, updating HR policies). These tasks are not sufficient nor can making these transactional adjustments be seen as being accountable to the staff and constituents in general and especially Black, Indigenous and other People of Color in living the value of the racial justice. I say this not to minimize the importance of doing each of those tasks; rather they are only steps. Operationalizing racial justice means identifying and interrogating all

<sup>20</sup> Potapchuk, Maggie. [Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment Tool](#). MP Associates (2016).

<sup>21</sup>A set of process norms to consider is the one by OpenSource Leadership Strategies. [Group Norms for Breakthrough Social Change: The Opensource Approach](#). Open Source Leadership Strategies.



of your policies, practices, and culture to uncover racial inequities and practices reinforcing white dominant culture. It means enacting the vision of what a racially just organization looks like. It means taking risks and not just focusing on the low hanging fruit as sufficient outcomes. As OpenSource Leadership Strategies shares in its definition of racial equity, it "requires seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing the work differently."<sup>22</sup>

***How do we deal with conflicts and tensions that will happen in a racial equity change process especially when they are complicated by power dynamics?***

Typically, in many non-profit organizations, the culture reinforces conflict-averse practices. Staff will share that they have insufficient skills for dealing with conflict. Conflict aversion also manifests as inability to address or allow for differences or disagreements and as having a narrow bandwidth for expression of emotions within a workplace. Racial equity and racial justice work definitely generate conflict, and that conflict will escalate, especially if it isn't addressed or gets buried under a false consensus that preserves existing cultural norms that protect feelings and white fragility.<sup>23</sup> Building the fortitude and skills of individuals to work through conflict and shifting the organizational culture to embrace conflict are both necessary. It may be helpful to bring in outside assistance to build skills or to mediate a conflict. However, the deep work that needs to part of the organization's roadmap is transformational culture change work that includes developing a culture that effectively engages conflict.

Unaddressed and/or poorly managed conflicts are more likely to doom a change effort rather than produce clearer thinking that illuminates the path to meaningful change. Often, an organization will shut down or temper the process based on the conflict exceeding the current culture's norms. This ends up prioritizing individual comfort, and many times centering white people's comfort level instead of addressing racial inequities. It also ends up maintaining the current organizational conflict-averse norms and works against creating a culture in which people can speak their truth, especially Black, Indigenous and other People of Color staff whose voices are frequently marginalized.

Organizational conflict typically increases during the organizational racial equity change process. By working to create a racially equitable culture, the boundaries shift and there is increasing transparency, which allows more knowledge about inequities within the organization. And though there may be increased commitment to and investment for change, those who resist change or are less invested can sometimes be more vocal or become gatekeepers to making progress. Specifically, while launching a racial equity assessment process, truths about harm from past and current practices and individual racial microaggressions will be revealed. People's responses to learning these truths will run the gamut as well as the organization who may move immediately into protecting themselves legally. All of this can escalate conflict. Stacie Haines talks about the impact of trauma as well as generative conflict in her book, *The Politics of Trauma*, saying "The impacts of trauma often have us feel more protective or brittle in conflict, roll over inside of it, or try to avoid it altogether. None of these lets us engage conflict as generative. We need to do our own healing, our own change work, to be able to show up for a

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "White Fragility" is a term coined by Dr. Robin DiAngelo, which describes a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium. Dr. DiAngelo discusses the term in several articles and in her book. DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Race*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2018.

different kind of conflict. ... Generative conflict does not mean it will always work out. It does not mean we won't have any more conflict. ... It does mean that *how* we do conflict creates more possibility and it does not create more damage. Generative conflict tends to leave relationships with respect, albeit differences, rather than people feeling trashed, shamed, or discarded. Conflict as generative can racially deepen a group's commitment and clarity. ... It can help us all practice more centered accountability. It can cultivate more wisdom. Generative conflict leaves us in better shape and more trusting for the next conflict."<sup>24</sup>

Though the space is fermenting for increased dialogue about racism, typically the processes, relationships, and skills don't keep pace. Conflict, most of the time, can be a positive sign of growth, investment, and increasing trust in the organization. There can also be simmering tension, as the organization's work must continue, while at the same time, the work is being interrogated to see how it reflects white dominant culture and possibly reinforces racial inequities. This change process is messy, exasperating, and yet soul-enriching and fulfilling.

Here are a couple of steps to strengthen an organization's muscles to effectively work through conflict while paying attention to power and racial dynamics:

***Giving and Receiving Feedback*** – Typically, for many organizations, there is not a developed muscle for giving and receiving feedback and addressing conflict. Spend the time to invest in building staff skills and creating a set of racial equity norms<sup>25</sup> that can ground and guide staff and trustees in their individual and collective work on racial justice. It is important for leadership to model using feedback well. A healthy feedback practice thrives in an organizational culture in which there is transparency, open communication, power sharing practices, and a focus on being learning-centered. Giving and receiving feedback is an individual skill to be learned. And it is also important to create an organizational culture that welcomes and sets expectations for feedback, provides support and space for the discomfort that can happen when having hard conversations, acknowledges when emotional tumult may result, and prioritizes learning and reflection for the individual and the organization.

Though many times giving and receiving feedback can be described as equitable practice, the practice still needs to be interrogated to see how white dominant culture may be reinforced. Clayton Robbins discusses in his article, *Interrupting Feedback Practices of Dominance*,<sup>26</sup> the ways in which feedback practices can undermine the very goal of equity by being tools of dominance. It is important to assess the organizational culture to determine what overt or covert messages the organization says are the 'appropriate' ways to receive feedback. It's also important to reflect on the impact of those messages. For example, Robbins shares how an organization can view individuals as engaged, collaborative, and humble learners when they listen to feedback calmly and do not critique, while others who are curious about the feedback and ask lots of questions (and decide not to modify their behavior) are viewed as defensive, proud or inflexible. After looking at these organizational messages, unpack whether there are differential consequences for the way people receive feedback based on their positional role and especially their racial identity. In examining white dominant culture, it is always imperative to unpack what are considered 'acceptable' behaviors, who defines what is acceptable, who the behaviors benefit, and how well the definitions of what's acceptable are shared within the organization so that employees don't find out about what's acceptable only after the fact.

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<sup>24</sup> Haines, Staci, K. *The Politics of Trauma*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books. 2019. p. 325 and 327.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Robbins, Clayton. "[Interrupting Feedback Practices of Dominance](#)." (2017).

**Centering Relationship** – In many organizations there is a constant drive for results through producing deliverables, meeting timelines, achieving benchmarks and publicly sharing achievements, with little concern about building relationships. These organizational messages center one of the characteristics of white dominant culture, individualism, as described in Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones seminal article, *White Supremacy Culture*.<sup>27</sup> To be a mission-driven organization that is working to operationalize racial justice, centering relationships needs to be a core value and practice. The work of centering relationships in the context of achieving the organization’s mission is generally not tracked and typically there is limited support in grant deliverables. Some may read this and wonder, what will be the impact of not meeting deliverables (especially grant deliverables) if we are prioritizing building relationships? One of the antidotes to white dominant culture is using “both and” as an alternative frame to “either or.”<sup>28</sup> Take some time to pause and consider various ways to achieve the deliverables by engaging people and building trust. It might mean changing the timeline or modifying the deliverables. By actually slowing down, there is space to think creatively and adopt practices that reflect the value of racial equity. Prioritizing relationships means setting up inclusive and equitable processes for working together, centering Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color’s leadership, practicing accountability, and building authentic relationships.<sup>29</sup> The Black Space Manifesto shares a set of practices. Here are a few examples: “Move at the speed of trust, seek people at the margins, center lived experience, and reckon with the past to build the future.”<sup>30</sup> Building relationships is a central part of racial justice work, not an addition to it.

Centering Blackness allows for a completely different worldview to emerge, free from the constraints of white supremacy and patriarchy. Imagine the possibilities of all our institutions and what it could mean for all of us if we centered Blackness and asked this foundational question: How does what I’m about to create and implement intentionally seek the voices of, lift, and protect Black people? What could we build? What would it allow us to collectively see? And how might we design new rules and institutions with the core goal of enabling Black people to thrive that would also ensure that all people thrive?”

~Centering Blackness: The Path to Economic Liberation for All, Insight Center for Community Economic Development, Medium.com

**Racial Identity Caucusing** – Many organizations deepen their work and build skills by using the methodology of racial identity caucuses.

[Caucusing can be helpful] “especially in acknowledging and supporting some of the emotions that naturally occur in racial equity work. The value of caucusing is so both white people and people of color have intentional space and time to focus on their respective work to dismantle racism and advance racial equity. Caucusing does not happen instead of integrated groups; rather, caucusing can lead to more authentic and powerful integrated groups.

Caucusing not only respects the choice of marginalized groups to be together, it also makes the dominant culture visible – an important step in making intentional changes to the culture. Further, working only in integrated groups puts an undue burden on people of color to be

<sup>27</sup> “Desire for individual recognition and credit...competition more highly valued than cooperation...creates a lack of accountability, as the organization values those who get things done” Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. *White Supremacy Culture*. ChangeWork (2001). p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 4-5.

<sup>29</sup> Karen Pace and Dionardo Pizaña. [Qualities of Authentic Relationships](#). Michigan State University Extension. (2004).

<sup>30</sup> BlackSpace. "[Black Space Manifesto](#)." (2020).

teachers and obscures the responsibility of white people to do their own work. Both people of color and white people are needed to work collectively for racial equity. But they have different work to do, precisely because of their different experiences with and location relative to white culture and privilege.

Though there is often resistance to participating in explicit race-identified groups, these formations occur all the time – though usually without intentionality or consciousness. One common resistance to caucusing by whites is, “I don’t like to feel guilty” – though having that feeling is an opportunity to remember one’s humanity and commitment to justice. What caucusing does in part is ensure that the feeling of guilt does not result in inaction, but rather in reflection and action. Caucusing can be an opportunity to transform the white space into a liberating space to build strengths, skills, and courage for white people so that they will act purposefully toward racial equity.”<sup>31</sup>

In the resource list below there are some resources about racial identity caucusing on page 22.

### ***What can we expect may be included in an organization’s roadmap for racial justice?***

After asking what will be included in an organization’s roadmap for racial justice, the next request is usually to know, “what a racial just organization actually looks like” or “what the evidence is from the work of other organizations.” There are a lot of organizations working to operationalize racial justice, but none of them have arrived. They are all a work in progress. They are experimenting, failing, succeeding, and learning. There is much uncertainty about the change process and there is also much that can be shared (see the resource section, starting on page 18). Key to moving toward racial justice is building your individual and collective will to take risks, to act boldly, and to trust the change process. Vu Le of Nonprofit AF states with profound wisdom, “True equity requires us not to just throw around concepts at summits and sprinkle terminologies on websites and strategic plans, but to reevaluate our beliefs and practices and definitions and board and staff composition and leadership and hiring practice and funding allocation processes and who is at the table and who set the table in the first place, etc. It requires us to change our ways of doing things.”<sup>32</sup>

As discussed earlier, it is important to invest in a racial equity organizational assessment process which will help identify the issues. Examples were shared of racial equity organizational assessment questions to possibly include. Here are some examples of some possible steps and questions which can inform prioritizing an organization’s racial equity roadmap after reviewing the racial equity organizational assessment data:<sup>33</sup>

***Policy Alignment***—Apply a racial equity framework to current policies and practice. Develop policies that are informed by stakeholders and those most impacted. Provide supports to staff to implement policies and create accountability practices through performance measures including developing racial equity competencies. Review recruiting, hiring, and retention practices to address inequities and racial bias. Some questions to explore while thinking about recruitment practices are:

- Who is involved in the decision-making process?

<sup>31</sup> Gulati-Partee, Gita, and Maggie Potapchuk. “[Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity.](#)” *The Foundation Review* 6, no. 1 (2014): 35-36.

<sup>32</sup> Le, Vu. “[Is Equity the New Coconut Water?](#)” *Nonprofit AF*. (September 7 2014).

<sup>33</sup> Potapchuk, Maggie. [Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment Tool](#). MP Associates (2016).

- Whose decision is privileged?
- What characteristics are being prioritized for those candidates being defined as a “good” candidate?

**Program and Strategy Alignment**— Create a strong feedback loop with your stakeholders, especially Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color. Examine how strategies are expected to lead to results and the worldviews and assumptions (spoken and unspoken) that undergird the program’s choice of strategies. Review strategy and implementation to understand how racial inequities, white privilege and white dominant culture may be manifesting.

Review the program design, and consider questions such as:

- How are decisions being made about the program’s design?
- What assumptions are being made about the participants’ needs?
- What is the level of involvement of past participants? Are past participants chosen to be involved with shaping the design? How are they involved?
- Whose voices are being privileged?
- Are Black, Indigenous and other People of Color’s voices centered?

Ensure accountability of the organization’s actions by including the people and communities most impacted, specifically communities of color. Support emergent thinking and experimentation. Integrate work in the context of movement building. Operate in an ecosystem approach using systemic intersectional analyses.

**Evaluation**— How is the data being collected and by whom? Who is defining success? How are outcomes being defined and are external variables such as grant deliverables being prioritized? Which data are informing the evaluation process? Is the data racially and intersectional disaggregated? Are the voices of participants who shared a critique or lower ratings part of the evaluation discussion? Are those most impacted by a particular issue sharing their experiences of the impact of the program and determining success?

**Leadership** - Ensure conceptual understanding of structural racism, power, and white dominant culture. Provide supports and accountability for productive engagement of conflict and for leaders to build their confidence to speak up about racial justice and act. Interrogate leaders’ own practices for interrupting bias and inequitable practices. Develop a willingness to take risks. Interrupt assumptions about who is a “good” leader.

**Equitable Culture Development**— Look at the unspoken and spoken rules and norms that guide behaviors and practices in the organization and learn how power operates within the organization. The question that comes up as organizations learn more about white dominant culture and interrogate their own culture is (e.g. to address urgency, superiority of the written word; hoarding power) how to develop a transformative just culture.

Here are examples of racially just practices:

- Valuing group collaboration and collective work;
- Considering conflict a healthy part of the organization's culture;
- Supporting different ways for people to respond emotionally to situations and provide thoughtful support,
- Mapping out decision-making processes and seeing how power plays out and whose voices are privileged;
- Applying policies consistently, equitably, and transparently;
- Providing space for experimentation and learning, and for sharing mistakes;
- Valuing forms of communication other than written communication;
- Providing feedback regularly with each other and understanding that sharing mistakes is an important part of the learning process;
- Developing workplans and timelines which center relationships, understanding the impact of the pace of work, and investing the time of using equitable processes in meeting the deliverables;<sup>34</sup> and
- Centering Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color's leadership and voice, as Erin Okuno describes: "centering people of color is about shifting power, control, and wellbeing/comfort to people of color."<sup>35</sup>

### ***What are ways to measure progress and be accountable to the communities and people we work with?***

Accountability is one of the critical elements of developing a racially just organization. There have recently been so many external statements of support by organizations for #BlackLivesMatter, but those statements will only be credible if they are backed up by sustained action to interrupt and address anti-blackness, structural racism, and white dominant culture. When accountability is discussed, reflect on who your organization is accountable to. While it is important to be accountable to many groups that are involved in your organization's mission, it should be primary to be accountable to people of color and specifically Black people in your organization as well as those who are your stakeholders, members of partner organizations, and live in the communities in which you work.

Your organization's accountability is about how you are aligning your actions with your commitment by working to transform systems to be racially just and ensuring that Black Lives Matter in everything you do. Review the resources about accountability in the resource list below on page 24. Here are some questions to discuss:<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Okuno, Erin, "[Five Ways to Center People of Color](#)," *Fakequity*, April 20, 2018.

<sup>36</sup> These questions are based on, [www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org), Accountability section, MP Associates, Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and World Trust Educational Services.

- **Who is the organization's work going to benefit if it succeeds? Who will it benefit if the work does not succeed?**
- **What are the feedback and accountability processes in place? How are you in communication with the individuals/groups you are accountable to? How do you share your work with those individuals and groups and what is your pattern in responding to their feedback?**
- **How are you addressing any burdens of resources or time with these individuals/groups who you are accountable to and in relationship with?**
- **How is your organization accounting for risks and unintended consequences of your work, especially those that may be potentially harmful to Black and Indigenous people and other People of Color?**
- **What is your organization doing to ensure the goals are met as promised?**

Another part of accountability needs to focus on how you are tracking your progress toward racially just outcomes. It is important to keep in mind the manifestations of white dominant culture which privilege quantitative evidence over anecdotal information and written word over storytelling. As Audrey Jordan shared in the publication, *Measuring Love In The Journey For Justice*, "To reverse the colonized, white supremacist culture of 'knowing,' where only the mind-knowing way is valued and maintains power dynamics that accrue value based on white dominant culture, we must actively value and integrate ways of knowing that are deeply ingrained from our ancestors: prioritize connections and relationships, emergence, belonging, the mystery of things that are not 'knowable,' and our own being. We are valuers, not e-valuators. Valuation is integration of all the ways of knowing."<sup>37</sup>

**As you track progress of operationalizing racial justice, reflect on these questions:**

- **Who is involved in tracking benchmarks for progress?**
- **Whose voices and perspectives are you privileging to determine what progress looks like?**
- **What is the filter being used to assess if the process is too slow/fast?**
- **How are policy changes, relationship building, and knowledge development being invested in by the organization?**
- **What is considered sufficient change and who is deciding what is sufficient?**
- **Does the progress being tracked address the root issues or are only quantifiable changes being prioritized?**

<sup>37</sup> Teng, Shiree, and Sammy Nuñez. *Measuring Love on the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*. Latino Community Foundation (San Francisco, CA: 2019), p. 18.

## ***How do we choose what tools and resources to use in our work of becoming a racially just organization?***

There are many tools,<sup>38</sup> resources, and frameworks listed below that can be helpful throughout the organization's racial equity change process. It is, however, essential that throughout the process, the organization prioritizes internal expertise and wisdom, especially that of Black, Indigenous and other staff of Color, to create, innovate, and share truths and ideas on operationalizing racial justice.

Sometimes it is assumed that adopting a tool will result in an easy fix to address the challenges in the change process. However, what is generally needed when challenges arise is slowing the process down and listening. One of the manifestations of white dominant culture is a sense of urgency. This is also one of the ongoing tensions in this work, because racial justice is, in fact, urgent work. That is why it is important to develop a healthy feedback muscle in the organization and also work on accountable relationships with people and communities most impacted by structural racism to address the urgency of the work and need to slow down to listen. For organizations to advance racial justice, it is important that inclusive processes and relationships are centered, along with investing in building staff's knowledge, skill, and confidence, while ensuring that those who are most impacted are informing and leading.

When you are reviewing potential tools, ask yourself what you are hoping to gain from them, such as clarity, knowledge, consensus, and/or developing action steps. It is important to ensure any tool that is being used reflects your racial equity analysis and is paying attention to power and privilege. Here are a few questions to ask, including some from the tip sheet *Reviewing Resources*<sup>39</sup> from [www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org).

### **Prior to adopting a tool or a framework, review it carefully and ask these questions:**

- **What seem to be the assumptions about how change happens?**
- **Does it include discussion of addressing privilege, racism, oppression, and power?**
- **Does the way the tool works acknowledge the existence of persistent differences in power, life experience and perspective among various racial/ethnic groups, or does it assume there is a single worldview, or that all people have roughly the same opportunities and challenges?**
- **Are the terms diversity, equity, and inclusion used interchangeably or are they used more precisely?**
- **Does it take into account how power is operating in the context of structural racism?**
- **What does the tool imply about why things are as they are, particularly in terms of different outcomes for people of different identities?**
- **Does the tool ask you to consider the ways racial inequities are maintained?**
- **Does the tool help you choose strategies that consider systemic, institutional, intergroup, and individual types of privilege and racism, and how they act to interrupt or reinforce each other?**

<sup>38</sup> It is important to note that many of these tools are labeled and framed as racial equity tools, rather than racial justice tools that have an "explicit focus on power building and an emphasis on transformative, high leverage systemic advances, including fundamental changes in policies, establishing new norms or designing alternative systems." There are a number of reasons for this: the limited investment of the development of tools/ framework by community based groups (many authors are intermediaries and consulting firms) which reflect emergent work on the ground, use of terms that reflect mainstream narrative rather than being provocative and visionary, and the need to continue to build the nonprofit sector's capacity to operationalize racial justice and then to share those lessons to build a deeper base of expertise.

<sup>39</sup> Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and MP Associates. "[Reviewing Resources](#)." (2013).





## Conclusion

Starting or deepening your organization's work to align with racial equity and to become a racially just organization will be a dynamic, maddening, emergent, intense and joyful process (sometimes all at the same time). Often in racial equity work, we say, "we need to meet people where they are." As Arundhati Roy shared<sup>40</sup>, we are in a portal between two worlds. Our focus needs to be *not* on meeting people where they are, rather we need to support people to re-imagine a just and liberated organization and then to collectively work to operationalize racial justice in our non-profit organization.

As we reimagine a racially just organization and work toward co-creating it, we need to increase our confidence to take risks, honor our justice warrior ancestors by acting with integrity and through solidarity, remember that racial justice work is done in right relationship and accountability to communities, specifically Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color communities, and act boldly while believing in what is possible. We are certainly at the point of no return.

**“Without new visions, we don’t know what to build, only what to knock down. We not only end up confused, rudderless and cynical, but we forget that making a revolution is not a series of clever maneuvers and tactics, but a process that can and must transform us. Protesting, organizing and education are all essential to activism, but they’re not the entire story. To be most effective, we must also create spaces to cultivate collective freedom dreams. We live in a society where destruction has become the dominant culture, to be truly revolutionary, we need to create space built on love and solidarity.”**

~Robin D. G. Kelley, Professor of American History at UCLA and author of  
*Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*

<sup>40</sup> Roy, Arundhati. "[The Pandemic Is a Portal.](#)" *Financial Times*. (April 3 2020).

# Operationalizing Racial Justice in Nonprofit Organizations

## Resource List

Here is a curated list of resources and tools. I encourage you to review the resources on various topics, listed below. Go beyond looking at the individual resources and tools, and explore each organization's website and learn about their analysis, approach and find out about other resources they created. Investing in your own racial justice change process requires increasing your knowledge of the work happening across the country. It is critical in sustaining your work that you widen your community and deepen your relationships with co-conspirators, leaders, and activists. This is curated list of resources and tools which you can find in the categories below. Additionally, there is a clearinghouse to search for research, tips, practices, and curricula at [www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org), which includes over 2,500 curated resources.<sup>41</sup>

- Organizational Case Studies
- Racial Equity Organizational Change Assessments
- Interrupting White Dominant Culture and Centering BIPOC
- Building Racial Knowledge and Skills: Curriculum/Workshop/Dialogue Guides
- Building Racial Knowledge and Skills: Activities/Videos/Podcasts/Webinars
- Racial Equity Impact and Power Analysis Questions
- Racial Identity Caucuses
- Developing Board Processes and Structures to Align with Racial Equity
- Hiring/Recruitment/Promotion Resources to Align with Racial Equity
- Contracting and Finance Resources to Align with Racial Equity
- Program Strategy Resources to Align with Racial Equity
- Accountability
- Tracking Progress and Evaluation
- Building Relationships and Community Engagement
- Communicating about Racial Equity: Internal and External
- Individual and Community Care for Racial Justice

### ORGANIZATIONAL CASE STUDIES

***Please note: it is important for nonprofits operationalizing racial justice to build our community of practice and action. Part of our accountability includes investing time in writing your own organization's story including your steps, reflections, and lessons through each stage of your organization's racial equity change process. Take risks, share when you hit the wall, talk about the tensions that came up, let folks know how you came back and refocused. Share your story so we can all learn from each other.***

[A Case Study of the Equity Initiative of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services with Technical Assistance from CommonHealth Action](#)

Gita Gulati-Partee, OpenSource Leadership Strategies for Consumer Health Foundation

[Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries: Case Studies from the Field](#)

Government Alliance for Race & Equity

[BALLE-Racial Equity Change from the Outside In, Cyndi Suarez, Nonprofit Quarterly](#)

Cyndi Suarez, Nonprofit Quarterly, BALLE – Business Alliance for Local Living Economies

[Beyond Diversity and Multiculturalism: Towards the Development of Anti-Racist Institutions and Leaders](#)

Mary Pender Greene, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services

<sup>41</sup> [www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org) – Maggie Potapchuk – MP Associates, Sally Leiderman and Stephanie Halbert Jones – Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and Shakti Butler – World Trust Educational Services.

<a href="#">Becoming an Anti-Racist/Racially Just Organization: The Environmental Support Center's Story</a> Danyelle O'Hara, The Environmental Support Center
<a href="#">Boston Builds Capacity to Address Racism and Achieve Health Equity</a> Health Equity Guide
<a href="#">Confronting Structural Racism in Research and Policy Analysis: Charting a Course for Policy Research Institutions</a> Steven Brown, Kilolo Kijakazi, Charmaine Runes, and Margery Austin Turner, Urban Institute
<a href="#">Demos' Racial Equity Transformation: Key Components, Process &amp; Lessons</a> Heather C. McGhee, Lucy Mayo, and Angela Park, Dēmos
<a href="#">King County's Journey in Institutionalizing Equity and Social Justice</a> Matías Valenzuela, Public Administration Review, King County
<a href="#">Moving Forward Together: CSSP's Journey to Center Equity, Inclusion, and Justice</a> Juanita Gallion and Kristen Weber, Center for Study of Social Policy
<a href="#">Putting Racial Justice at the Heart: How Did CompassPoint Get Here?</a> Lupe Poblano, CompassPoint
<a href="#">Report 2008: Looking Back and Moving Forward</a> Race and Social Justice Initiative, City of Seattle
<a href="#">The Racial Justice and Health Equity Initiative</a> Boston Public Health Commission
<a href="#">Video Case Studies</a> Equity in the Center, Includes videos about Year Up, Leadership for Educational Equity, SAGE and Demos
<a href="#">What Does it Take to Embed a Racial Equity and Inclusion Lens?</a> Ratna Gill, Hafiz Omar, and Nadia Owusu, Living Cities
<b>RACIAL EQUITY ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE PROCESSES &amp; FRAMEWORKS</b>
<a href="#">Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action</a> Julie Nelson, Lauren Spokane, Lauren Ross, and Nan Deng, Government Alliance on Race and Equity
<a href="#">Analysis Tools</a> Dismantling Racism Works Book
<a href="#">Anti-Racist Organization Change: Resources &amp; Tools for Nonprofits</a> CommunityWise Resource Centre
<a href="#">Are You Guilty of Equity Offset?</a> Vu Le, Nonprofit AF
<a href="#">Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture</a> Equity in the Center
<a href="#">Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive &amp; Antiracist Organization Tools for Liberation Packet</a> Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence
<a href="#">Building A Race Equity Culture in the Social Sector</a> Equity in the Center (Infographic)
<a href="#">How to Manage When Things Are Not Okay (And Haven't Been for Centuries)</a> The Management Center
<a href="#">Organization-Wide Equity Pause Resources</a> Equity Meets Design
<a href="#">Racial Equity Toolkit: Applying a Racial Equity Lens to Your Organization</a> Monica Joe, Reuben Waddy, Housing Development Consortium
<a href="#">REJI Organizational Race Equity Toolkit</a> JustLead Washington
<a href="#">Seeing and Naming Racism in Nonprofit and Public Organizations</a> Laurin Mayeno Consulting
<a href="#">Six Phases of Racial Equity</a> CORE Food Systems, dR Works

[Systems Change & Deep Equity: Pathways Toward Sustainable Impact, Beyond "Eureka!," Unawareness & Unwitting Harm](#)

Sheryl Petty and Mark Leach, Change Elemental.

[Ten Lessons for Taking Leadership on Racial Equity](#)

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change

[Why did SAGE decide to work with Consultants](#)

Equity in the Center

### **RACIAL EQUITY ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE ASSESSMENT**

[Building Organizational Capacity for Social Justice: Framework, Approach and Tools](#)

National Gender and Equity Campaign

[Internal Scan: Racial Equity and Inclusion Competency Survey: Results 2018](#)

Living Cities

[Moving a Racial Justice Agenda: Organizational Assessment — Are You Ready?](#)

Western States Center

[Operationalizing a Structural Racism Framework: A Guide to Community Level Research and Action](#)

Stacy Sutton, The Aspen Roundtable Structural Racism and Community Revitalization Project

[Race Matters: Organizational Self-Assessment](#)

Annie E. Casey Foundation

[Racial Equity](#)

Alliance to End Hunger, Chapter in *Self-Assessment Workbook for Hunger Free Communities*

[Racial Equity Readiness Assessment for Workforce Development](#)

Race Forward

[Racial Justice Assessment Tool](#)

Western States Center

[Standing Together Coming Out for Racial Justice: An Anti-Racist Organizational Development Toolkit for LGBT Equality Groups and Activists](#)

Basic Rights Education Fund. pp.147-163

[Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity](#)

Coalition of Communities of Color and Education and All Hands Raised

[Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment Tool](#)

Maggie Potapchuk, MP Associates

### **INTERUPTING WHITE DOMINANT CULTURE AND CENTERING BIPOC**

[All in this Together: Ending White Supremacy Culture Starts with Us](#)

Hafizah Omar and Alyssa Smaldino, Living Cities

[BlackSpace Manifesto](#)

BlackSpace

[Centering Blackness: The Path to Economic Liberation for All](#)

Insight Center for Community Economic Development, Medium.com

[Challenging White Dominant Culture: Time to Look in the Mirror](#)

Lupe Poblano, CompassPoint

[Decentering Whiteness and Creating Inclusive and Equitable Conferences: A Tip Sheet](#)

N. Aruliah, S. Balajee, S. Butler, B. Calhoun, D. Goodman, S. Leiderman, E. Morrison, and M. Potapchuk

[Dismantling White Supremacy in Nonprofits: A Starting Point](#)

Jarrell Skinner-Roy, YNPN Twin Cities

[Five Ways to Center People of Color](#)

Erin Okuno, [www.fakequity.com](http://www.fakequity.com)

[Interrupting Feedback Practices of Dominance](#)

Clayton Robbins, Diversity Equity Inclusiveness Consulting, Remote DEI Toolkit

[Interrupting White Dominant Culture in Museums](#)

Mike Murawski, Art Museum Teaching

[Love is in Need: 5 Things You Can Do to Center Black Freedom](#)

Erin Trent Johnson, Medium.com

[Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity](#)

Gita Gulati-Partee and Maggie Potapchuk, Foundation Review

[Pushing Back Against Habits of White Supremacy During A Crisis](#)

Kad Smith, CompassPoint

[Transforming Culture — An Examination of Workplace Values through the Frame of White Dominant Culture](#)

Merf Ehman, Columbia Legal Services, Management Information Exchange Journal

[Uncovering White Supremacy Culture in Museum Work](#)

Hannah Heller, nikhil trivedi and Joanne Jones-Rizzi, The Inclusionum

[White Dominant Culture & Something Different: A Worksheet](#)

Partners for Collaborative Change

[White Supremacy Culture](#)

Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones, dRworks

[White Supremacy Culture & Remote Culture Crosswalk](#)

Remote DEI Collective

[White Women Doing White Supremacy in Nonprofit Culture](#)

Heather Laine Talley

**BUILDING RACIAL EQUITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:  
CURRICULUM/WORKSHOPS/DIALOGUE GUIDES**

[Anti-Oppressive Facilitation for Democratic Process: Making Meetings Awesome for Everyone](#)

AORTA

[Asian American Racial Justice Toolkit](#)

J. Ishida and Soya Jung

[Curriculum for White Americans to Educate Themselves on Race and Racism](#)

Keep Ypsi Black, Interactive Media Project

[Dismantling Anti-Black Bias in Democratic Workplaces: A Toolkit](#)

AORTA

[Dismantling Racism 2016 Workbook](#)

dRworks

[Racial Equity Learning Modules](#)

World Trust Educational Services

[Standing Together Coming Out for Racial Justice: An Anti-Racist Organizational Development Toolkit for LGBT Equality Groups and Activists](#)

Basic Rights Education Fund

[Systems Thinking and Race: Workshop Summary](#)

john a. powell, Connie Cagampang Heller and Fayza Bundalli

[Targeted Universalism: Animated Video & Curriculum](#)

Othering and Belonging Institute

[The 1619 Project Curriculum](#)

Pulitzer Center

[Transforming White Privilege: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership Capacity](#)

World Trust Educational Services, MP Associates, and Center for Assessment and Policy Development

[6 Month Study and Practice Guide](#)

White Awake

[Witnessing Whiteness: Workshop Series Overview](#)

Shelly Tolchuk

## BUILDING RACIAL EQUITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS: ACTIVITIES/VIDEOS/ PODCASTS/WEBINARS

[1619 Podcast](#)

Nikole Hannah-Jones, The New York Times

[A Conversation on Race: A series of short films about identity in America](#)

The New York Times

[Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity](#)

World Trust Educational Services

[Housing Segregation in Everything Video](#)

NPR, Code Switch

[How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Discussing Race](#)

TED talk by Jay Smooth

[Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible](#)

World Trust Educational Services

[Organizing for Power, Organizing for Change: Resources and Trainings](#)

Lisa Fithian

[Putting Racism on the Table videos](#)

Washington Area Grantmakers

[Race: Power of an Illusion](#)

California Newsreel

[RaceWorks Toolkit](#)

Stanford|SPARQtools

[Teaching People's History: Teaching Materials](#)

Zinn Education Project

[The Danger of a Single Story](#)

TED talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

[The Disturbing History of the Suburbs](#)

Adam Ruins Everything

[The Unequal Opportunity Race](#)

African American Policy Forum

[Seeing White Podcast](#)

Center for Documentary Studies, Scene on Radio Podcast

[Witness Black History](#) Podcast

BBC News

## RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT AND POWER ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

[Approaches to Power Inequity Within Organizations](#)

AORTA

[Concentric Circles: Unpacking Privilege and Power](#)

Maggie Potapchuk, MP Associates

[How Can We Choose Strategies for our Action Plan?](#)

MP Associates and Center for Assessment and Policy Development

[Race Matters, Racial Equity Impact Analysis, Assessing Policies, Programs and Practices](#)

Annie E. Casey Foundation

[Racial Equity Impact Assessment](#)

Race Forward

[Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs and Budget Issues](#)

Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

[Social Determinants Framework \(River Model\)](#)

Sonali Sangeeta Balajee, et al., Multnomah County, Oregon

[Strategic Questioning: An Approach to Creating Personal and Social Change](#)

Fran Peavey

[Tools for Thought: Using Racial Equity Impact Assessments for Effective Policymaking](#)  
Annie E. Casey Foundation

## **RACIAL IDENTITY CAUCUSES**

[Building an Effective White Caucus](#)  
Roots of Justice

[Going to the Root: How White Caucuses Contribute to Racial Justice](#)  
Alex Vlastic, The Arrow

[Guidelines for Forming Racial Affinity Groups](#)  
Ruth King

[Race Caucusing in an Organizational Context: A POC's Experience](#)  
Kad Smith, CompassPoint

[Racial Identity Caucuses](#)  
No Author listed

[Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives](#)  
Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training

[Tips for Creating Effective White Caucus Groups](#)  
Craig Elliott

[Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People](#)  
Kelsey Blackwell, The Arrow

## **DEVELOPING BOARD'S PROCESSES & STRUCTURES TO ALIGN WITH RACIAL EQUITY**

[Activating Race Equity Problem-Solving on Nonprofit Boards](#)  
Markita Morris-Lewis

[Guardrails for Relationships Tilted by Power: How to Keep Everyone on the Road](#)  
Keecha Harris, NonProfit Quarterly

["If You Like It Then You Shoulda Put A Re-Ng On It!" Moving Nonprofit Boards Towards Real Racial Equity \(Re\) Commitments](#)  
Sapna Sopori, Sapna Strategies LLC

[The 4 Secrets: The Hidden Factor of Nonprofit Boards & Racial Equity Change](#)  
Kelly Bates, Interaction Institute for Social Change

[The Default Nonprofit Board Model Is Archaic and Toxic; Let's Try Some New Models](#)  
Vu Le, Nonprofit AF

[Vital Voices: Lessons Learned from Board Members of Color](#)  
Vernetta L. Walker and Deborah J. Davidson, BoardSource

## **HIRING/RECRUITING/PROMOTION TO ALIGN WITH RACIAL EQUITY**

[18 Ways We've Improved Our Hiring Process](#)  
Kira Page, COCo

[Equity in Hiring and Employee Development](#)  
City of Madison Human Resources

[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring and Retention](#)  
Urban Sustainability Directors Network

[Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap](#)  
Sean Thomas Breitfeld and Frances Kunreuther, Building Movement Project

[Racial Equity and Social Justice Tool: Process Guide](#)  
City of Madison

[Reimagining Compensation: It's Time to Stop Building on Inequities of The Past \(Part 1\)](#)  
Shannon Ellis, CompassPoint

[Reimagining Compensation Decisions Through an Equity Panel](#)  
Jasmine Hall, CompassPoint

[Talent Justice Report](#)  
Fund the People and the Center for Urban and Racial Equity

[The "Problem" Woman of Colour in the Workplace ToolBox](#)

Kira Page, COCo

[The Roadmap for Racial Equity: An Imperative for Workforce Development Advocates](#)

National Skills Coalition

### **CONTRACTING AND FINANCES TO ALIGN WITH RACIAL EQUITY**

[Addressing Racially Biased Financial Analysis](#)

Nonprofit Finance Fund

[Contracting for Equity: Best Local Government Practices that Advance Racial Equity in Government Contracting and Procurement](#)

Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity

[Guidelines for Promoting Racial Equitable Purchasing](#)

Annie E. Casey Foundation

[MCF's Supplier Diversity Policy and Practices](#)

Minnesota Council on Foundations

[Race and Social Justice Budget and Policy Filter Supplemental Toolkit](#)

City of Seattle

### **PROGRAM STRATEGIES TO ALIGN WITH RACIAL EQUITY**

[Applying a Racial Equity Lens to Our Parks](#)

Alec Weis, Julie Nelson, Jennifer Ringold, Art Hendricks, and Jules Posades, Parks and Recreation Magazine

[Best Practices for White-Led Organizations to Promote Health Equity and Racial Justice in Health Advocacy](#)

Alberto González and Kasey Wilson, Community Catalyst

[Farm to Early Care and Education Racial Equity Framework](#)

Ready Set Grow

[How Can We Choose Strategies for our Action Plan?](#)

MP Associates and Center for Assessment and Policy Development

[Labor/Community Strategy Center Case Study](#)

Fern Tiger Associates

[Liberatory Design Card Deck](#)

Tania Anaissie, Victor Cary, David Clifford, Tom Malarkey, Susie Wise, National Equity Project

[Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper](#)

Shiree Teng and Sammy Nuñez

[Moving Toward Conflict for the Sake of Good Strategy](#)

Yotam Marom, Medium.com

[Organizing Transformation: Best Practices in the Transformative Organizing Model](#)

Steve Williams, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

[Racial Equity Tools – Strategies Section](#)

Center for Assessment and Policy Development, MP Associates, and World Trust Educational Services

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

[10 Ways Orgs Can Show Up for Black Lives Without Exploiting 'Black Lives Matter'](#)

Sunshine Muse, ColorLines

[Accountability](#)

SURJ Greater Lafayette

[Accountability in a Time of Justice](#)

Vivette Jeffries-Logan, Michelle Johnson, Tema Okun

[Accountability: Who Benefits from our Work](#)

Paul Kivel

[Building Accountable Relationships with Communities of Color: Some Lessons Learned](#)

Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team

[Calling In: A Quick Guide on When and How](#)

Sian Ferguson, Everyday Feminism



<a href="#">Community Accountability within the People of Color Progressive Movement</a> INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence
<a href="#">European Dissent Accountability Statement</a> People's Institute for Survival and Beyond
<a href="#">Organizational Change and Accountability</a> Paul Kivel
<a href="#">Protocol and Principles for White People Working to Support the Black Liberation Movement</a> Bay Area Solidarity Action Team
<a href="#">Transparency Defined</a> Kip Holley and Jon Martinez, Organizing Engagement
<b>TRACKING PROGRESS and EVALUATION</b>
<a href="#">Constructing A Racial Equity Theory of Change: A Practical Guide for Designing Strategies to Close Chronic Racial Outcome Gaps</a> The Aspen Institute for the Roundtable of Community Change
<a href="#">Evaluating Community Organizing</a> Catherine Crystal Foster and Justin Louie, Center for Evaluation Innovation
<a href="#">How Can We Create Reasonable Expectations for the Success of the Group's Strategies While Still Being Accountable?</a> Center for Assessment and Policy Development
<a href="#">How Can We Design Survey Interviews and Questionnaires to Give Us the Best Information Possible?</a> Center for Assessment and Policy Development
<a href="#">How Can We Lay Out Assumptions to Understand our Theory of Change?</a> Center for Assessment and Policy Development and MP Associates
<a href="#">How Can We Tell If Our Strategies are Powerful Enough for the Changes We Want?</a> Center for Assessment and Policy Development
<a href="#">Multiple Ways of Knowing: Expanding How We Know</a> Elissa Sloane Perry and Aja Couchois Duncan, NonProfit Quarterly
<a href="#">Racial Equity Tools - Evaluate Section</a> Center for Assessment and Policy Development, MP Associates, and World Trust Educational Services
<a href="#">Why Am I Always Being Researched?</a> Chicago Beyond
<b>BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS &amp; COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>
<a href="#">Authentic and Equitable Partnerships: A Framework for Building Movements</a> Gita Gulati-Partee and Maggie Potapchuk
<a href="#">The Community Engagement Continuum: Outreach, Mobilization, Organizing and Accountability to Address Violence against Women in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities</a> Mimi Kim, Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
<a href="#">Monterey County: From Disenfranchisement to Voice, Power, and Participation</a> Race Forward
<a href="#">Operationalizing a Structural Racism Framework: A Guide to Community Level Research and Action</a> Stacy Sutton, Aspen Roundtable Structural Racism and Community Revitalization Project
<a href="#">Our Approach to Race Equity Work and Why We Focus on Black and Latinx People</a> Code2040
<a href="#">Racial Equity in Service to Collective Impact and Movement Building: The Blueprint North Carolina Story</a> Judia Holton, Emelia Cowans-Taylor, Erin Byrd, Roxane Richir, and Ivanna Gonzalez, Blueprint NC
<a href="#">Resource Guide on Public Engagement</a> National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation
<a href="#">The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership</a> Rosa González, Facilitating Power in Partnership with Movement Strategy Center

[We Can't Work Toward Racial Justice Equity Without Working on Relationships](#)

Kad Smith, CompassPoint

## **COMMUNICATING ABOUT RACIAL EQUITY: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL**

[7 Agreements for Productive Conversations During Difficult Times](#)

Vu Le, Nonprofit AF

[Courageous Conversations Toolkit](#)

Social Transformation Project

[Discussion Guide: Common Good Message Box](#)

Building Movement Project

[How to Tell Compelling Stories While Avoiding Exploitation](#)

Abesha Shiferaw, Nonprofit Technology Conference

[Moving a Racial Justice Agenda: Naming and Framing Racism](#)

The Western States Center

[Re-railing the Conversation on Race](#)

Autumn Brown, AORTA and Danielle Sered

[Story-Based Strategy 101](#)

Center for Story-Based Strategy

[Talking About Race](#)

National Museum of African American History & Culture

[Telling a New Story: A Collaborative Checklist for Social Justice Leaders Using Narrative Strategies for Change](#)

The Opportunity Agenda

[Ten Lessons for Talking About Race, Racism and Racial Justice](#)

The Opportunity Agenda

[The Business Case for Racial Equity](#)

Ani Turner, Altarum Institute and W.K. Kellogg Foundation

## **INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY CARE FOR RACIAL JUSTICE**

[21 Day Self-Care Challenge Packet](#)

Move to End Violence

[Adrienne Marie Brown on Finding Joy During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)

WBUR

[Healing Justice Practice Spaces: A How-To Guide](#)

Autumn Brown and Maryse Mitchell-Brody

[Healing Resources for BIPOC Organizers & Allies Taking Action for Black Lives](#)

Irresistible, Medium.com

[Love with Power: Practicing Transformation for Social Justice](#)

Kristen Zimmerman and Julie Quiroz, Movement Strategy Center

[Out of the Spiritual Closet: Organizers Transforming the Practice of Social Justice](#)

Kristen Zimmerman, Neelam Pathikonda, Brenda Salgado and Taj James, Movement Strategy Center

[Practicing Self-care for Sustainability and Impact](#)

Move to End Violence

[Resources for Sustaining Momentum and Doing Everyday Racial Justice Work](#)

Beth Goodbee, Heart-Head-Hands.com

[Self-Care Strategies for Survival: Sustaining Oneself in Social Justice Movements](#)

Lauren Lofton, CompassPoint

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**“When you see something that is not right, you must say something. You must do something. Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself. Ordinary people with extraordinary vision can redeem the soul of America by getting in what I call good trouble, necessary trouble. ... Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe.”**

~Congressman John Lewis, from “Together, You Can Redeem the Soul of Our Nation.”  
*The New York Times*. July 30, 2020.

If you have questions and/or feedback about  
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[www.mpassociates.us](http://www.mpassociates.us)