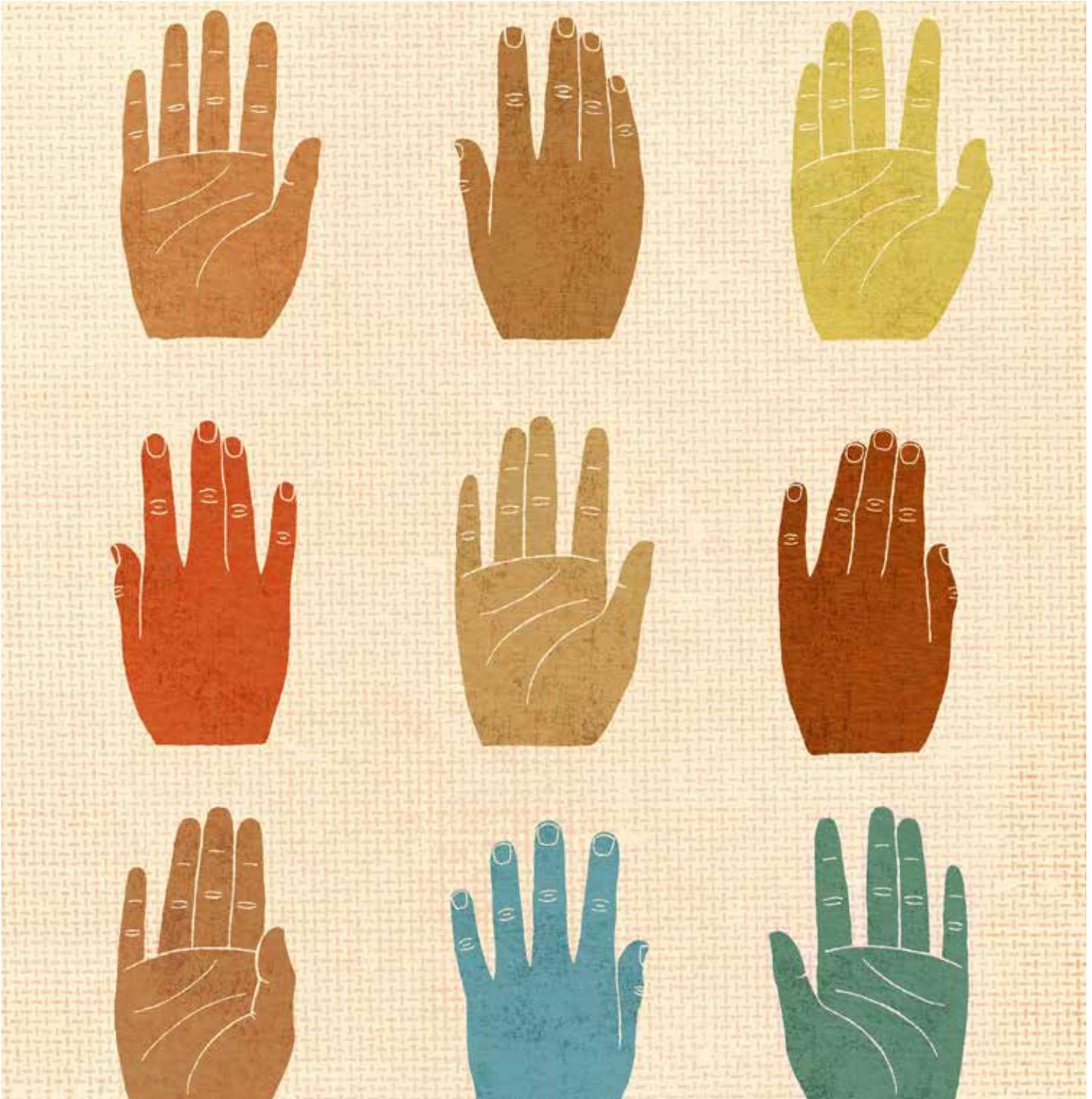


# Racial Equity Outcome Toolkit: A Six-Step Process for Your Organization

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# Introduction

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Organizations continue to struggle to meet the diverse needs of their employees and the people they serve. Because of this challenge, requests for racial equity resources and toolkits are growing in number. This toolkit, adapted from the Aspen Institute's guide "Constructing a Racial Equity Theory of Change," is designed to help address diverse needs while increasing racial equity within your organization.

The goal of these recommendations is to assist you in building your organization's capacity to have constructive conversations about race and privilege, and to learn how to assess its sphere of influence and contribute to systemic change. What follows in this workbook is a step-by-step process for conducting a structural race analysis and understanding your organization's implicit and explicit assumptions about the community-level outcomes that you seek to address. The toolkit will allow you to discover the root causes of the challenges that you observe within communities that you serve and then to brainstorm strategic actions to dismantle structural racism and promote racial equity.<sup>1</sup>

Moral leadership is about leaders adopting a problem-solving perspective that is historical, political, comparative and systemic. Without evaluating your organization's role and effect on marginalized communities, moral leadership cannot be attained. A moral leader must pay particular attention to the cognitive, cultural and political environments that give discriminatory policies and practices their public legitimacy. The hope is that this toolkit can help you focus on that and set goals for your organization to expand the progress and dialogue about fairness and justice.<sup>2</sup>

The process of racial equity and the process of change are intricate. The intricacies lie in the depth of the problems, the challenges as reported by the members of the organization, and the value placed on the anticipated outcomes. The change process for ensuring and promoting racial equity does not happen overnight. The information, methods and resources in this toolkit may need to be repeated multiple times, with additional modifications, to ensure sustainable implementation. It is imperative to remember that, just like with the change process, racial equity takes time, work and will.

## Why Do We Need to Focus on Racial Equity in the Pittsburgh Region?

Early in 2018, the Pittsburgh City Paper reported that the National Urban League had found that out of 71 metro communities, Pittsburgh ranked 65th in black–white income inequity. According to “Structural Barriers to Racial Equity in Pittsburgh,” a 2015 research report by the Urban Institute, “negative perceptions and stereotypes toward African American men continue to present barriers to employment even when individuals are fully qualified for the available positions.” This alarming assertion just lightly scratches the surface of the need for racial equity in the Pittsburgh region. A look at the nonprofit sector reveals more.

In “Charting the Resources of the Pittsburgh Region’s Nonprofit Sector,” a report prepared for The Forbes Funds, southwestern Pennsylvania’s nonprofit sector was described as having 2,674 organizations in 2001. The counties included were Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington and Westmoreland. Allegheny County had 1,799 nonprofits, “twice as many nonprofits as the other six counties combined,” serving 1,261,303 residents. These nonprofits ranged from youth development, religious affirmations, human- and animal-related services.

According to “The Nonprofit Sector: An Economic and Community Asset,” the region’s nonprofit organizations form “a multi-billion-dollar sector with hundreds of different types of organizations. These organizations employ millions of people and generate billions of dollars in compensation.” This 2014 Allegheny County report on nonprofits, conducted by The Forbes Funds, The Pittsburgh Foundation and United Way of Allegheny County, found that, annually, \$4.4 billion is spent to create the 106,392 nonprofit direct jobs, indirect jobs and ancillary positions. Furthermore, \$377 million in state and local taxes are generated.

But while the nonprofit sector employs thousands of residents, the racial employment gap remains huge and inequitable. In a May 2018 Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article, Sean Thomas-Breitfeld, co-director of the Building Movement Project, said that “fewer than 20 percent of all nonprofits are led by people of color, and the numbers aren’t changing.” This statement aligns with the 2016 survey that found that the factors keeping minorities from advancing in nonprofit careers were a lack of mentors and predominantly white boards of directors.

Though the nonprofit sector is thriving in the city of Pittsburgh, it lacks diversity in leadership. The study “Race to Lead: Confronting the Racial Leadership Gap” yielded three key findings about this issue. First, “executive recruiters are not equipped to identify potential candidates of

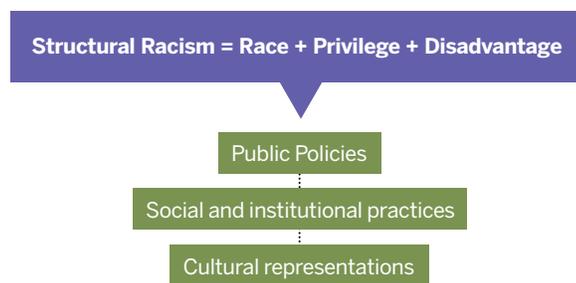
color for top-level nonprofit positions.” Second, “boards are predominantly white and often do not support the leadership potential of staff of color.” And, third, “. . .concepts like ‘fit’ are great hiding places for implicit bias.”

These findings demonstrate that leaders must confront racial equity head on and recognize the challenges that employees of color in the organization may experience. When employees of color feel isolated and excluded, they often become disconnected from the social and professional circles of their positions. This isolation can create an uncomfortable and perhaps even hostile work environment for the employee who must carry the burden of being “the voice” for their race in an organization.

## Hard Truth: Structural Racism Exists

While our economy continues to make many strides in inclusion and diversity, structural racism persists. The cultural representations of non-whites reflect ubiquitous stereotypes, and demonstrate that “white culture” (see definition in *Appendix*) has cultivated the narratives of people of color.

Structural inequities are pervasive. This statement remains a hard truth for many who are not people of color and consider their struggle to leadership to be one “just as” burdened with obstacles as their minority counterparts. Unfortunately, this comparative mentality is grounded in privilege with a limited understanding of structural racism.



Structural racism is a system of public policies, social and institutional practices, and cultural representations that are considered norms in the workplace. The challenge, though, is that these norms typically favor white employees while putting employees of color at a disadvantage. Understanding “white culture and privilege” can lead to a better understanding of structural racism. White culture values familiar ways — or ways that come more naturally to the white western tradition of thinking, behaving, deciding and knowing — while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways.

For example, hiring practices or policies such as “We will only hire the best candidate” often reflect a meritocracy based on skin color. This practice excludes an equal candidate of color who may bring a greater wealth of knowledge and experience to the company but may have not scored the highest on an unrelated hiring test. Understanding the manifestations of privilege is the key to confronting structural racism.

The next step in grasping structural racism is honestly acknowledging the disadvantages faced by communities of color. The demographics of this country are rapidly shifting, with people of color projected to be the U.S. majority by approximately 2050. Despite this statistic, communities of color continue to experience high levels of unemployment, barriers to accessing health care, high foreclosure rates, and limited access to affordable transportation, thus making the American Dream not as attainable for the future majority of the country.

Organizations have to realize that progress will not happen if communities of color are left behind, particularly when policies are developed without identifying the challenges and realities of everyday people dealing with disparate levels of discrimination and criminalization. Recognizing that disadvantage is and has been a part of the history of America’s winners and losers will help in the understanding of structural racism.<sup>3</sup>

As your organization begins to understand many of these definitions and concepts, it is imperative to acknowledge that race is a difficult subject. Feelings of blame, shame and guilt can arise and may become barriers to just moving forward. However, it remains important to stay the course. Continue to engage and empower people of color to share their stories, and promote understanding among whites of the convergence of race, place, class and history. Racial equity cannot be achieved by whites or people of color alone. It has to include both groups for progress to happen.<sup>4</sup>

## Racial Equity Outcome Toolkit: Six-Step Process for Your Organization

### Step 1: Establish an understanding of racial equity and inclusion principles

#### OVERVIEW

This step and Step 6 go hand in hand; however, before your organization can move forward with any portion of this work, some level-setting has to happen. In the *appendix* of this document, there is a glossary of terms related to racial equity. It is incredibly imperative that there is some shared understanding of what much of this work means.

When discussing this work, employ those definitions. Meet with your team to talk about what the definitions mean. Be mindful of the racial dynamics within your

organization and the internal marginalization that can happen, and may have already happened, for people of color. Be prepared to listen to all individuals and try not to force people of color within the organization to (a) speak for all individuals of color, or (b) be responsible for teaching the entire organization about this work.

Also, within this step, it is essential to gather and analyze disaggregated data for both your internal and external context.

#### PROCESS

##### 1 Understand the demographics of your organization.

- What is the racial makeup of the leadership of your organization (including the board) compared to the leadership on the front lines and the at grassroots level?
- Do your leadership demographics reflect the communities you serve?
- How many individuals in your organization are from the communities you serve? *Gather data about the population you serve and information on where you serve those individuals.*

##### 2 Next, think thoroughly about whether or not your organization has the “will” to take on this work.

- Does your board have the race equity lens needed to prioritize this work? Does your staff?
- If not, what concrete steps will you take to increase organizational awareness and understanding of structural racism? Provide specific examples and details when possible.

#### POTENTIAL ACTIONS FOR THIS STEP

- Consider enrolling your leadership team and middle managers in a racial equity training.
- Create a staff position for someone whose role it is to constantly think about internal equity issues.
- As a team, explore the internal norms with your organization. Determine whether these norms perpetuate problems for certain groups over others within your organization. Ask the question, “Where does privilege exist in our organization?”

#### JUST A NOTE

A focus on white culture and privilege can privilege whiteness. At times, we are often trying to prove to those in power (white people) that these systemic issues do exist. So, starting with the data to highlight — and center where we are — further demonstrates to whites the systemic inequities. However, this act in itself can marginalize the personal experiences of people of color. Create safe spaces for everyone to share their experiences.<sup>5</sup>



6

Use the space below to begin your list. Identify individual policies, regulations and information/resources that can be the pre-conditions for your racial equity outcome.

Policies/Regulations/Information/Resources

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next, separate the ones that are in your locus of influence from those that are not. Those that are in your control are your building blocks.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Examples of building blocks to eliminate juvenile racialized sentencing disparities:<sup>8</sup>

- Similar arrest rates for white, black and brown youth in the same community or region for any given offense.
- A wider menu of positive recreational options for local youth
- Alternative sentencing options for local judges: options that are more proportionate to the crimes committed and that take the devastating community impacts of mass incarceration into account
- Preventive rather than aggressive community policing, which does not, for example, emphasize stop-and-frisk tactics or quality-of-life sweeps in poor neighborhoods
- Culturally competent police officers and juvenile justice officials

Questions/ideas to consider:

- Frame your building blocks as nouns not verbs. It is important to specify “conditions” not “actions.”
- What must be in place for your desired racial equity outcome?
- What barriers to this desired racial outcome must be eliminated in order to be successful?<sup>9</sup>

**Step 4: Identify barriers to your building blocks that impede your vision**

This next step involves looking at each building block and connecting it to the reality at the present moment. As it relates to your racial equity outcome, what are the barriers that are in place — public policies, institutional practices and cultural representations — that impede your building blocks?

In this section, you will take each building block that you have chosen and craft barriers for each one. Consider policies, practices and representations from different sectors (e.g., education, justice system, workforce) that affect your building blocks. Additional research for this step may be needed to move forward.

See an outline below of how to do this portion. Complete for each building block.

<b>Racial Equity Outcome:</b>		
<b>Building Block 1:</b>		
Policies	Practices	Cultural representations/stereotypes

**TO REVIEW**

Create a vision for racial equity that will serve as your racial equity outcome. Determine the building blocks needed to achieve your outcome. Identify barriers (policies, regulations, information or resources) that are preventing that vision (use nouns, not verbs) from being reality. These also will help you develop and refine your building blocks for racial equity. If you are uncertain about where to begin, be sure to engage stakeholders to get their opinion of the process.

Your desired outcome is to create a clear vision for racial equity in your organization. This is no easy task. Therefore, you must reflect on your organization's existing policies, regulations, information and resources. As part of this reflection process, you will consider the barriers that hinder the desired outcome of racial equity.

Additionally, the organization must look at critical stakeholders/leaders and set action steps around their roles as well. The stakeholders are often the principal holders of the fate of the racial equity plan.

Finally, it is imperative to remember that, just like with any change process, achieving racial equity takes time and a lot of work and passion. If efforts don't work the first time, evaluate what went well and what didn't go so well, then make modifications to re-implement. This is not a one-size-fits-all model; therefore, the duration of implementation and making adjustments may vary based on how racial equity evolves in your organization and some of the change factors identified in the opening of this toolkit.

**Step 5: Understand your local landscape**

**OVERVIEW**

As a moral leader, it is imperative that you understand the landscape where you seek to make a change. For each policy, practice and representation, there are potential allies and obstacles to racial equity. Mapping them out can help your organization create strategic actions to advance your racial equity outcomes. This part of the racial equity process is about the governance surrounding your vision. Context matters and is an essential piece in the change-making effort.

You will need to understand the elected officials, interest groups, government bureaucrats, business executives, media and entertainment organizations, unions, opinion leaders, and other important local/state actors who must be (a) engaged or challenged to bring about change, or (b) monitored because they have opposed such change historically, can be expected to oppose change, or tend to fall short when it comes to implementation. Subsequently, it will be essential to understand the context in which each

of the policies, practices or representations have manifested themselves. This conversation is meaningful because it helps you identify new allies and potential obstructionists.

**KEY QUESTIONS**

What individuals or institutions have power relevant to the policy, practice or representation being discussed in your region?

Policy/Practice/Representation:

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1 Who are the allies for this particular policy, practice or representation?

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2 Who or what are the obstacles for this particular policy, practice or representation?

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If the above step is a bit difficult, you can answer the following questions with further prompts below to understand:

- 1 What are the key decision-making bodies relevant to this issue at a local, state and federal level?
- 2 What is the legislative or institutional history relating to the policy or practice or representation?
- 3 Are there complicated budgetary or technical aspects to this issue that require specialized knowledge?
- 4 Which organization in your community or region traditionally takes leadership in this particular area?

**What are the key decision-making bodies relevant to this issue at a local, state and federal level?**

Policy/Practice/Representation

Key decision-making body	Who has influence and control	Mandates, timetables, and activities	Mechanisms available for public access and accountability

What is the legislative or institutional history relating to the policy, practice or representation?

- Are there important changes/developments in the legislative, regulatory or administrative pipeline with respect to the issue?
- Who are the main promoters or opponents of those changes or developments?
- Has this been a contested area historically? Yes or no?

Use the space below to delve further into the context.

Particular legislative or institutional history:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Important changes or developments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Main promoters or opponents:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Historically contested area:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there complicated budgetary or technical aspects to this issue that require specialized knowledge?

- If so, who provides that analysis?
- Is the information publicly available?

Budgetary or technical aspects:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who provides that analysis?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is the information publicly available? If not, how can you access it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which organization in your community or region traditionally takes leadership in this particular area?

Who currently takes leadership?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How is leadership exercised?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

Stake in the issue:

.....  
 .....  
 .....

Likely ally or obstacle:

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**Step 6: Assess your organization's capacity for change**

This last step is about understanding if your organization is ready to take on a racial equity effort. Before moving forward with any action, assessing your organization's will for change is appropriate and necessary.

Does your organization have the capacity and competencies necessary to implement the public policies, practices or cultural representations that will promote your racial equity vision? Consider the following areas below and assess (a) if a person, or a group of individuals, performs this task, and (b) if there has been some financial investment by your organization in any of these areas.

	Analytical (has deep knowledge of policies, racial dynamics and power structures)	Convening (can bring different stakeholders together for honest conversation)	Communicative (can reach appropriate audiences with your messaging)	Networking (has the capacity to participate in formal and informal networks)
Role in organization				
Financial investment by the organization in this space				

Based on your answers above, what can your organization do as a first step?  
 Use the following tables to think through an initial action plan.

**Action 1**

Action	Messenger	Talking points	Audience	Timeline to accomplishment

Action 2

Action	Messenger	Talking points	Audience	Timeline to accomplishment

**Conclusion**

After the completion of this toolkit, your organization should have an action plan for racial equity informed by your regional context and your capabilities.

The goal is always to affect the “system” where structural racism ultimately lives and negatively impacts the individuals and the communities in which you serve. It is important to remember and recognize that your organization has a role in this work and that to ignore it would not be a sign of moral leadership.

Racial equity is a change process and will be uncomfortable, yet it must be made safe for all involved. That is why it is essential to know and differentiate between a system of racism versus individual acts of hate. The beauty of this process is the aftermath. After your organization commits to and experiences the process, you may still interact with community partners, funders and politicians who do not understand their own biases and ways of working that support and promote white culture. Your organization can help teach others how to be culturally responsive and recognize their challenges and biases. It can be an opportunity for a shift in an entire ecosystem — and a transformation in an entire region.

**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Aspen Institute, 2009

<sup>2</sup>n.d.

<sup>3</sup>Saporta and Sanchez, 2018

<sup>4</sup>Anne E. Casey Foundation, 2018

<sup>5</sup>Gulati-Partee and Potapchuk, 2014

<sup>6</sup>Anne E. Casey Foundation, 2018

<sup>7</sup>Aspen Institute, 2009

<sup>8</sup>Aspen Institute, 2009

<sup>9</sup>n.d.

<sup>10</sup>Aspen Institute, 2009

<sup>11</sup>Gulati-Partee and Potapchuk, 2014

<sup>12</sup>Aspen Institute, 2009

## Appendix

### GLOSSARY

Below are subject-relevant words and definitions that are used throughout this toolkit.

**Cultural representations:** Language, images, narratives, frames and cognitive cues that form the public's conventional wisdom about race. Within the common perspective that these representations generate, white privilege and racial disparities are perceived as normal, disconnected from history and institutions, and largely explainable by individual and racial group characteristics.

**Inclusion:** The action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging.

**Internalized racism:** The private racial beliefs held by and within individuals. The way we absorb social messages about race and adopt them as personal beliefs, biases and prejudices are all within the realm of internalized racism. For people of color, internalized oppression can involve believing in negative messages about oneself or one's racial group. For white people, internalized privilege can involve feeling a sense of superiority and entitlement, or holding negative beliefs about people of color.

**Institutional racism:** Racial inequity within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment, or inequitable opportunities and outcomes. An example of institutional racism would be a school system that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded and under-resourced schools with the least qualified teachers compared to the educational opportunities of white students.

**Interpersonal racism:** How our private beliefs about race become public when we interact with others. When we act upon our prejudices or unconscious bias — whether intentionally, visibly, verbally or not — we engage in interpersonal racism. Interpersonal racism also can be willful and overt, taking the form of bigotry, hate speech or racial violence.

**Intersectionality:** A particular way of understanding and identifying social location in terms of crisscrossing, or interwoven, systems of oppression. Specifically, intersectionality is an “analysis claiming that systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation and age form mutually constructing features of social organization.”

**Race:** A socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features (phenotypes), such as skin color, and on ancestry. There is no scientific basis for, or discernible distinction between, racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions and culture and is used as a basis for discrimination and domination. At the micro, or individual, level of racism are internalized and interpersonal forms of racism. At the macro level of racism, we look beyond the individuals to the broader dynamics, including institutional and structural forms of racism.

**Racial equity:** The condition that would be achieved if one's race or ethnic origin were no longer a determining factor in one's success. This concept focuses on achieving favorable outcomes that are comparable across racial and ethnic groups through the allocation of resources in ways designed to remedy disadvantages some people face through no fault of their own.

**Racial justice:** The systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people are able to achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live. Racial justice — or racial equity — goes beyond “anti-racism.” It's not just about what we are against, but also what we are for. A “racial justice” framework can move us from a reactive posture to a more powerful, proactive and even preventive approach.

**Structural racism:** The ways that history, culture, public policy, institutional practices and personal beliefs interact to maintain racial hierarchy and company norms.

**Systematic equity:** A complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and a dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits and outcomes.

**White culture:** The dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States.

Example of a Racial Equity Outcome Analysis <sup>12</sup>	
<b>Your goal</b>	Elimination of racial disparities in juvenile sentencing in the region within two years
<b>Your priorities</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Similar racial arrest rates</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">More positive youth recreational opportunities</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Alternative sentencing</div> </div>
<b>What helps or hinders</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Policing practices</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Local media bias</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Youth sentencing guidelines</div> </div>
<b>What you must know</b>	<p>Key players at City Hall, on Main Street, in the law enforcement, child welfare and juvenile justice communities; local foundations; Board of Education, etc.</p> <p>Sources of retrenchment, e.g., high public spending on police and prisons at expense of opportunity investments in communities with most at-risk youth; inadequate re-entry programs for formerly incarcerated youth</p> <p>Juvenile justice, education, other youth-related funding formulas in state, local legislatures; regulatory guidelines at youth-serving agencies; formal and informal systems of bargaining negotiations relating to criminal justice, child welfare, education policy-making</p> <p>Local child welfare, juvenile justice, school outcome data</p> <p>Your capacities for engaging/influencing powerbrokers, and analyzing/framing local budget proposals, media messaging, youth organizing</p> <p>Local and national juvenile advocacy resources and networks</p>
<b>What you must do</b>	<p>Set strategic priorities, e.g., campaign against "stop-and-frisk" police tactics in communities of color, and establish community courts and community sentencing alternatives</p> <p>Take action to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicize disparities between searches, arrests and actual convictions; disposition of similar arrests in nearby white communities</li> <li>• Bring together parents, business leaders, youth, other stakeholders to design community courts, restorative sentences</li> <li>• Engage the Department of Corrections around early release of nonviolent juveniles to community re-entry programs</li> </ul>

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/LINKS**

Here are a few places online where you can find additional readings, case studies, definitions and exercises.

Diversity and Inclusion: Essential to All Non-Profits. [www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/diversity-and-inclusion-essential-to-all-non-profits\\_us\\_5988c06ce4b0f25bdfb31ecb](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/diversity-and-inclusion-essential-to-all-non-profits_us_5988c06ce4b0f25bdfb31ecb)

National Council of Nonprofits: Why diversity, equity, and inclusion matter for nonprofits. [www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter-nonprofits](http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter-nonprofits)

Nonprofit Quarterly: “Making your Board More Inclusive.” <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2018/02/20/making-board-inclusive-boardsource/>

Paths Along the Way to Racial Justice: Four Foundation Case Studies. <https://web.archive.org/web/20170627234704/http://racialequity.org/docs/CIF5.pdf>

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