# Building Racial Equity:

Foundations Toolkit

race forward

# ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This Toolkit contains information, guides, and worksheets related to Race Forward's Building Racial Equity Training.  This toolkit aims to support individuals in their work of advancing racial equity in their organizations.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

# About Race Forward

In 2017, Race Forward united with the Center for Social Inclusion. Founded in 1981, Race Forward brings systemic analysis and an innovative approach to complex race issues to help people take effective action toward racial equity. Founded in 2002, the Center for Social Inclusion catalyzed community, government, and other institutions to dismantle structural racial inequity and create equitable outcomes for all. Race Forward is home to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national network of local government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. Race Forward publishes the daily news site Colorlines and presents Facing Race, the country's largest multiracial conference on racial justice.

## OUR MISSION

Race Forward catalyzes movement building for racial justice. In partnership with communities, organizations, and sectors, we build strategies to advance racial justice in our policies, institutions, and culture.

# Our Approach

Race Forward's Building Racial Equity series is a collection of interactive trainings for those who wish to sharpen their skills and strategies to address structural racism and advance racial equity. Unlike "diversity trainings" which primarily focus on interpersonal relations and understanding, the Building Racial Equity trainings emphasize how to challenge and change institutional racial inequities.

**We emphasize practical strategies and solutions.** Many trainings—even well intentioned "anti-racism" trainings—often focus more on the problems than the solutions. Both are important. But to move forward, it's essential to focus on developing viable strategies and solutions. We use the term "racial justice" trainings to emphasize our proactive focus.

**We emphasize institutional and structural change.** A lot of organizations provide "diversity," "anti-oppression" or "cultural competency" trainings, which focus primarily on the personal or interpersonal dimension of racism. This is important, but our niche is to focus on systemic change. We help groups address systemic racial inequality by developing proactive proposals, practices, messages, strategies and alliances for advancing racial equity. By changing inequitable systems, we can interrupt patterns of privilege and oppression.

**We focus on race explicitly, but not exclusively**. We work with groups that are interested in seriously addressing race issues, since that is our expertise. But, we know that other dynamics are also important--such as gender, class, sexuality, immigrant status, etc. The kind of analysis, values, tools and strategies we highlight are ones that support all kinds of equity and inclusion. We emphasis race—not because we think it's the primary problem in all situations—but because it's a significant problem in many, if not most, cases. By learning to address race effectively--which many groups have the most difficulty with--there can be important lessons for dealing with other dynamics. When there are intersecting dynamics, each dynamic must be given distinct and sufficient attention in proportion to its significance.

**We emphasize an empowerment model of social change: People of color and white people have a stake in racial justice.** Our lives and fates are interconnected and we're all better served when equity, inclusion, dignity and unity are the norm. It will require people of all races to take action, risks and leadership to dismantle systemic racism. Key stakeholders—especially those most disadvantaged by racism—must play a key role in shaping social change and racial justice strategies. While some people address racism through a lot of blame, shame, guilt-tripping and grievances, we see this as disempowering. Most people support racial justice and just need more clarity, skills, and strategies to become part of the solution. We aim to move people from divisive, destructive and disempowering patterns of engagement to those that are constructive, productive and empowering.

**We emphasize "equity" more than "diversity."** We place a major emphasis on addressing racial equity (fairness), rather than diversity (variety). We see "diversity" as a tool to get to "equity," but not the end, and not the same.

**We focus on community change.** Some training approaches begin with the personal level (with people processing their privilege and oppression), then move to the organizational change level, then if they get around to it, focus on community/societal change. We flip the script by getting organizations to focus on their mission and the impacts they want to have in their community, then we explore what organizational and personal changes are needed to help serve that purpose. Change still occurs at all levels –societal, organizational and personal--but the community change is the driver. Profound personal change can occur when people have first-hand experience engaging in purposeful and collective action.

# Elements of Change for Racial Equity
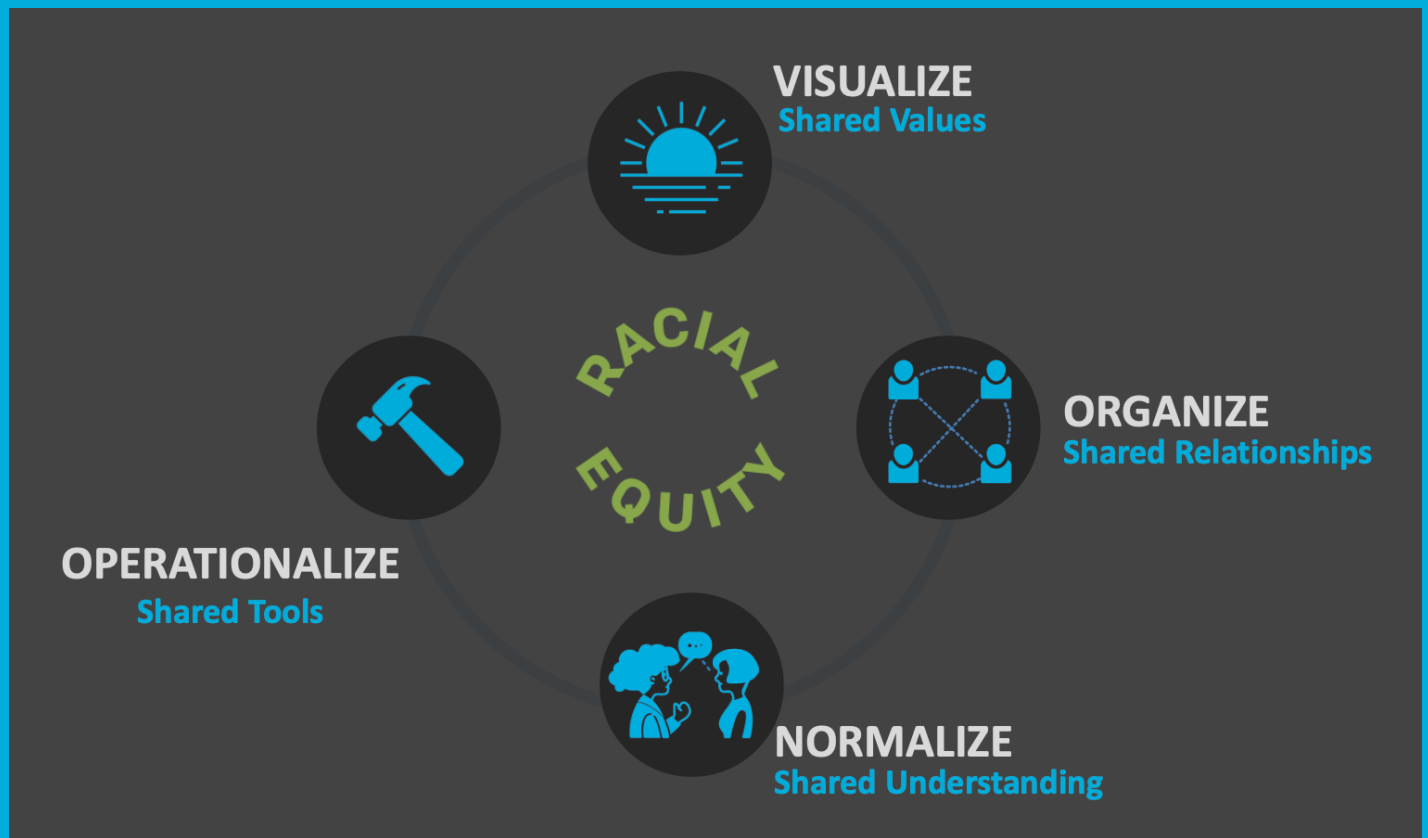


Race Forward trainings, frequently highlight common elements of racially equitable organizational change.- the movement of an organization from one state to another, such as shifting power, changing policies and practices, and transforming values and culture. (There are different organizational change models, centered on either process and content). Race Forward's model of organizational change includes four key components:

**VISUALIZE:** Establishing a vision for racial equity. (Visioning: building shared values that move us towards a vision for racial justice.)

**NORMALIZING** conversations about race so there's a shared racial equity analysis, including an understanding of the history of race and key terminology, such as racial equity and inequity, racial justice, structural, institutional, interpersonal and internalized racism, and implicit and explicit bias. (Normalizing: building shared understanding though ongoing conversations about race, with common definitions and key concepts that help to center racial equity and people of color, through and intersectional and inclusive framework.)

**OPERATIONALIZING** new behaviors and policies via specific interventions, such as use of a Racial Equity Tool and development of a Racial Equity Action Plan. (Operationalizing: using shared tools and strategies to systematize racial equity in culture, policies, and practices.)

**ORGANIZING** to achieve racial equity, including across the breadth (all functions) and depth (up and down hierarchy) of an organization. Together this changes the norms, practices, culture, and habits of thoughts within an organization and the outcomes produced by the organization. (Organizing: building shared relationships within and across organizations and sectors so that we can shift power to advance transformative and equitable systems change.)

# Background Materials to Prepare for A Racial Equity Training

To prepare for the upcoming training on racial equity, here are some things you can read, view and do to provide you with some background on topics that will be addressed in the training. These are optional and should take less than an hour to complete all of them.

**Structural Racialization and White Privilege**
• View "The House We Live in" – This is a 6-minue segment from the series "Race: The Power of an Illusion" by California Newsreel about post World-War II housing policies that privileged white people and often excluded people of color.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8

• **Read "A Long History of Affirmative Action – For Whites,"** also from California Newsreel, a companion 2-page reading that goes with the above video clip at:
 www.newsreel.org/guides/race/whiteadv.htm

**Watch: The Myth of Race Debunked in 3 minutes:**
https://www.vox.com/2015/1/13/7536655/race-myth-debunked

**Advancing Racial Equity:**
• Read "Building Community Leadership and Power to Advance Racial Justice," by Terry Keleher, Critical Issues Forum, Volume 4, Sep 2012, Philanthropic Initiative on Racial Equity. This 6-page reading highlights some racial equity practices that can be used by community groups and supported by the philanthropic community.
https://racialequity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/CIF4BuildingCommunity.pdf

# HOW TO DO A LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Race Forward Trainings begin by acknowledging the continued survival and thriving of Indegenous Peoples on stolen, colonized lands we now know as the United States of America. We encourage everyone to cultivate this practice of doing land acknowledgements during Convenings, gatherings, and events as a grounding for racial justice work.

**Start with self-reflection. Before starting work on your land acknowledgment statement, reflect on the process:**

- *Why am I doing this land acknowledgment? (If you're hoping to inspire others to take action to support Indigenous communities, you're on the right track. If you're delivering a land acknowledgment out of guilt or because everyone else is doing it, more self-reflection is in order.)*
- *What is my end goal? (What do you hope listeners will do after hearing the acknowledgment?)*
- *When will I have the largest impact? (Think about your timing and audience, specifically.)*

**Do your homework. Put in the time necessary to research the following topics:**

- *The Indigenous people to whom the land belongs.*
- *The history of the land and any related treaties.*
- *Names of living Indigenous people from these communities. If you're presenting on behalf of your work in a certain field, highlight Indigenous people who currently work in that field.*
- *Indigenous place names and language.*
- *Correct pronunciation for the names of the Tribes, places, and individuals that you're including.*
- *Use appropriate language. Don't sugarcoat the past. Use terms like genocide, ethnic cleansing, stolen land, and forced removal to reflect actions taken by colonizers.*



We Must Protect The Land For The Next Seven Generations, by artist Chief Lady Bird

Chief Lady Bird

**Use past, present, and future tenses. Indigenous people are still here, and they're thriving. Don't treat them as a relic of the past.**

**Land acknowledgments shouldn't be grim.**

They should function as living celebrations of Indigenous communities. Ask yourself, "How am I leaving Indigenous people in a stronger, more empowered place because of this land acknowledgment?" Focus on the positivity of who Indigenous people are today.

# SHIFTING THE FOCUS

One of the ways we can start advancing racial equity in our organization is by shifting the focus from individual racism to institutional and systemic causes, effects, systems, and solutions. We can shift the focus by asking different questions that draw our attention (prime) towards institutional roots and solutions of racial inequities.. Addressing systemic roots and impacts allows us to come up with long term, sustainable solutions that will transform our institutions to be more racially just regardless of who the actor are.

## Blame

Who's a racist?Who is the responsible individual ?

## Causes

What policies are causing the racial inequities?

## Intentions

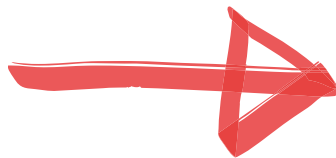What did they mean? What was their attitude?

## Effects

Who benefits and who is harmed? What are the effects on the larger organization/community?

## Prejudice

What beliefs made them do it?

## Systems

What institutions are responsible?

## Grievance

How can we fix what just happened?

## Solutions

What are proactive strategies and solutions?

# SHARPEN YOUR ANALYSIS: DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RACISM

Internalized Racism lies within individuals. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies.

Interpersonal Racism occurs between individuals. Bias, bigotry, and discrimination based on race.

**We need to pay attention to institutional and structural racism so we can come up with systemic and sustainable solutions**

Institutional Racism occurs within institutions. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not.

Structural Racism
refers to racial inequities across institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture.

# Readers' Theater
# Everyday Racism – Algebra or Pre-Algebra?

*Instructions: Read through the scenario and use the worksheet in the following page to identify the examples of the different levels of racism in the scenario. This will help you sharpen your racial equity analysis!*

Narrator: Tony is an African American student about to begin high school. He wants to be the first in his family to attend college and hopes to be a biologist. He did well in middle school and took advanced math. But he didn't score well on the school district's new high school placement exam. Compared to white students, most Black and Latino students don't score as well on this exam. The students of color mostly come from two middle schools, known as the worst schools in the district in the poorest part of town. They're overcrowded and have the least qualified teachers. When Tony enrolled at the high school, he was referred to Mr. Perez, the guidance counselor. He was happy Mr. Perez was Latino since most teachers at the high school are white.

Mr. Perez: Tony, you seem like a good student but I'd recommend that you enroll in the Pre-Algebra class instead of the regular Algebra class.

Narrator: Mr. Perez, for years, has been routinely advising most African American and Latino students to take Pre-Algebra because a lot of them fail regular Algebra.

Tony: But I've already taken advanced math class in middle school. And I know that Algebra is a requirement before I can take any science classes.

Mr. Perez: I'd really like to help you, but the school district has new testing policies—if you don't score well on the placement exam, you can't take Algebra. That's the rules.

Narrator: Mr. Perez didn't have the heart to tell Tony that his chances of getting into the local college were not good because you need three high school science classes. If you take Pre-Algebra freshman year and regular Algebra sophomore year, you'd have to take all three-science classes in your last two years of high school. After meeting with Mr. Perez, Tony talked to his friend Jason, one of the few white students who attended the same junior high school as Tony.

Jason: Are we gonna be in Algebra class together?

Tony: I guess not. They're making me take Pre-Algebra because of my placement test scores. It's the new policy and I don't have a choice.

Jason: Those tests are messed up. Guess you can't do much about it if those are the rules.

Narrator: Jason didn't tell Tony that he had just overheard his white friends in the hall saying, "since mostly whites got into Algebra class, it proves they must be smarter." Tony then talked to his friend Nary, who is Cambodian, and one of the few Asian Americans at the school.

Nary: I have to take Pre-Algebra, too. I don't have the brains to pass the regular Algebra class anyway. Who needs advanced math, anyway? I can get a better grade in art class.

Narrator: As the day went on, Tony realized that most white students had, in fact, gotten into Algebra, while most students of color were assigned to Pre-Algebra. He felt angry, disappointed and embarrassed about his test scores. He wasn't sure if there was anything he could do. His excitement about beginning high school quickly began to fade.

# A GUIDE FOR ANALYZING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RACISM

*INSTRUCTIONS: ANSWER THE FIVE QUESTIONS BELOW. LIST IN EACH BOX, EXAMPLES OF THE LEVEL OR RACISM YOU THINK IS OCCURRING IN THE SCENARIO OR SITUATION YOU'RE ANALYZING. YOU DON'T HAVE TO IDENTIFY EVERY POSSIBLE EXAMPLE BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT TO LEAVE AMPLE TIME TO ADDRESS THE LAST QUESTION.*

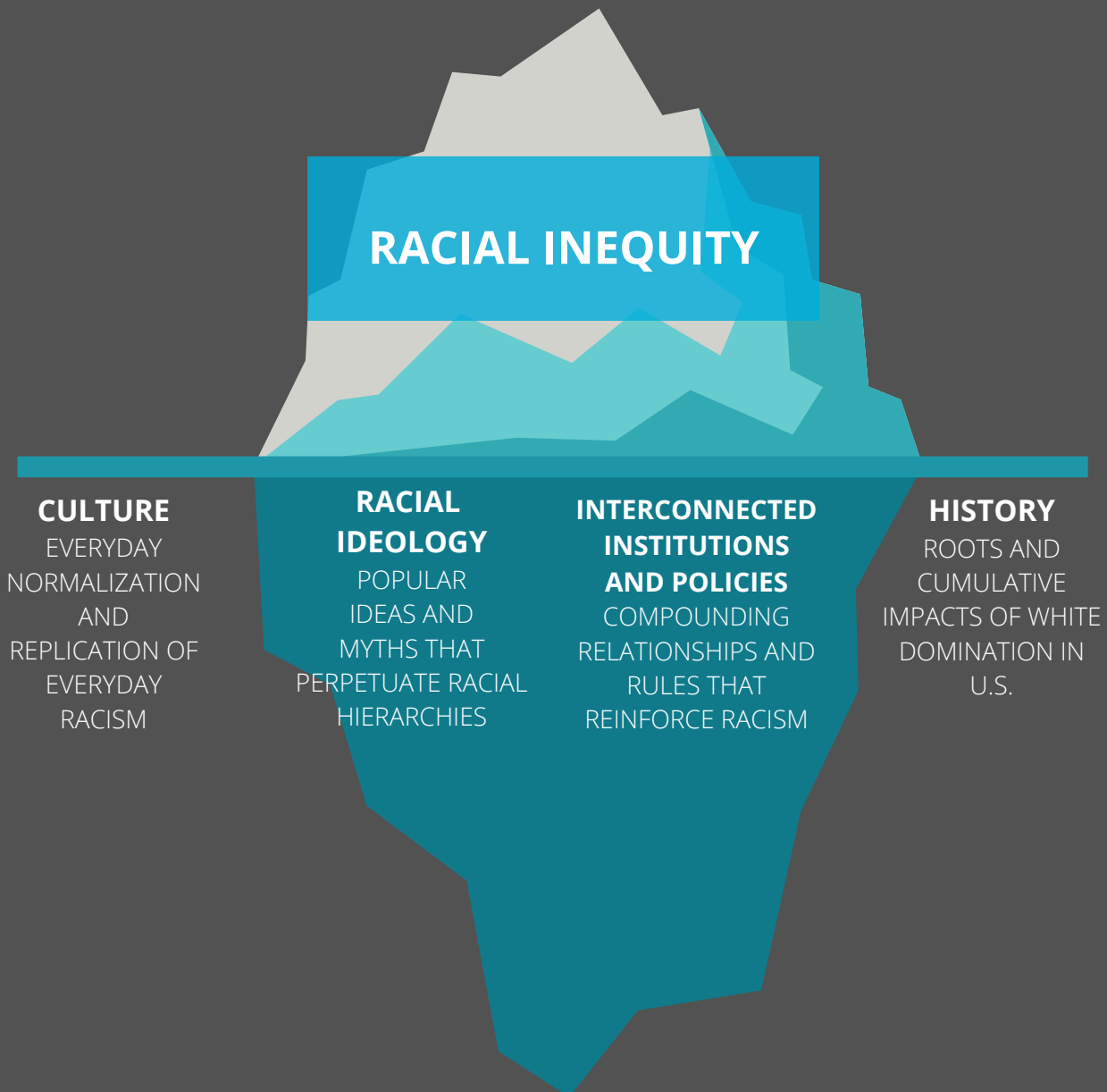| | |
|---|---|
| **1. What are examples of Internalized Racism (racism within individuals)?** | **2. What are examples of Interpersonal Racism (racism between individuals)?** |
| **3. What are examples of Institutional Racism (racism within institutions and systems of power?)** | **4. What are examples of Structural Racism * (racism among institutions and across society)?** |

**5. WHAT IS A PROPOSED SOLUTION THAT COULD PRODUCE SYSTEMIC CHANGE (INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL) IN THIS SCENARIO?**

# ICEBERG ANALYSIS TOOL

To achieve and sustain equity, new rules and activities need to be institutionalized. Just as racism operates structurally and systemically, so too must racial equity in order to perpetually supplant racism. We need systemic solutions. As a start, we need to practice doing a systemic racial analysis. A systemic racial analysis analyzes racial inequities and disparities holistically to identify root causes and contributing factors. A systemic racial analysis generates an array of possible solutions and strategic interventions aimed at fundamental and lasting change. One of the many ways to do a systemic racial analysis is via an iceberg analysis. Often, the racial disparities we see are just the tip of the iceberg. An examination of what's underneath will reveal its roots in culture, history, racial ideology, and interconnected institutions. **Check out the next page which shows how to use this tool using the disparate effects of Covid-19 on people of color as an example.**

## RACIAL INEQUITY

**CULTURE**
EVERYDAY NORMALIZATION AND REPLICATION OF EVERYDAY RACISM

**RACIAL IDEOLOGY**
POPULAR IDEAS AND MYTHS THAT PERPETUATE RACIAL HIERARCHIES

**INTERCONNECTED INSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES**
COMPOUNDING RELATIONSHIPS AND RULES THAT REINFORCE RACISM

**HISTORY**
ROOTS AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF WHITE DOMINATION IN U.S.

# RACEAND COVID 19

THE CDC COVID DATA TRACKER SHOWS MORE THAN 30 MILLION CASES AND ALMOST 550,000 DEATHS FROM COVID-19 AS OF MARCH 31, WITH BLACK, LATINX, INDIGENIOUS, AND ASIAN-AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER INDIVIDUALS ACCOUNTING FOR MORE THAN ⅓ OF ALL CASES AND CLOSE TO 30% OF DEATHS. COVID19 HAS TAUGHT US THAT PANDEMICS ARE NOT JUST HEALTH ISSUE, IT IS ALSO A RACIAL JUSTICE ISSUE. FOR US TO FIND LONG TERM SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES, WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO GET TO THE ROOTS OF THE ISSUE. WE NEED A **SYSTEMIC RACIAL ANALYSIS** TO HELP US IDENTIFY THE ROOTS OF THE RACIAL INEQUITIES WE'RE SEEING. ONE WAY TO DO A SYSTEMIC RACIAL ANALYSIS IS BY USING ICEBERG ANALYSIS. LIKE AN ICEBERG, MUCH OF THE RACIAL INEQUITIES WE SEE IN THE WORLD IS ONLY THE SURFACE OF A MUCH DEEPER PROBLEM. THE ICEBERG ANALYSIS ALLOWS US TO LOOK INTO THE CULTURAL, IDEOLOGICAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE RACIAL INEQUITIES AT THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.

## WHAT ARE THE SYSTEMIC ROOTS OF THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT OF COVID19 ON COMMUNITIES OF COLOR? LET'S USE AN ICEBERG ANALYSIS.

"COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, WHICH HAVE BORNE THE BRUNT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE UNITED STATES, HAVE ALSO RECEIVED A SMALLER SHARE OF AVAILABLE VACCINES. THE VACCINATION RATE FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES IS HALF THAT OF WHITE PEOPLE, AND THE GAP FOR HISPANIC PEOPLE IS EVEN LARGER, ACCORDING TO A NEW YORK TIMES ANALYSIS OF STATE-REPORTED RACE AND ETHNICITY INFORMATION." - NY TIMES

A STRUCTUAL ANALYSIS CONTINUES TO BE IMPORTANT

**CULTURE**
EVERYDAY NORMALIZATION AND REPLICATION OF EVERYDAY RACISM

**RACIAL IDEOLOGY**
POPULAR IDEAS AND MYTHS THAT PERPETUATE RACIAL HIERARCHIES

**INTERCONNECTED INSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES**
COMPOUNDING RELATIONSHIPS AND RULES THAT REINFORCE RACISM

**HISTORY**
ROOTS AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF WHITE DOMINATION IN U.S.

### PROFIT OVER LIVES
NORMALIZED THAT PEOPLE IN LOW WAGE JOBS WOULD PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR THE SAKE OF THE ECONOMY. WE'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE THROUGH SLAVERY, ENDENTURED SERVITUDE, SHARECROPPING, MIGRANT FARM WORKERS) AND WE SEE IT NOW WITH THE PROTESTS TO REOPEN NOT ACKNOWLEDGING THAT REOPENING WILL REMOVE SOME OF THE LIMITED PROTECTIONS IN PLACE REQUIRING PEOPLE IN LOW WAGE POSITIONS, LARGELY PEOPLE OF COLOR TO GO BACK TO WORK UNDER UNSAFE CONDITIONS.



State & Regional Govt & Politics

**Coronavirus cases, deaths projected to rise as Georgia reopens**

By: Willoughby Mariano The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Published: May 6, 2020 4:15 PM
Updated: May 6, 2020 9:01 PM

### RACIAL SCAPE-GOATING
FOLKS HAVE BEEN SAYING POC ARE TO BLAME FOR STARTING THE VIRUS, (E.G. ASIANS EATING EXOTIC ANIMALS, BLACK AND LATINOS HAVING UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLES, ETC.) RACIAL SCAPEGOATING IS WHAT MAKES IT NORMAL TO SEE COMMENTS STATING THAT THE PROBLEM IS PEOPLE OF COLOR AND IT MAKES IT NORMAL FOR US TO NOT SEE THE SAME BEING SAID OF WHITE PEOPLE.

**A virus originating from China exposes blatant racism in America as the US struggles to respond to the coronavirus**

Lauren Frias Mar 19, 2020, 11:39 PM



Members of the Asian American Commission held a press conference on the steps of the Massachusetts State House on March 12 in Boston to condemn racism toward
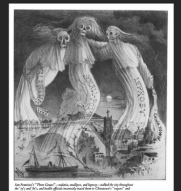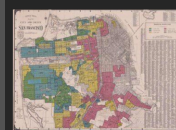
### HISTORICAL ROOTS
BIPOC COMMUNITIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY PANDEMICS IN HISTORY. FOR EXAMPLE, CHINESE IMMIGRANTS WERE USED AS SCAPEGOATS DURING THE BUBONIC PLAGUE

**BUBONIC PLAGUE: Immigrant Scapegoating**



1899 - BUBONIC PLAGUE OUTBREAK
CONTAMINATED BUILDINGS DESTROYED BY FIRE WHICH ACCIDEN-TALLY SPREAD, DESTROYING MOST OF "CHINATOWN"

Hawaii News Now

California History
Vol. 57, No. 1, The Chinese in California (Spring, 1978), pp. 70-87 (18 pages)

### INTERCONNECTED INSTITUTIONS
SEGREGATION AND REDLINING: BECAUSE OF THE LONG HISTORY OF STATE-SANCTIONED SEGREGATION, BLACK, LATINX, AND SOME ASIAN COMMUNITIES LIVE IN MULTIGENERATIONAL HOMES IN NYC, MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN DENSE HOUSING, THUS COMPOUNDING VULNERABILITY. BECAUSE OF THE LONG HISTORY OF WEALTH THEFT VIA HOMES, PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE ALSO MORE LIKELY TO BE HOMELESS.

IN TRANSIT, PEOPLE OF COLOR, PARTICULARLY BLACK PEOPLE IN MANY PARTS OF THIS COUNTRY, ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE PUBLIC TRANSIT JOBS AND TO RIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. WE KNOW THAT MASS TRANSIT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE PRIMARY MECHANISMS BY WHICH THE VIRUS SPREAD IN ITS EARLY STAGES.
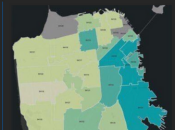
| REDLINING | CALENVIROSCREEN | COVID 19 |
|---|---|---|



Redlined communities = predominately People of Color and poor

Disadvantaged communities = predominately People of Color, poor, and polluted

San Francisco Covid-19 Map
Darker blue portions of the map illustrate the neighborhoods harder hit by Covid-19 cases

Source: https://greenlining.org

# ICEBERG ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

**RACIAL INEQUITY:**

**CULTURE**

**RACIAL IDEOLOGY**

**INTERCONNECTED INSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES**

**HISTORY**

# CHOICE POINTS TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY

Choice points are decision-making opportunities to consciously consider racial equity and influence outcomes.

In your routine organizational operations, there are many choice points — some are big ones, some are small, some occur frequently, while others may be annual. Example choice points may be strategic planning, curatorial decisions, featuring artists in productions or exhibitions, HR and personnel decisions, budgeting, facilities management, program development, event production, audience engagement, etc. For all or most of these decisions in the daily life of your organization, there are likely a myriad of ways in which racial bias occurs, and therefore just as many opportunities to intervene to expand racial equity. When routine decisions are made without attention to racism and racial equity, the result is typically the continuation of the status quo, which generally reinforces and reproduces white dom- inant cultural patterns, racial inequities, and exclusion. The cumulative impacts of many small choices can be as significant as the impacts of big decisions.

**"Racism can be interrupted and prevented at the point of decision-making, if we use these "choice points" thoughtfully. With intentional use of a race lens when you make decisions, you can shift your organizational culture from one that unconsciously and passively replicates racism, to one that consciously and proactively creates racial equity."**

In order to interrupt racial bias and inequities, it is critical to approach decision-making with a racial justice lens and the active participation of BIPOC. Without this, racism is likely the default operating system. When we're conscious of choice points and the related impacts, we're less likely to replicate implicit bias and the status quo, and we open new possibilities for equitable change. Racism can be interrupted and prevented at the point of decision-making, if we use these "choice points" thoughtfully. With intentional use of a race lens when you make decisions, you can shift your organizational culture from one that unconsciously and passively replicates racism, to one that consciously and proactively creates racial equity. If racial equity is truly a priority that is critical to your mission and community impact, there are opportunities to embed a racial equity framework at every turn.

(This description is from Race Forward's "Toolbox for Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity)

# CHOICE POINTS TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY
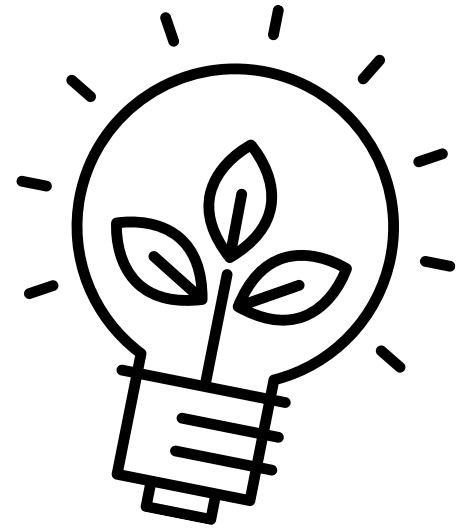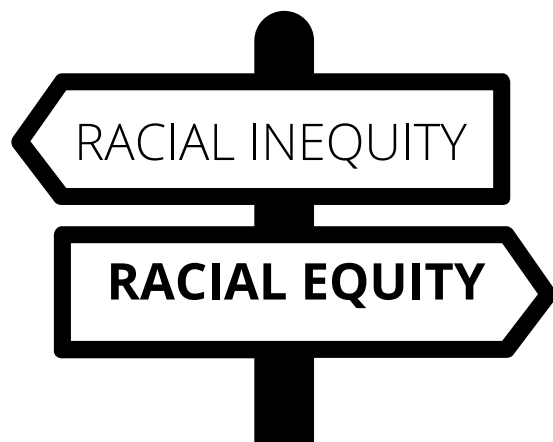
**CHOICE POINT**

**Same old choices and actions**

**Choosing equitable options and actions**

Same outcomes: Inequity, exclusion, racism

New Outcomes: Equity, Inclusion, Prevention of Racism

RACIAL INEQUITY

**RACIAL EQUITY**

# CHOICE POINTS EXAMPLE

| INDIVIDUAL | INSTITUTIONAL |
|---|---|
| **CONSUMER DECISIONS**<br>where to shop, what to buy, or boycott? | **PLANNING**<br>what to change and prioritize in programs/workplans? |
| **VOLUNTEER WORK**<br>what causes to get involved in? | **BUDGETING**<br>what items to prioritize, add or cut? |
| **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS**<br>what organizations to support? | **PERSONNEL**<br>who to hire, retain, promote, or develop as leaders? |
| **SOCIALIZING**<br>who to spend time with? | **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**<br>what to propose or modify? |
| **VOTING**<br>which candidates or causes to support? | **PRACTICES**<br>routines/habits to continue, change, or cut? |

*Choice Points are key decision-making opportunities to consciously consider racial equity and influence outcomes.*

*Cumulative impacts of many small choices can be as significant as the impacts of big decisions*

# FIVE KEY CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING AND SHORTLISTING RACIAL EQUITY CHOICE POINTS

AS YOU REFLECT UPON AND IDENTIFY YOUR CHOICE POINTS, HERE ARE FIVE KEY CRITERIA TO KEEP IN MIND. IT IS BEST TO WORK WITH YOUR  TEAM OR DEPARTMENT WHEN SELECTING CHOICE POINTS, USING THESE CRITERIA, SO YOU CAN COLLECTIVELY AND COLLABORATIVELY IDENTIFY  AREAS FOR INTERVENTION.

## IS YOUR CHOICE POINT:

**Race-explicit?**
**Are there areas where race is currently not being addressed head-on?**
Can race, racism, and racial impacts be talked about explicitly? Strategies for racial diversity and inclusion are not the same as strategies for racial equity. It's important to choose actions that are explicitly and specifically about institutional racism.

**More than just diversifying?**
Is your choice point moving beyond diversity to equity, with real consideration for how decision-making and power dynamics impact BIPOC? Is it an opportunity to move beyond outreach, access, and inclusion strategies — to meaningful equity strategies?

**Right-Sized?**
**Is it right sized for your organization in terms of your capacity, resources, readiness, internal will, and momentum.** Will it stretch your "equity muscles" meaningfully or will it cause painful overreach? Is it a one time intervention or is repeatable?

**Enlisting more allies, peers, and partners in your organization and network?**
Will your choice point generate options for engaging more allies within your organization and network, in order to build their investment, energy, and readiness for shared racial equity work

**An "Add-in" and Shared Across the Organization?  Is it an "add in", rather than an "add-on" so that racial equity work is integrated and embedded into existing work and projects, rather than becoming siloed in one department or within one team or person?** Is the labor and the work for engaging racial equity in this choice point shared equitably amongst the team with specific efforts made to not overtax, burden, or exhaust BIPOC?

# CHOICE POINTS WORKSHEET

1. Identify a Choice Point: What is one of your points of opportunity to make or influence a decision that may affect equitable outcomes?

2. Assess Impacts: What are the impacts of current decisions and actions that may be unintentionally reinforcing bias, barriers or inequities?

3. Generate Options: What are some alternative action options that could produce different outcomes?

4. Decide Action: Which option will generate the most leverage, momentum or gain towards advancing equity and inclusion?

5. Change Habits: What reminders or "equity primes" can be structured into you routine practices and protocols to make equity an ongoing priority and habit? What relationships, supports, incentives or accountability measures could help?

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Anti-Blackness/Anti-Black Racism:** bias and discrimination directed at people of African descent, rooted in the history of enslavement and colonization. Anti-Blackness goes hand-in-hand with white supremacy and is a central dynamic of racial oppression in the U.S. It is "the inability to recognize Black humanity," according to Dr. kihana miraya ross.

**Anti-racism**: Opposition to racism in belief and action. Anti-racism is necessary, but not sufficient to get to racial justice. Anti-racism is generally reactive, while racial justice is proactive—both are necessary and distinct (like having an offense and defense).

**BIPOC / "Black, Indigenous, and People of Color:"** is a cross-racial unifying term that also gives prominent attention to Blackness and Indigeneity, recognizing that the U.S. is founded on genocide and slavery. This term helps "to build authentic and lasting solidarity among Black, Indigenous and People of Color in order to undo Native Invisibility, anti-Blackness, dismantle white supremacy and advance racial justice" according to the BIPOC Project, and it recognizes "the unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African American) people have to, which shapes the experiences of, and relationship to, white supremacy for all people of color within the U.S. context."

**Colorism:** a type of racism that privileges lighter skin over darker skin, which can exist across and within different racial groups.

**Decolonization** is ending colonization, dismantling the colonial government, liberating the colonized, repatriating the lands, and reestablishing sovereignty to indigenous tribes and peoples. This can also be used to describe the process of shifting from colonizer or settler mentality. **(**This term should not be used as a metaphor for addressing oppression, injustice or liberation--it should always be explicitly linked to Indigenous sovereignty, the theft of Indigenous lands, and the genocide against First Nation's people, especially when non-Native people use the term).

**Diversity:** variety or representation of racial identities or characteristics (e.g. African Americans, Native Americans, Latinx. Diversity is a quantitative measure of representation.

**Equality:** sameness; everyone gets the same thing. Equality focuses on everyone getting the same opportunity, but often ignores the realities of historical exclusion and power differentials among whites and other radicalized groups.

**Equity:** Equity ensures that outcomes in the conditions of well-being are improved for marginalized groups, lifting up outcomes for all. Equity is a measure of justice.

**Equity Primes** are prompts or reminders that can help you consciously consider racial equity and Black, Indegenous and People of Color when making decisions. They can take the form of a checklist, a set of key questions, tools, or images. Equity primes are short-term mechanisms to shift and focus your attention. Once your attention is shifted, then you can empoy racial equity tools, protocols, practices, and policies that can be used to routinely and rigorously engage appropriate stakeholders, assess racial impacts, and generate equitable strategies to have more lasting impacts.

**Implicit Racial Bias / Unconscious Bias** – attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, decisions and actions in an unconscious manner.

**Inclusion**: Inclusion is the measure of the quality of representation, such as full access, authentic representation, empowered participation, true belonging and power-sharing. Inclusion is a qualitative measure of representation and participation.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Institution**: Institutions are a type of organization, and tend to be more durable, bureaucratic and hierarchical. Institutions are established official organizations having a specific role and purpose in society, such as a local government, bank, media corporation, museum, university, foundation, or hospital. Institutions are long-lasting, which means that they do not end when one person is gone. An institution has rules and the authority to enforce rules of human behavior.

**Institutional Racial Bias** – bias by institutions—such as patterns, practices, policies, or cultural norms that advantage or disadvantage people of color.

**Institutional Racism** occurs *within institutions*. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not. Example: A school district that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers.

**Internalized Racism** lies *within individuals*. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies. For White people, this can be internalized privilege, entitlement, and superiority; for people of color, this can be internalized oppression. Examples: prejudice, xenophobia, conscious and unconscious bias about race, influenced by the white supremacy.

**Interpersonal Racism** occurs between individuals. Bias, bigotry and discrimination based on race. Once we bring our private beliefs about race into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of prejudice and hate, microaggressions, bias and bigotry between individuals.

I**ntersectionality**: A framework for understanding the intersecting and compounding systems of oppression experienced by BIPOC people. The term was coined in 1989 by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, but Black women and femmes throughout history paved the way for this concept. (For example, Sojourner Truth's "But ain't I a woman" speech delivered in 1851 called into collective consciousness the bitter and compounded experience of gender and racial oppression.)

**Liberation:** emancipation, self-determination, and free expression--free from oppression, exploitation, imprisonment, and slavery--where all people thrive in healthy communities.

**Multiracial Solidarity:** this described racial solidarity across or between racial groups, and can include solidarity between different communities of color as well as with anti-racist white people.

**Normalizing:** building shared understanding though ongoing conversations about race, with common definitions and key concepts that help to center racial equity and people of color, through and intersectional and inclusive framework.

**Operationalizing**: using shared tools and strategies to systematize racial equity in culture, policies and practices.

**Organizational Change:** The movement of an organization from one state to another, such as shifting power, changing policies and practices, and transforming values and culture. (There are different organizational change models, centered on either process and content). Race Forward's model of organizational change includes four key components: 1) Establishing a vision for racial equity; 2) Normalizing conversations about race so there's a shared racial equity analysis, including an understanding of the history of race and key terminology, such as racial equity and inequity, racial justice, structural, institutional, interpersonal and internalized racism, and implicit and explicit bias; 3) Operationalizing new behaviors and policies via specific interventions, such as use of a Racial Equity Tool and development of a Racial Equity Action Plan; and, 4) Organizing to achieve racial equity, including across the breadth (all functions) and depth (up and down hierarchy) of an organization. Together this changes the norms, practices, culture and habits of thoughts within an organization and the outcomes produced by the organization.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Race** is the tool and taxonomy of white supremacy. It is an invented and imposed construct based on a false hierarchy of human value. Race is not an inherent human characteristic and racial categories have no scientific basis, yet race has real social meaning and real-life consequences. White people created and perpetuated racial hierarchies and categories to amass power, wealth, and social status at the expense of those they define not to be white.

"**Race And…" (Race+) Framework**: Addresses race explicitly, not exclusively. (e.g. race and gender, race and immigrant status, etc.) Or, in other words, we address race prominently and intersectionally. Race can be a complimentary, rather than competing, frame e.g. environmental justice and racial justice, reproductive justice and racial justice, etc.)

**Race-Silent Framing**: When race is not explicitly addressed, racism is often perpetuated.
It is problematic when a "diversity-equity-and-inclusion" (DEI) framework is used without
explicit, specific, and sufficient attention to race. Race is easily avoided or simply considered another "identity" characteristic along with other differences (rather than a pervasive system of power that often defines and predicts outcomes).

**Racial equity** is a process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.

**Racial Justice** is a vision and transformation of society to eliminate racial hierarchies and advance collective liberation, where Black, Indigenous and People of Color, in particular, have the dignity, resources, power, and self-determination to fully thrive.

**Racism** is a system of power based on white supremacy that is deeply rooted historically, structurally, institutionally, and culturally. Racism encompasses both the system and symptoms of inequitable power that benefit white people and harm people of color.

**Root Cause Analysis / Structural Racism Analysis**: an in-depth analysis of a problem, its history and policy and practices to reveal upstream factors, so that strategies and solutions can address the originating causes.

**Sector:** A distinct part of an economy, e.g., public sector, private sector, non-profit sector, or a sphere of activity such as education or health, which includes an organized set of institutions and organizations.

**Settler Colonialism:** The removal and erasure of Indigenous peoples by the taking of ancestral land for use by settlers in perpetuity.

**Structural Racism** refers to racial inequities across institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. Structural racism highlights how racism operates as a system of power with multiple interconnected, reinforcing, and self-perpetuating components which result in racial inequities across all indicators for success. Structural racism is the racial inequity that is deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture and our economic, political, and legal systems. Examples: The "racial wealth gap," where Whites have many times the wealth of people of color, resulting from the history and current reality of institutional racism in multiple systems.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Structure**: The network of formal and informal relationships between organizations and sectors. History, culture and ideology reinforce those relationships. Structures often transcend, but profoundly impact, specific institutions.

**System**: An organized collection of parts (or subsystems) that are highly integrated to accomplish an overall goal. Our systems currently produce racially inequitable outcomes because they have been designed to do so. To achieve racially equitable outcomes, we must address institutional and structural racism.

**Systemic Racism** includes institutional and structural racism.

**Systems Analysis:** Analyzes problems holistically to identify root causes and contributing factors; and generates an array of possible solutions and strategic interventions aimed at fundamental and lasting change.

**Systems Change**: Addressing the root causes of problems, which are often intractable and embedded in networks of cause and effect. It is an intentional process designed to fundamentally alter the components and structures that cause the system to behave in a certain way.

**White Nationalism**: A subset of racist beliefs that calls for a separate territory or enhanced legal rights and protections for white people. It's a belief and movement that seeks to develop and maintain a white racial and national identity. They seek the survival of the white race and the maintenance of white economic, political, and cultural superiority. (White separatism is a term sometimes used as a synonym for white nationalism but differs in that it advocates a form of segregation in which races would live apart, but in the same general geographic area.)

**White Privilege**: societal and systematic advantages that benefit white people over people of color. Examples include the presumption of innocence rather than criminality by law enforcement, or preferential treatment in hiring and advancement decisions.

**White Supremacy** is the racist belief that whites are superior to those who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and it is a system of power, laws, institutions, and practices that uphold and enforce this racial hierarchy. White supremacy is the underlying ideology of systemic racism used to maintain white power and privilege and to justify political, economic and social suppression of people of color. Though the term is frequently associated with overt and extreme racists (e.g. the KKK and Aryan Nation), it refers to the widespread ideology and system of racism based on the false notion of white superiority.

**White Supremacy Culture**: norms, patterns, and practices of white power and superiority--such as weaponizing concepts of individualism and competition, meritocracy to create disparate outcomes an have the impact of exploiting, dividing, and marginalizing people of color. It can be manifested by proximity to cultural and institutional whiteness being valued, perpetuated, and enforced at the level of culture, policy and practice within institutions. White supremacy culture within institutions is manifested and maintained largely by, but not limited to, white people.