



**Center for
Nonprofits & Philanthropy**
THE BUSH SCHOOL • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Assessing & Building Racial Equity at Nonprofit Organizations

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The Center for Nonprofits and Philanthropy



Mission

The Center for Nonprofits and Philanthropy (CNP) **supports** a vibrant nonprofit and philanthropic sector in Texas and beyond, through high quality **research**, professional **outreach** and engaged **learning**.



Core Values

Nonprofits
Oppportunity for All
Board Governance
Leadership
Engagement



Today's Agenda



- Equity Definitions
- NPO Leader Demographics
- Research Findings
- Racial Equity Assessment
- Building Racial Equity
- Change Concepts
- Wrap Up
- Question and Answers



Equity at Nonprofits



Definitions

- An awareness of how systemic inequities have affected our society and those an organization serves enables them to avoid blind spots which can lead to flawed strategies, and creates powerful opportunities to deepen an organization's impact, relevance, and mission
- Giving everyone what they need to thrive, based on an understanding that different people start in different places due to historical and current injustices
 - “Equity” is about equal outcomes



Racial Equity at Nonprofits



Definitions

- Eliminating race-based disparities, so that race cannot predict outcomes
 - Has the potential to improve outcomes for all
 - Institutional Racism – policies, procedures, and practices that work better for white people than for people of color
 - Structural Racism – combines and compounds institutional racism into a system of power that negatively impacts employees of color at nonprofit organizations

NPO Staff and Board Leaders who Identify as White

	2017	2021
Executive Directors/CEOs	90%	87%
Board Chairs	90%	83%
Board Members	84%	78%

Academic Literature



Nonprofit Management and Leadership

- Though park-supporting nonprofits generate better park access for all racial–ethnic groups, more benefits accrue to whites than to other racial–ethnic groups (Cheng, Yang & Deng, 2021)
 - design better policies and institutional structures to ensure equitable public service provisions
- Greater board diversity is associated with targeted programming and advocacy to support racially diverse communities, and expanded service delivery (Mumford, 2022)
 - Study suggested diverse nonprofits are “doing more with less” in response to the pandemic...found that boards with greater Black representation was associated with nonprofits with fewer reserves
- Board member diversity and expertise are associated with better-performing organizations; promotes creativity and innovation (Brown, 2002)

Organizational Assessment



- **Staff Competencies**

- Staff are trained in and are knowledgeable at the 101 level about the range of barriers to equal opportunity and the depth of embedded racial inequities-how they are produced and how they can be reduced
- Staff have a deep level of understanding about barriers to opportunity and embedded inequities in their special area of focus-including critical data and information about how inequities are produced and how they can be reduced
- Staff are comfortable and competent about discussing issues of barriers to opportunity and embedded racial inequities with relevant individuals and groups
- Staff exhibit cultural competence in interactions with diverse groups

Organizational Assessment



- **Staff Competencies cont**

- Staff disaggregate data by race in all analyses
- A racial equity analysis is applied to policy issues
- A racial equity analysis is applied to practice issues
- Written materials reflect a knowledge and understanding of barriers to opportunity and embedded racial inequities
- Staff can articulate the costs of failing to address barriers to opportunity and embedded racial inequities



Organizational Assessment



- **Internal Operations**

- Removing barriers to opportunity and disparity reduction are explicit goals of the work and are articulated in a mission/vision statement
- The unit has an internal team that guides the ongoing work of removing barriers to opportunity and reducing racial disparity
- The organization's goals of reducing barriers to opportunity and racial disparities are reflected in resource allocations
- Investments promote capacity-building and asset-building for people and communities of color
- Results of investments show opportunity for all and a reduction in racial disparity

Organizational Assessment



- **Internal Operations cont**

- The organization has a deliberate plan to develop and promote the leadership of staff of color
- The organization has regular trainings and discussions at the staff and/or board levels about removing barriers to opportunity and reducing racial disparities, both internally and externally
- The organization regularly assesses workforce composition by race/ethnicity and develops/implements strategies for increasing diversity at all levels
- The environment of the organization (food, art, holiday activities, etcetera) is multicultural
- The organization has a mechanism in place to address complaints about barriers to opportunity and racial inequities in the workplace

Scoring



- **Staff Competencies...0=None / 1= Some / 2=Almost All / 3=All**
- **Internal Operations...0=NO / 1=Moving in that Direction / 2=Yes**
 - Incorporate racial equity into mission and evaluate performance with it as an emphasis; ≤20
 - Identify areas of opportunity to build staff competencies and identify policies and procedures which could be improved; 20 – 29
 - Fine-tune and continue to build up staff and organizational capacity; 30 – 39
 - Go deeper in promoting opportunity for all, remember that reducing disparities overall is tied to other's performance; 40 – 49

Other Racial Equity Assessment Questions



- Does the ED/CEO or Board of Directors address racial inequities within their formal organization updates to staff, or within the agenda for board meetings?
- Does organization have a committee or informal task force who is responsible for addressing racial equity?
- Does organization provide any type of formal training (sensitivity, well-being, cultural, etcetera) for front-line staff who directly interact in communities of color?
- Are racial equity or diversity/equity/inclusion goals included within organization's strategic plan?
- Do definitive actions and consequences exist for when people of color experience discrimination; direct, indirect, inadvertent, or intentional

Building Racial Equity



- **Elements of Change**

- Shared Values – Visualizing
- Shared Understanding – Normalizing
- Shared Relationships – Organizing
- Shared Tools – Operationalizing



Building Racial Equity



- **Shared Values – Visualizing**

- Ultimately, each agency, department, unit, and team should be able to articulate what racial equity would look like in their sphere of work

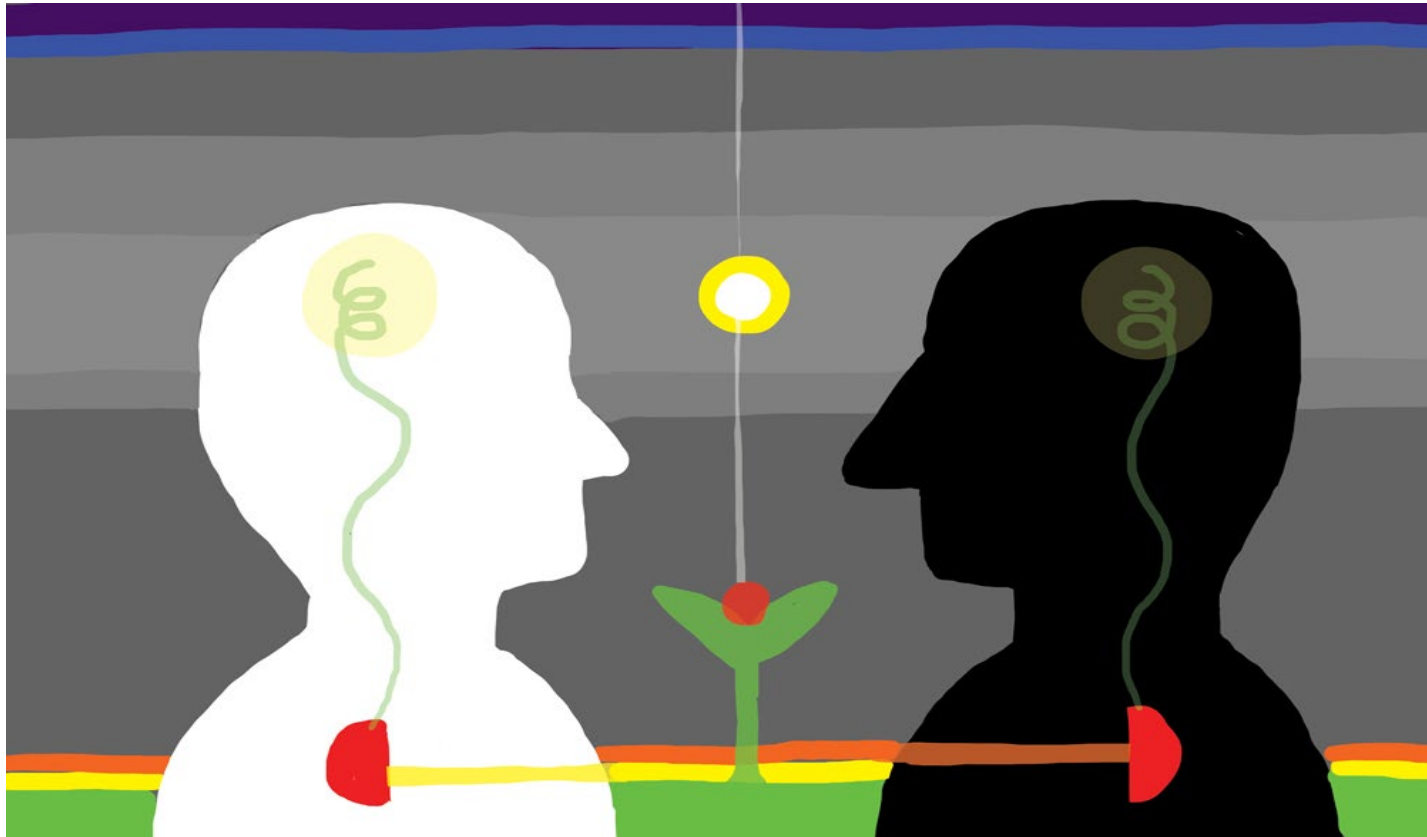


Building Racial Equity



- **Shared Understanding – Normalizing**

- Turning a racial equity vision into reality requires understanding the underlying drivers of inequities, along with the systems that maintain these inequities



Building Racial Equity



- **Shared Relationships - Organizing**

- Organizing seeks to disrupt the status quo, such as rules, cultures, and silos of work, and to build the power for putting forth new rules, values, and practices



Building Racial Equity



- **Shared Tools – Operationalizing**

- Operationalizing a racial equity agenda can begin with small-scale models and pilots, provided they are set up to be scalable, sustainable, and replicable...with the systematic use of racial equity tools, a team can begin to build out a racial equity practice, foster a culture of learning, and integrate equity into broader strategic plans



Regarding Change - Kotter's 8 Step Process



Regarding Change - Transactional Leadership



- Leaders who exchange things of value with employees to advance their own and their employees' agenda
 - Transactional approaches are limited in scope and do not alter the status quo but can produce short-term benefits for communities of color; scaffolding for building towards substantive change
 - A supervisor negotiates with an employee that if he/she attends a DEI training, it will be taken into consideration for a promotion



In Closing



Remember what's at stake

- Our own progress as leaders
- Nonprofit sector not being able to fully realize its potential
- Humankind and more just societies



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Education Opportunities in Nonprofit Management



Upcoming Events

Introduction to Nonprofit Performance Measurement Engaging Your Board and Others in Fundraising

Online - April 6-26, 2022 (self-paced)

Strategic Planning That Drives Sustainability and Impact

Via Zoom – April 21, 2022; 12 noon to 1p

Leadership in Public Service

Annenberg Presidential Conference Center, May 24-25, 2022

Continuing Education & Professional Development

Certificate Programs (online)

- Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership
- Certificate in Social Justice Leadership
- Certificate in Fundraising Leadership

Leadership Programs (In-person)

- Leadership in Public Service (2-day)
- Leadership in Board Service (1/2 day)

Graduate Programs

Master of Public Service & Administration
Executive Master of Public Service & Administration
Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management



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