

Racial Equity Checklist

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This checklist is designed for regular use as a check in during the planning and implementation of an initiative, program or event. It can also be useful as a regular check-in for team meetings and other operational touch points within an organization. Feel free to modify and/or add questions to support the needs of your work.

Equity Check Questions	Details	Team Notes
1. Who or what is being centered in this process or decision?	Identify the needs, concerns, contributions of BIPOC stakeholders and how a decision is honoring those equitably. Are we considering all needs or are we centering whiteness, Western perspectives, or similar? An equity focus requires that we decenter whiteness and make the efforts to center BIPOC and other perspectives.	
2. Are we defaulting to what we've typically done?	It's common when timelines are tight and/or when we are stressed to default to doing things they way they've been done in past. An equity focus requires different strategies, formats, and approaches to ensure we are making decisions intentionally and not simply because it's what's we know and are comfortable with.	
3. Are we defaulting to who we know?	Ensure we are not primarily inviting those who are in our immediate networks to participate. Expand beyond the typical circle, including for input and decision-making processes. An equity focus requires that we acknowledge that much expertise exists outside of what's familiar, may "show up" differently, and will take effort to find and engage.	
4. How is our language aligned with an equity focus?	Examine our language to ensure we are not inadvertently using coded or deficit model thinking, jargon, exclusive frameworks/reference points, or centering academic ways of knowing. An equity focus requires that we describe individuals, communities, organizations, and areas of work in respectful, affirming, and culturally appropriate ways.	
5. How are we ensuring we are not overburdening/asking BIPOC participants (in a program, event or similar) to do all the heavy lifting?	BIPOC individuals often carry the load of discussing and facilitating racial equity efforts in our initiatives. We need to attend to what we are asking of individuals outside our team and how we are supporting their participation and distributing this "work." An equity focus requires that we consistently ask ourselves and each other: Who benefits? Who is burdened? What effort is needed to reduce potential harm? And then we must respond and adjust accordingly.	
6. How are we ensuring that we are not overburdening BIPOC team members on equity-focused tasks and efforts?	BIPOC individuals often bear an imbalanced share of the intellectual and emotional labor in the thinking, conversations and action steps of racial equity work. How do we establish practices that prevent this common occurrence? An equity focus requires that we distribute responsibilities equitably across the team. The burden to notice and/or engage with this should fall on White team members.	
7. Does a particular program or initiative explicitly address or relate to a topic or dimension of equity?	There is a tendency to overlay "DEAI"/equity sessions into a program as an add-on. In convenings or conferences, for example, there is often a "DEAI track." This sends the message that equity is optional and not the "real" work. An equity focus requires that we center and weave questions, issues, dimensions of equity into all areas of the initiative, event or program.	



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