



Terms and Definitions Relevant to the Racial Equity Conversation

- **Accountable-** Responsive to the needs and concerns of those most impacted by your Organization's scope of work, particularly to communities of color and those historically underrepresented in the civic process.
- **Class-** A group of people with similar levels of wealth, influence, and status.
- **Classism-** Differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It's the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class.
- **Contracting Equity-** Efforts to achieve equitable racial outcomes in the way an organization spends resources, including workforce attraction/retention, goods and services, consultants and contracting.
- **Cultural Competence-** The integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural setting to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes.
- **Culture-** A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival
- **Discrimination-** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.
- **Disparate Impact-** Disparate impact occurs when policies, practices, rules or other systems that appear to be neutral result in a disproportionate impact on a protected group.
- **Diversity-** the condition of having or being composed of differing elements: variety; especially : the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization
- **Emerging Majority-** Comprises of non-White ethnic groups who are expected to make up the majority of the US population by 2042. Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other non-Whites are all included in this description.
- **Equal Opportunity-** Principle of non-discrimination which emphasizes that opportunities in education, employment, advancement, benefits and resource distribution, and other areas should be freely available to all citizens irrespective of their age, race, sex, religion, political association, ethnic origin, or any other group characteristic unrelated to ability, performance, and qualification.
- **Equality-** Access or provision of equal resources and opportunities, where individuals are protected from being discriminated against.
- **Equity-** A state in which all people in a given society share equal rights and opportunities.

- **Ethnic Group**- A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.
- **Ethnic Minority**- Comprises of non-White ethnic groups who historically made up a smaller percentage of the US population than Whites. Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other non-Whites are all included in this description.
- **Inclusion/Inclusiveness**- Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.
- **Inclusive Outreach and Engagement**- Processes inclusive of people of diverse races, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations and socio-economic status. Access to information, resources and civic processes so community members can effectively engage in the design and delivery of public services.
- **Individual Racism**- Pre-judgement, bias, stereotypes about an individual or group based on race. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what he or she is doing.
- **Institutional Racism**- Organizational programs, policies or procedures that create different outcomes for different racial groups, sometimes unintentionally or inadvertently.
- **Intersectionality**- The idea that various biological, social, and cultural categories-- including gender, race, class, and ethnicity-- interact and contribute towards systematic social inequality.
- **Person of Color**- Someone who belongs to a racial and ethnic minority group
- **Race**- A group of people of common ancestry, distinguished from others by physical characteristics, such as hair type, color of eyes and skin, stature, etc
- **Racial Equity**- The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares.
- **Racial Inequity**- When a person's race can predict their social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes.
- **Racism**- The belief that all members of each race possess characteristics or abilities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races.
- **Socioeconomic Status (SES)**- Socioeconomic Status (SES) is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. It is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group.
- **Structural Racism**- The interplay of policies, practices and programs of multiple institutions which leads to adverse outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities that occurs within the context of racialized historical and cultural conditions.
- **Workforce Equity**- Ensure the organization's workforce diversity reflects the diversity of the community it serves.