The Racial Equity Change Agent's Toolkit

Using Organizational Assessments to Advance Racial Equity

Alliance for Nonprofit Management 2018 Capacity Builders Conference
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Background
& Making the Case

Stephanie Leiderman

Why assess racial equity within organizations?

- Justice - the right thing to do

- Increasing evidence that equitable organizations are more effective

The **Justice** Case for Assessing Equity

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

Talking about diversity in terms of perspectives helps people intuitively understand how advancing diversity and inclusion can lead to better problem-solving.

+

GREATER EFFECTIVENESS

Linking diversity, equity, and inclusion to more effectively advancing their unique mission is critical to building support and inspiring action.

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MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CONSTITUENCIES

Creating "opportunities" for our constituencies describes equity in a way that is readily understood and supported.

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BETTER ADVANCE THE COMMON GOOD

The "common good" is a universal value that can help all foundations connect to this cause.

Source: "Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Message Manual for the Field," D5 Coalition (2013)

The **Evidence** Case for Assessing Equity

For instance, in equitable organizations:

- Staff and leaders seek broader input *
- Better perceptions of the organization from staff and stakeholders *
- Teams are more likely to innovate and engage in creative problem-solving +
- Better results in recruiting and retaining qualified staff -

*Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Foundation Working Group (2017) +
Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth." Center for Talent Innovation (2014)   -
The Voice of Nonprofit Talent, CommonGood Careers and the Level Playing Field Institute

Organizational Assessments & Racial Equity

- We measure what we value; we value what we measure

- Filling in gaps for the field

- Organizational change accountability

"Embedding organizational accountability [through assessment] is seen as essential to the implementation and ongoing viability of diversity practices...Given the prevalence of racism within workplaces as well as its considerable social, economic and health impacts...we propose that current approaches to organizational assessment require a stronger focus on assessing and addressing racism. An anti-racism perspective recognizes that in order to ensure that workplace environments are fair, equitable and inclusive for all, must include a focus on racism."

Trenerry, Brigid. (2012). Organizational Assessment: An Overlooked Approach To Managing Diversity And Addressing Racism In The Workplace. Journal of Diversity Management (JDM). 7. 10.19030/jdm.v7i1.6932.

White Culture is the water we all swim in

The Colorblind Fallacy
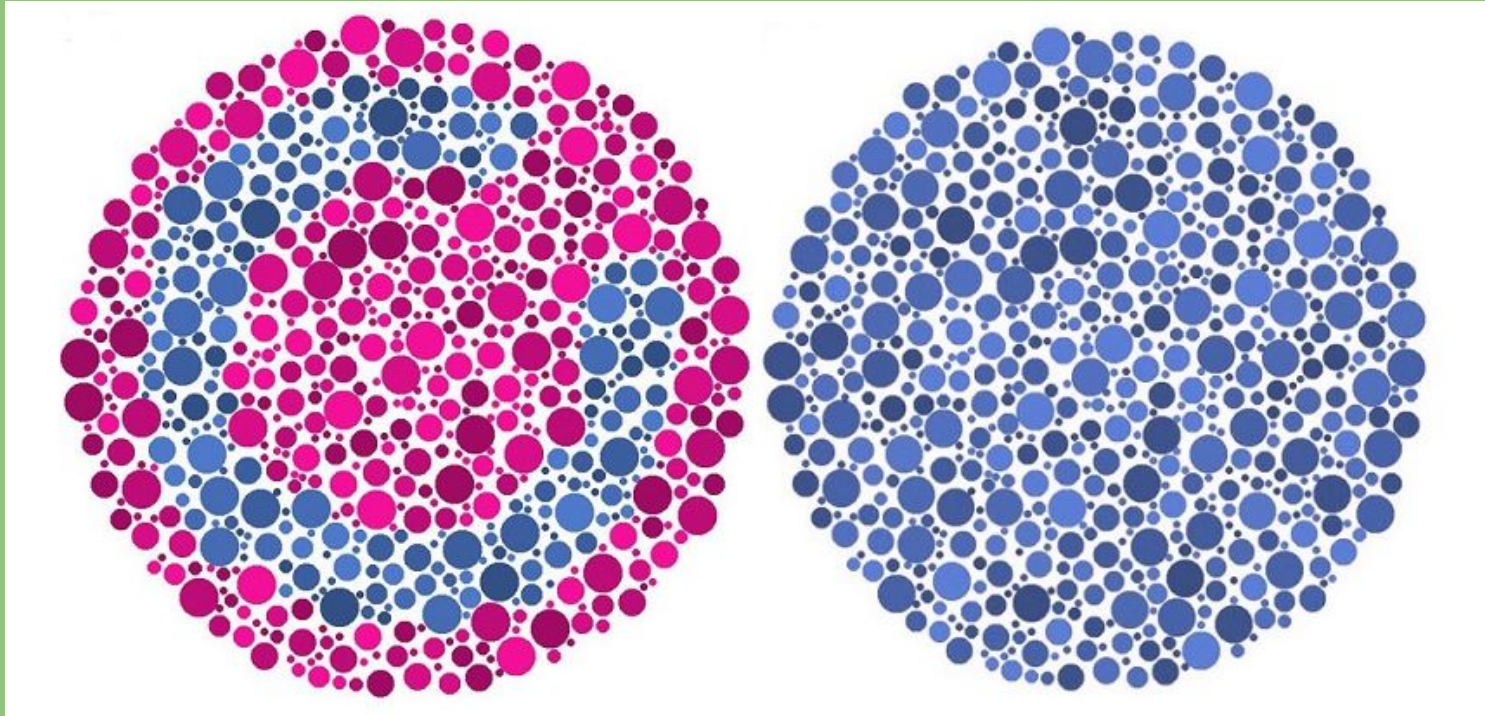
See: "Colorblind Ideology Is a Form of Racism" Monnica T Williams Ph.D., *Psychology Today* (2013)

General & mainstream assessments in the field tend to evaluate organizational equity via a few key data points:

- Race of respondents and related patterns of responses
- Organizational culture, power-sharing and voice
- Diversity and representation
- *Few tools appear to explicitly name race or racism within their questions*

Voices of historically excluded groups within the communities with which the organization works are not reflected in program decision-making.	Voices of historically excluded groups are occasionally reflected in program decision-making.	Voices of historically excluded groups are often reflected in program decision-making.	Voices of historically excluded groups within the communities with which the organization works are proactively sought and have clear influence in programming.
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Source: "Inclusion of Historically Excluded Voices section of "Ford Foundation's Organizational Mapping Tool (2016)

What do more explicit approaches look like?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	0	1	2	3	4
Talking about racism is encouraged in the organization.					
Talking about white privilege is encouraged in the organization.					
There is support for people who share their truth about racialized incidents at the organization.					
If someone raises issues about racism, the person can be marginalized.					
If someone raises issues about white privilege, the person can be marginalized.					
Giving feedback about a comment made or attitude about race/racism is encouraged.					
Talking through conflict/different perspectives about racism is encouraged					
Discussing whether or how a decision may be racialized is encouraged.					
Discussing what might be the impact of a decision in the context of inequities is encouraged.					
Discussing how white privilege and culture may be operating within in the organization is encouraged.					

Transforming Organizational Culture Tool, Maggie Potapchuk (2016)

What do more explicit approaches look like?

✓ INTERNAL QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

Here are key questions to answer through internal data gathering:

1. **To what extent does the foundation embody diversity and inclusion?**
   a. Are there internal diversity, equity and inclusion goals?
   b. Which board and staff have lived experience and reflect the communities they serve, including in leadership roles?
   c. Is there board and staff diversity related to income, wealth, race, ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ, disability status and age?
   d. Is the foundation staff culturally competent? Does it understand and seek to address implicit bias?
   e. Does our organization solicit confidential or anonymous feedback from staff and board about progress on equity and inclusion goals?
   f. Are staff and board held accountable to equity goals through internal assessment and evaluation?

13. When and how is conflict addressed?
   a. What are the responses when an individual or a group raises a difficult issue, especially one involving race, gender, inequities, power or privilege?
   b. Are there different patterns of response by staff or board?
   c. By race/ethnic or gender identity groups?

   e. What do other community stakeholders think of the foundation, and do our prioritized communities see us as a true partner? How effectively do we engage them? Are there differences by race, gender, disability status and other identities?
   f. What have we learned about the most effective ways to solicit and receive honest feedback, especially from marginalized constituents? How does the foundation measure the quality of that feedback, taking into account race, class and other power dynamics that exist between funder and grantee?

Resource Recommendation: RacialEquityTools.org

Racial Equity Tools is designed to support individuals and groups working to achieve racial equity. This site offers tools, research, tips, curricula and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working toward justice at every level – in systems, organizations, communities and the culture at large.

Some Additional Recommended Resources

- [Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#), Xiomara Padamasee and Becky Crowe
- [Anti-Racist Organizational Change: Resources & Tools for Nonprofits](#), CommunityWise and Anti-Racist Organizational Change Working Group
- [Seeing and Naming Racism in Nonprofit and Public Organizations](#), Laurin Mayeno
- [Approaches to Power Inequity within Organizations](#), AORTA
- [Race Matters: Organizational Self-Assessment](#), Annie E. Casey Foundation