

Racial Equity Assessment

How is your organization doing in its work to advance racial equity? Are you taking the steps that are usually needed to achieve the equitable results you and your constituencies want?

In each section, please check all items that describe your organization, and total the check marks as directed.

SECTION A

My organization:

- Understands and communicates that reducing racial inequities is mission-critical.
- Collects, breaks out, and analyzes data by race/ethnicity in programs and operations.
- Proposes strategies for its work that have been put through a racial impact analysis.
- Values diversity, and Inquires about the cultural competence of staff to work with diverse groups.
- Has mechanisms for management accountability around racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Has mechanisms for staff accountability around racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Supports the efforts of internal groups to work on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

In Section A, I checked ____ boxes.

SECTION B

My organization:

- Has some recognition that expanding opportunity and closing racial gaps are important to its work.
- Collects and breaks out data by race/ethnicity in programming but is not sure what to do with it.
- Has gone through trainings about race but is unclear about what to do next.
- Needs a better understanding of the distinctions between equity and diversity/inclusion.
- Has no mechanisms for management accountability around equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Has no mechanisms for staff accountability around equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Has an internal group working on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

In Section B, I checked ____ boxes.

SECTION C

My organization:

- Does not collect, break out, or analyze data by race/ethnicity in programming.
- Proposes strategies that are presumed to work for all children.
- Looks for staff, consultants, and vendors with racial/ethnic backgrounds similar to the community.
- Sees diversity as an important organizational consideration.
- Has accountability mechanisms around diversity and inclusion, but not around equity.
- Offers cultural competence training and opportunities for cross-cultural conversations and learning.
- Supports the efforts of internal groups to work on issues of diversity and inclusion.

In Section C, I checked ____ boxes.

SECTION D

My organization:

- Does not collect, break out, or analyze data by race/ethnicity in programs or operations.
- Proposes strategies that are presumed to work for everyone.
- Presumes that all staff can work with all groups.
- Does not see diversity as an important organizational consideration.
- Believes that lifting up issues of race/ethnicity will only create conflict.
- Has no accountability mechanisms around equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Discourages the formation of internal groups to focus on race/ethnicity.

In Section D, I checked ____ boxes.

Assessment Results

Underneath the section where you have the most checks, see how your organization may be characterized.

If the most checks are in **Section D**, your organization may be characterized as “**Color-blind**.” An intentional focus on race is likely to improve your organizational results. [Let us help](#) you get started.

If the most checks are in **Section C**, your organization may be characterized as “**Diversity-only**.” Congratulations on your work on diversity. [Let us help](#) you move next to a focus on equity.

If the most checks are in **Section B**, your organization may be characterized as “**Race-tentative**.” You’ve made a start, so [let us help](#) you accelerate your work.

If the most checks are in **Section A**, your organization may be characterized as “**Equity-focused**.” We hope you’ll share your lessons and best practices with others. Be sure that policies are in place that can sustain the work. [Let us help](#).

Color-blind describes the organization that tends to think what’s good for everybody will tend to be good for people of color. Thus, it does not lift up issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in any regular or routine way. Further, it may even take the position that paying attention to racial/ ethnic diversity or disparities diverts attention away from shared concerns. As one colleague said, “Focusing on race is applying a reverse discrimination. I get very sensitive about this.”

Diversity-only organizations are working on color but not on equity with a decided and deliberate emphasis on diversity (but diversity-only), recognizing that it offers value to the workplace and the work. This “place” is not attuned to equity and may not even be active around issues of inclusion. Organizations in this place may feel either that (a) doing the work of creating diversity will allow other goals to fall in place, or (b) doing the work of diversity is itself labor-intensive, not really allowing space to work on issues of race. As one organizational partner said, “We just launched a major diversity initiative. We don’t want to confuse people with talking about equity now.”

Race-tentative is the organization that doesn’t know what to do, and doesn’t want to get it wrong. These organizations find the data showing racial disparities troubling, know something needs to be done, and yet are not sure how to act systematically on that concern. They may take a step or two in the way of funding or outreach, often without a shared theory of change to guide these decisions. They may also recognize that their own staff and Board are not diverse but presume that slow turnover of staff and Board members dictates slow change generally. Such organizations can be characterized as “race-tentative.” A frequently heard comment is, “We just don’t know what to do, but we don’t want to get it wrong.”

Equity-focused organizations start from a raced informed place, and then move into other forms of inequity such as gender, sexual orientation, and a more nuance approach around ethnicities. This approach characterizes the most race-intentional organizations. This “place” recognizes that virtually all programmatic and operational functions must be race-informed in order to advance the overall organizational mission for everyone.

Adapted from *Advancing the Mission Toolkit*, Annie E. Casey Foundation