Advancing Racial Equity: Practical Steps for CAAs

Workshop

Presenter
Dr. Luisa Boyarski
Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership
Georgetown University
2018 Research: Advancing Racial Equity Within Nonprofit Organizations

195 individuals completed the Racial Equity Survey

75% were executive directors or senior leadership

79% were from the Washington, D.C. region
External Barriers

- Community Demographics
- Lack of Funding
- Difficulty in finding trainings/consultants
- Limited access to diverse networks or pipelines of talent

Internal Barriers

- Nonprofit's History
- Lack of board commitment
- Prioritization
- Lack of common language
- Change fatigue
We have begun having conversations.

- Board conducts a self-assessment on racial equity
- Racial equity is listed as a core value for the organization
- Board recruitment strategies begin to consider racial representation

We have participated in a training(s) and/or started to develop our capacity in other ways.

- Implicit bias training
- Racial equity training
- Adoption and implementation of a diversity and inclusion plan

We have adjusted some of our internal policies, practices and/or values to intentionally promote racial equity.

- Comprehensive board orientation that includes racial equity
- Board roles are explicitly defined to understand stake in advancing racial equity
- Explicit commitment to racial equity included in strategic plan

It is an integral part of our internal culture, value, practices, and policies, at all levels of organization.

- Board regularly conducts a self-assessment on racial equity
- Explicit commitment to racial equity as a core value

Other practices unrelated to a specific stage of engagement.

- Expert/trainer brought to facilitate internal conversations
- Anti-racist framework is applied in hiring and HR practices
- Formation of racial affinity groups
Promising Practices

**Racial Equity as a core value; include in strategic plan**

By acknowledging racial equity as a core value, organizations can create a reference point for prioritizing the implementation of policies and practices, through a racial equity lens, at all levels of the organization. Including goals and strategies in the strategic plan can result in the creation of a line item in the budget to fund racial equity work.

**Regular board-assessment**

Adopt a policy to require annual self-assessments that include racial equity metrics, and be explicit in the board role definitions to deepen their understanding of the organization’s mission and work as well as what their responsibilities are as a board member.
Promising Practices

Adapt fundraising requirements

In order to ensure racial equity and diversity, one board eliminated “any "give or get" requirement from the expectations regarding board financial engagement. People give as they are able, though 100 percent giving is expected.”

Create organization-specific working definitions

By creating organization-specific working definitions of terms such as racial equity, racial justice, white supremacy, white privilege, and marginalization, boards can be explicit about desired outcomes and create an open culture of social transformation through learning.
Consider generational representation in recruitment

Since younger generations are found by some organizations to be more comfortable in discussing racial equity, they could be helpful in easing tensions and advancing discussion. One board said that they always have a young person trained to be at board meetings and they learn about board practices and the org’s work. “We never make hiring decisions without young people being in interviews,” they mentioned.

Prioritize one-on-one or in-person networking

In recruiting, those most responsive to public postings tend to be people not of color. One board found that one-on-one and in-person network methods were more successful for diversity board recruitment.
Case Example: Hiring a New ED

There was consensus that working on racial equity went beyond attending a training or adopting a new policy. It required an ongoing, intentional commitment to the work.

They were dedicated to investing in the necessary tools and trainings so the new ED could improve his professional development and management skills. They were aware of the costs and believed them to be worth it in the long run.

The board successfully assessed and utilized the skills and expertise of current members to help with this transition. For example, they ensured that the search committee included two African Americans that helped in evaluating the candidates. Additionally, there were board members that had a lot of HR experience and could help with staff transitions, and a board member that could raise the money needed to support the new ED.
We have begun having conversations.

- Staff-led discussions of racial equity
- We have participated in a training(s) and/or started to develop our capacity in other ways.
  - Implicit and structural bias training
  - Staff-led reading groups on racial equity
  - Introduction of a diversity and inclusion plan
- We have adjusted some of our internal policies, practices and/or values to intentionally promote racial equity.
  - Comprehensive staff orientation that includes racial equity
  - Start implementation of diversity and inclusion plan
  - Formation of a racial equity working group
- It is an integral part of our internal culture, value, practices, and policies, at all levels of organization.
  - Diversity and inclusion plan is being implemented with intention
- Other practices unrelated to a specific stage of engagement.
  - Expert/trainer brought to facilitate internal conversations
  - Anti-racist framework is applied in hiring and HR practices
  - Formation of racial affinity groups
Create racial affinity groups or recommend groups in the community for staff to join

These safe spaces can be ways that people of color can share experiences without feeling tokenized or taking on the responsibility of “representing their race.” Racial affinity groups can contribute to the promotion of an organizational culture that acknowledges racial inequity without putting the onus on people of color staff to lead the work and hold everyone else accountable.

Invest in an ongoing education

Regularly share articles and curriculum that addresses issues of racial equity, and provide staff with opportunities to participate in professional development workshops.
Promising Practices

**Ensure equal professional development opportunities**

Collect and analyze data to determine if staff are provided with equal opportunities and encouragement to take part in on-the-job training, attend conferences, receive mentoring and participate in networking.

**Develop HR mechanisms to uphold racial equity**

Intentionally monitor the race and ethnicity of current and incoming staff (specifically those who access professional development opportunities or apply for promotions).

**Recruit, interview, and continue to support successful minority candidates.** When needed, expand recruitment networks for every level of staff, including interns and volunteers.

**Train HR staff in:** conflict resolution, affinity group facilitation, hiring policy reform, etc. Consider making these trainings available to all staff.
Case Example: Racial Equity Working Group

A group effort is needed to distribute the time-consuming work, emotional strain, and at times risk, that advancing racial equity work requires.

They advise developing a strategy for gaining leadership buy-in by finding allies at all levels. “You need everyone to see themselves as part of the same community, assess their strengths and opportunities for growth, learn from others engaged in this work and celebrate each other.”

It has helped to have a shared-leadership model because it aids in gaining staff buy-in as well as sharing the burden of the work. Leading the racial equity working group can be “emotionally and personally expensive.” In some cases, it meant actively challenging senior leadership.

Most importantly, get a line item in the budget. Also, have a clear scope of work so you can stay focused and maintain perspective.
3 Main “Sticking Points”

1. Clear Goals and Metrics of Success
2. Engagement Throughout the Organization
3. Avoiding Change Fatigue
Group Discussions

1. Break into groups of 6-10 people
   • We are just starting to have conversations
   • We have participated in trainings
   • We have started to implement new policies/procedures
   • It is an integral part of what we do

2. Facilitating the discussion
   • The facilitator will help keep the discussion moving and take notes of common themes discussed
Group Discussions

3. Introductions and Challenges Faced
   Each person shares:
   • Name, Organization, Role
   • What is one key challenge that you are facing in advancing race equity within your organization?

4. Facilitator Highlights Common Themes of Challenges Faced

5. Discussion of Solutions
   • Discuss within the group what people have done to address the challenges.
Action Planning

Please Fill Out Your Worksheets

• What are 2-3 actions you will take to advance racial equity work within your organization?

• Who will be responsible to lead each action?

• What will success look like for each action?

Share One Action Commitment
Additional Research on Racial Equity
Tools and Resources

**Building Movements Project** - Reports (Racial Leadership Gap; LGBTQ)

**Annie E. Casey Foundation** - Racial Equity Impact Assessment; Action Guide

**Racialequitytools.org**

**Policy Link** - Research, data, framing, messaging

**Race Forward** - Research, tools, trainings

**Dismantling Racism Works** - Workbook, definitions, history, and other resources
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Thanks in Advance for your Cooperation!