

Racial Equity Tool

Introduction: A Racial Equity Tool is used for making decisions with deliberate attention to racial justice, equity, and inclusion. It provides a guide and protocol for race- and equity-conscious decision-making that is thoughtful, transparent, participatory and systematic. It can be used for a variety of decisions, such as assessing existing or proposed policies, practices, plans, programs, budgets, etc.

Why use this tool? This tool can help us to align our words and actions with our values, priorities and aspirations, and to:

- Consciously, actively, and continually prioritize racial justice,
- Eliminate, reduce, and prevent harm, exclusion, inequities, and bias,
- Ensure that stakeholders, especially those most marginalized, are actively and authentically engaged in needed change efforts, and
- Build practice and organizational culture that advances racial justice, social justice, equity, and inclusion.

Who uses this tool? This tool is best used by a diverse team of people from different parts of the organization, that can also include external stakeholders and partners. For each specific use of the tool, the team will identify and engage the most relevant stakeholders, especially those most marginalized, under-represented and directly affected by the decision under consideration. When using equity tools, *who* is doing the assessment is as important as *what* you are assessing. An inclusive process will yield more inclusive results.

How do you use the tool? The tool involves a series of steps that can be followed sequentially. The process is also iterative so, with new information, you may need to jump back to a previous step to revise your findings. Each step provides questions for consideration by relevant stakeholders. Be sure to allow ample time to thoughtfully and inclusively address each step. It is not meant to be used and completed in one sitting. It often requires time to gather information and consult with various stakeholders over a series of meetings or engagements. The tool is designed to be widely applicable to many different kinds of decisions. Every question may not be relevant for every decision. Feel free to tailor add other helpful questions to inform your decision. For more significant or controversial decisions, you can address all of the steps and questions for a robust analysis. For less consequential decisions, you can select the most relevant questions and do a simpler and shorter analysis. While this tool foregrounds race as a central focus, please address other relevant or intersecting power dynamics.

Racial Equity Tool

Step	Questions to Consider	Findings / Notes
1. Clarify Goals	• What kind of decision is under consideration (e.g. policy, program, budget, working conditions)? • What results or changes are you seeking to advance racial/social justice?	
2: Engage Stakeholders	• Who is most directly impacted, especially those most marginalized under-represented (e.g. staff of color, lowest paid workers) • How can they be meaningfully engaged, and empowered in this process?	
3. Analyze Data	• What is the relevant history and current context? • What data do we have and what do we need? Is it disaggregated by race? • Who benefits and who is most burdened? How are different racial/ethnic groups affected differently? • What are the root causes of the problem? Are there intersecting dynamics?	
4. Generate Options	• What proposed solutions can address the root causes and change systems? • How will this proposal advance racial justice, equity, and inclusion?	
5. Assess Impacts	• What are the positive & negative impacts on different racial communities? • How will communities of color benefit from each option? • How can this help counteract dominant patterns of white supremacy? • What positive values, norms, and narratives can we affirm and project? • How does this align with our values, vision, mission and priorities?	
6. Decide Solution	• What are the pros and cons of each option? • Are there ways to revise the options to prevent adverse consequences? • Which option best advances equity?	
7: Develop Implementation Plan	• What strategies, staffing, and funding are needed to ensure success? • What is the implementation plan & timetable? Who will move it forward? • How will we document & measure progress? What are success indicators? • How can we ensure ample communication, participation & accountability?	
Step 8: Operationalizing Equitable Change	• How can we operationalize equity practices to sustain success? • How do we institute these changes so they become ongoing practices, protocols, habits – a part of our organizational culture?	

Worksheet for Comparing Racial Impacts of Different Proposed Solutions

1. Use this worksheet for Steps 5 and 6 of the Racial Equity Tool. List the different proposed solution options to assess in the top shaded row.
2. For each option, list potential positive impacts and negative impacts for different racial groups. In the bottom row, list other noteworthy factors or findings, such as intersecting dynamics (e.g. gender, class), geographic or generational differences, etc.

	Solution Option 1: _____	Solution Option 2: _____	Solution Option 3: _____
Potential Positive Racial Impacts			
Potential Negative Racial Impacts			
Other Notes & Considerations			

(Adapted from Race Forward, Revised 1/31/21)