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Advancing Racial Equity Within Nonprofit Organizations

2018 Research Results

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership at Georgetown University spent the 2017-2018 academic year researching how nonprofit organizations are advancing racial equity within their boards and staff. Through in-depth interviews, focus groups and a survey, more than 200 nonprofit and philanthropic leaders, primarily located in the Washington, D.C. region, contributed to this research project. We are pleased to share the results in this report and hope that the practical examples and lessons learned will aid nonprofits, and those organizations that support them, in strengthening and continuing their racial equity work.

There were two words that came up again and again in our interviews with nonprofit leaders—intentionality and language. 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. One survey respondent explained it as "A commitment to going beyond policies, words and convenings and to doing the work to actually achieve racial equity in terms of recruitment, hiring and retention." Developing a common language was considered a key first step to working on racial equity. Nonprofit leaders discussed the importance of not only defining key terms, but also creating safe spaces for staff to have uncomfortable conversations.

As expected, nonprofit leaders highlighted a variety of challenges that made it difficult for them to advance racial equity within their organizations. Some of these challenges were external—lack of funding, difficulty finding trainings or technical assistance, and limited access to diverse recruiting networks. Others were internal—historic organizational practices, lack of board commitment, and balancing internal racial equity work with programming commitments.

One of our key findings is that there is a pathway of engagement that most nonprofit organizations follow in their racial equity work. Survey respondents were able to place their organizations at one of the stages along the pathway of promoting racial equity:

- We have not done anything, yet.
- We have begun having conversations.
- We have participated in a training(s) and/or started to develop our capacity in other ways.
- We have adjusted some of our internal policies, practices and/or values to intentionally promote racial equity.
- It is an integral part of our internal culture, values, practices, and policies.

There are also specific activities associated with each stage along the pathway, providing practical next steps in racial equity advancement, no matter where nonprofits are in the journey.

This report highlights the findings from our survey and provides replicable models, recommended resources and practical advice from our interviews and focus groups. We conclude with some suggested next steps, for nonprofits as well as for funders and trainers. We hope the report provides inspiration and guidance for future work on racial equity in the Washington, D.C. region and beyond.

II. INTRODUCTION

The nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, particularly in the Washington, D.C. region, have recently begun to intentionally promote and invest in work to address racial inequality in our local communities. The Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership (The Center) began its investment in this work in 2015 when it co-sponsored a roundtable discussion at Georgetown on "Racial Equity and the Role of Local Governments." Next, Center Senior Fellow, Margaret O'Bryon and Graduate Fellow, Lucretia Witte, researched and wrote a white paper on *[Laying the Foundation: Building a Collective Approach to Addressing Poverty, Income Inequality, and Racism in the DC Metropolitan Region](#)*.

This academic year, the Center chose to focus both its research and teaching on racial equity, which was made possible through the endowed Waldemar A. Nielsen Chair in Philanthropy, currently held by Center Director, Dr. Kathy Kretman. Known for its trainings and thought leadership on nonprofit capacity building, the Center conducted an environmental scan of nonprofit organizations, primarily located in the Washington, D.C. region. This resulting report highlights the internal organizational challenges and opportunities for promoting racial equity from the perspective of nonprofit leaders.

The goal of this research is to provide practical next steps for nonprofits that want to begin, or are currently engaged in, work on racial equity. It also highlights some of the challenges that organizations face when doing this work and how to address them. Finally, we have included some general recommendations for the nonprofit and philanthropic fields on the support and resources still needed to ensure this work continues to advance.

Why Black Racial Equity?

For the purpose of the research, we are using the following definition of racial equity:

> *"The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares in society. Racial equity is more than the establishment of fair treatment, and fundamentally requires that past inequities be resolved so that the current conditions, and not just the treatment of people, cannot be predicted by race"[1]*

Our research project focuses on racial equity within the Washington, D.C. region's nonprofit sector. We are interested in the establishment of conditions in which Black/African Americans have equal consideration in how nonprofits attract, hire, develop, and retain them and who is consciously or unconsciously included in decision making. Given the history and current data that demonstrate ongoing racial inequities for Blacks within the sector, that is our primary focus.

As noted in *[The Case for Funding Black-Led Social Change](#)*, anti-Black racism is the root cause of all types of current racial inequity. Beginning with slavery and the differentiation of the "white race" in the 1600s, "Anti-black racism is manifested in the current social, economic and political marginalization of Black people in society."[2] We firmly believe, along with the authors

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[1] Taylor Batten, Susan and Nat Chioke Williams. "The Case for Funding Black-Led Social Change." Black Social Change Funders Network, 2017, page ii.

[2] Ibid, page 3.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Kijakazi, Brooks Atkins, et al. "The Color of Wealth in the Nation's Capital." Urban Institute, Duke University,

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of the paper that, "Embracing a shared commitment to dismantling anti-Black racism will strike at the heart of all forms of racism in this country."[3]

This focus is particularly relevant for the Washington, D.C. region. According to *The Color of Wealth in the Nation's Capital*, "White households in DC have a net worth 81 times greater than Black households. In 2013 and 2014, the typical White household in DC had a net worth of $284,000. Black American households, in contrast, had a net worth of $3,500."[4] The report highlights additional wealth gaps, which it attributes to "more than two centuries of deliberately constructed barriers to wealth building."[5] Recent demographic shifts and gentrification have led to the displacement of Black households, resulting in a decrease in the Black population, which now "stands at 48 percent, down from 70 percent in the 1970s."[6] *A Vision for an Equitable DC*, a report commissioned by the Meyer Foundation and Consumer Health Foundation, highlights other stark gaps in educational attainment, unemployment, health, home ownership, and childhood poverty. The report concludes that "Dismantling barriers to equity requires an understanding of the city's history of discrimination and systemic racism, and a firm commitment to pursuing racial equity from DC's policymakers, agencies, nonprofits, philanthropic institutions, and businesses."[7]

We hope this report will help advance the efforts of nonprofits promoting racial equity within their organizations, a small piece of the work that is necessary to address centuries of systematic racism.

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Kijakazi, Brooks Atkins, et al. "The Color of Wealth in the Nation's Capital." Urban Institute, Duke University, The New School, and the Insight Center for Community Economic Development, 2016, page vii.
[5] Ibid, page viii.
[6] Ibid, page ix.
[7] Hendey and Lei. "A Vision for an Equitable DC." Urban Institute, 2016. https://www.urban.org/features/vision-equitable-dc

III. STATE OF THE FIELD

Within the nonprofit sector, racism can be seen in the lack of people of color in the executive director/CEO role. *Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap* finds that the reasons for the leadership gap cannot be explained by differences in backgrounds, qualifications, aspirations, skills or preparation. Instead, the lack of people of color serving on nonprofit boards and working at executive recruiting firms is a structural barrier to greater leadership diversity. Specifically, the research found that "executive recruiters don't do enough to find a diverse pool of qualified candidates for top-level nonprofit positions, predominantly white boards often don't support the leadership potential of staff of color, and organizations often rule out candidates of color based on the perceived 'fit' with the organization."[8] Finally, "people of color often feel they have a second, unpaid job—internally and externally—to represent the interests of people of color, which is often an unrecognized part of their work."[9] Our research builds off of the findings in "Race to Lead," and digs deeper to understand how the barriers identified are experienced by nonprofit organizations and highlights promising approaches for addressing these barriers. We expand the research to consider how racial equity can be promoted within a nonprofit's board and staff.

Racial equity is a specific approach that falls within a broader framework focused on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). JustPartners, Inc. (JPI) with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation created a learning continuum for race-focused work that outlines the stages organizations often progress through as they adopt a racial equity lens for internal processes. Generally, for organizations starting at ground zero they tend to start as "color-blind," progress to "diversity-only," become "race-tentative," and through intentional and continuous transformation can adopt an "equity-focused" model. As JPI argues, "at the right end of the continuum is a *racial equity approach*, one which 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."[10] Our research corroborates JPIs findings, with some organizations working more broadly on diversity efforts while others are developing an explicit racial equity approach. One survey respondent stated, "Both internally and externally, we are more broadly focused on diversity and inclusion, rather than focus[ed] on racial equity."

Other research focuses specifically on racial equity. Equity in the Center recently released *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture* to discuss how to integrate a racial equity lens into all levels of an organization's culture. They coin the phrase "Race Equity Cycle" to describe a journey of change through stages from "awake," to "woke," to "work." Organizations move from the awake stage where people-focused workplace reforms are enacted, to culture transformation and inclusive practices in the woke stage, and can build up to the work stage where a systemic and integrative race equity lens examines all of the organization's internal and external work.[11] Additionally, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation released an update to its report, *The Business Case for Racial Equity: A Strategy for Growth*, which finds that "The United States

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[8] Thomas-Breitfeld and Frances Kunreuther. "Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap." Building Movement Project, 2017, page 16. http://racetolead.org/

[9] Ibid, page 14.

[10] "Advancing the Mission: Tools for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion," JustPartners, Inc., 2009, pages 5-6.

[11] Ibid, page 3.

economy could be $8 trillion larger by 2050 if the country eliminated racial disparities in health, education, incarceration and employment."[12]

Much of the current work on racial equity has been carried out within specific nonprofit and philanthropic fields. In 2016, a group of education funders supported and participated in a study of staff experience, workplace practices, and demographics across the education sector. *Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* finds that "our field – especially at senior levels – is still not reflective of the students we serve."[13] The report emphasizes that "While the data shows important differences in the practices of organizations with greater diversity, a singular focus on diversity without a commensurate focus on equity and inclusion will not maximize the potential benefits."[14] Inclusion is a key part of DEI as it focuses on "creating an environment of involvement, respect, and connection – where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed to create value."[15]

In 2015, Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA) published a statement of purpose that "made racial equity in arts philanthropy a primary focus of the organization."[16] They intentionally outlined a list of actions that GIA committed to including, "requir[ing] all Grantmakers in the Arts board and staff members to attend structural racism training" and "select[ing] staff and members for board service whose values include racial equity and social justice."[17] GIA also makes recommendations for ways grantmakers, individual practitioners and institutions can advance racial equity.

In the Washington, D.C. region, many philanthropists participated in a 2016 Learning Series: Putting Racism on the Table. This series, offered by the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers, explored key elements of racism and resulted in many of the participating foundations intentionally changing their giving priorities to focus on addressing racial inequality. For example, the Meyer Foundation now states on its website, "Informed by our vision to end systemic racism and all its consequences, Meyer's grantmaking is focused on eliminating racial disparities in housing, employment, education, and asset building."[18] Edward Weizenegger, a McCourt School of Public Policy graduate student, assessed the impact of the learning series in a report titled, *Role of Philanthropy in Advancing Racial Equity*.

Action to promote racial equity is taking place across the nonprofit and philanthropic sector but with uneven coverage and impact. This brief overview does not do justice to the many efforts, both national and local, that have emerged in the past few years. It also does not capture the work focusing on other areas of inequality or intersectionality. We hope that this is just the beginning of our research on racial equity and anticipate greater adoption of racial equity efforts across the sector.

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[12] Noricks. "Updated Study Outlines Potential Gains to U.S. Economy and a Pathway for Economic Growth." W.K. Kellogg Foundation, accessed April 25, 2018, https://www.wkkf.org/news-and-media/article/2018/04/updated-study-outlines-potential-gains-to-us-economy-and-a-pathway-for-economic-growth

[13] Padamsee and Crowe. "Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion." 2017, page 4.

[14] Ibid, page 4.

[15] Ibid, page 3.

[16] Grantmakers in the Arts. "Racial Equity in Arts Philanthropy: Statement of Purpose and Recommendations for Action." 2015, page 2. http://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/GIA-racial-equity-statement-of-purpose.pdf

[17] Ibid.

[18] "Grants," Meyer Foundation, accessed March 5, 2018, https://www.meyerfoundation.org/grants.

IV. METHODOLOGY

We collected data for this research project through three approaches: interviews, focus groups and a survey. Seventeen interviews were held with key stakeholders in the Washington, D.C. region who represent the nonprofit, foundation, executive recruiting, and research communities. We also held two focus groups, one had eight representatives from the philanthropic community and the other had eleven nonprofit leaders.

The findings from the focus groups informed the design of the survey, which was distributed to nonprofits in the D.C. region as well as to alumni of the Center's Nonprofit Management Executive Certificate Program across the country. The survey was administered electronically and distributed through the Center and through local D.C. region foundations. 195 responses were received, 79 percent of which came from the Washington D.C. area. Due to the snowball method of collecting responses, it is not possible to determine the percentage response rate. Survey participants were asked to limit their responses to one per organization, resulting in a diverse representation of nonprofit sizes and areas of focus. 75 percent of survey responses came from either the executive director or senior leadership, making it possible for them to provide input on board and staff racial equity efforts.

Since it was optional for nonprofits to complete the survey, we anticipate a response bias that favors nonprofits already engaged in racial equity work. This bias is also expected because the foundations that distributed the survey have grantmaking commitments to racial equity. While this limits the report's ability to generalize as to the overall state of the field, it provides more evidence of promising practices and challenges faced by nonprofits already engaged in racial equity work. We find these practical examples to be an important result of this research design.

Finally, answers to the survey questions were not required, given the sensitive nature of the topic and acknowledgement that respondents may not have the information requested. The number of respondents is noted for each of the questions discussed in the report findings. Additionally, individual quotations are also kept anonymous.

V. GENERAL FINDINGS

The following findings are primarily taken from the survey of nonprofit organizations, however comments from our interviews and focus groups are also included to provide additional examples and detail. Short case studies can be found in the callout boxes, which highlight the complexity as well as the potential success of racial equity efforts.

Survey Demographics

195 individuals completed our Racial Equity Survey. 75 percent were executive directors or senior leadership (see Chart 1 in attachments). The organizations represented in the survey work on a wide variety of issues, with a larger percentage utilizing approaches of education (48 percent) and advocacy (28 percent). Organizations were given the opportunity to choose more than one area of work, so it is not possible to provide a precise breakdown of field representation. Nevertheless, the broad representation across a variety of fields suggests that the survey is not biased by one, or a few, specific fields (see Chart 2 in attachments).

The survey represents a variety of organization sizes, with almost one third coming from organizations with budgets over $10 million (see Chart 3 in attachments). Still, more than forty percent of respondents work at organizations with budgets between $500,000 and $5 million. Despite this over-representation of larger nonprofits, we find no correlation between organization size and how advanced the nonprofit is in its racial equity work.

By conducting outreach through community foundations and local partner organizations, the survey is deliberately focused on the D.C. metropolitan region. 154 out of 195 respondents (79 percent) are based in the District of Columbia and neighboring Maryland and Virginia cities and counties. New York City comprised the second-highest proportion of respondents (4 percent). The remaining 34 respondents (17 percent) represent a geographically broad range of organizations across the United States, from Pennsylvania to California. Only three international organizations are represented in the survey.

Scale of Engagement

We developed a scale of engagement to determine where nonprofits are in the process of working on racial equity. Survey responses show that nonprofits are able to place themselves in one of the five categories, proving the validity of the categories. Only two respondents skipped the question. As might be predicted based on the voluntary nature of the survey, more people completed the survey that were further along in their racial equity work. Nearly 30 percent of survey respondents placed their nonprofit in the most advanced category, "It is an integral part of our internal culture, value, practices, and policies, at all levels of organization" (see Chart 4 in attachments).

Interestingly, each stage of engagement correlates pretty closely to a set of practices, resulting in a pathway that nonprofits can follow as they advance their racial equity work. Specific practices are noted during the stage when nonprofits typically adopt them. These practices are then continued and added to, during subsequent stages. While this pathway is presented in a linear fashion, we are not advocating that nonprofits follow the precise order. In fact, our research

suggests that to be successful, every organization needs to develop its own journey that responds to its unique organizational mission, history and culture.

We have begun having conversations.	**Board Engagement** • 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 **Staff Engagement** • Staff-led discussions of racial equity
We have participated in a training(s) and/or started to develop our capacity in other ways.	**Board Engagement** • Implicit bias training • Racial equity training • Adoption and implementation of a diversity and inclusion plan **Staff Engagement** • 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.	**Board Engagement** • Comprehensive board orientation that includes racial equity • Board roles are explicitly defined so members understand their role in advancing racial equity at the organization • Explicit commitment to racial equity is included in the strategic plan **Staff Engagement** • Comprehensive staff orientation that includes racial equity • Beginning 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.	**Board Engagement** • Board regularly conducts a self-assessment on racial equity • Explicit commitment to racial equity as a core value **Staff Engagement** • Diversity and inclusion plan is being implemented with intention
Other practices un-related to a specific stage of engagement.	• Expert/trainer brought to facilitate internal conversations • Anti-racist framework is applied to hiring and HR practices • Formation of racial affinity groups

Nine percent of the survey participants report that they have not done anything yet to promote racial equity within their organizations. We anticipate that this category is under-represented in our survey. Still, it is encouraging to find that over ninety percent of survey respondents are already engaged to some extent in promoting racial equity within their organizations.

Leading Racial Equity Work

In addition to understanding where nonprofits are in the process of working on racial equity, we want to understand who is promoting the work. In the survey, we allow for multiple responses to the question, which is why responses total more than 100 percent (see Chart 5 in attachments). We find that the nonprofits further along in the process of racial equity work note more people driving the effort than nonprofits that are in the beginning stages. This intuitively makes sense, that as racial equity becomes more ingrained in an organization's policies, procedures and culture, the more it will and must include the engagement of the entire board and staff.

Overall, senior leadership (69.6 percent) and CEOs (61.9 percent) are citied as the main drivers of racial equity efforts. This is a positive finding, because to institutionalize racial equity work, top-level leadership needs to be supportive. The next most engaged are mid-level management (34.5 percent). Unfortunately, in less than a third of the responding organizations is the board helping lead racial equity work. This is a real concern, because the board controls important processes and procedures that influence an organization's ability to intentionally pursue racial equity work: strategic planning, budgeting, and hiring the CEO. This challenge is further explained in the next section of the report.

A few respondents wrote in answers to this survey question, noting that funders were also important drivers of their racial equity work. As highlighted earlier in this report's "The State of the Field," funders, especially those in specific fields, have taken the lead to research the extent of current racial equity efforts while others have developed recommended steps for advancing racial equity. Despite grantmakers' increased focus on racial equity, nonprofit leaders continue to report a lack of funding for advancing racial equity work within their organizations. Thus, while funders are driving some of the thought leadership around racial equity, more emphasis needs to be placed on the best ways to fund this work. We make some preliminary recommendations at the end of this report.

One of the most important aspects of leading racial equity efforts came through in our interviews and focus groups – having a mix of races represented in those driving the work. In one interview, leaders of a racial equity working group noted that they intentionally have black and white co-leads. This mix ensures that the risks and burdens associated with this work are shared, considering potential "fragility, microaggression, and resistance from White staff and Black staff fearing repercussions if they get too involved, including emotional taxation, the potential for damaged rapport with staff and leadership, or even termination." It also makes it possible to reach out to and engage other staff members, including organization leadership, through a lens that they understand.

Barriers to Racial Equity Work

Survey respondents highlighted a number of challenges that were preventing them from advancing racial equity as quickly and comprehensively as they hoped. Some of these challenges were external to the organization, reflecting changes that need to be made to the broader context in which nonprofits operate. Others were internal, highlighting areas where nonprofits need to take ownership around making change. The full set of responses can be found in Chart 6 in the appendix.

External Barriers

Community demographics – Some nonprofits, located outside of the Washington, D.C. region, noted that the communities in which they work are not diverse. Particularly in the middle of the country, communities that lack diversity can create a context that makes it even more difficult to have discussions about racial equity. Finding ways to engage nonprofits in these communities in broader national conversations around racial equity will be important to ensure that racial equity work is not just confined to our diverse, urban centers.

Lack of funding – Racial equity work can be expensive. Not only are trainings and consultants costly, but organizations that are intentional about hiring people of color are finding that they must also set aside additional resources to provide equitable pay that makes it financially feasible for diverse applicants to apply or be retained.

A survey respondent explained the challenge, "I would like to see if the sector can collectively work to improve compensation for staff positions that would allow for people of color, who have been historically and systematically deprived of the ability to accumulate wealth, to be able to work and stay in the field for longer periods of time, allowing for upward mobility and promotions. I've noticed that many people of color, despite their passion for nonprofit work, cannot stay in the field for as long as they wish because they cannot afford the low pay of nonprofit life. It is more likely that individuals who have old, inherited wealth (many of whom are white) have the means and the networks to continue in the field without having to worry about their personal or family financial stability."

Some foundations have begun to create specific pools of money for capacity building around racial equity, but much more can be done to expand this support. Funding challenges are systemic. A focus group participant cautioned: "So much of philanthropy and wealth are coming from white people with wealth and power. So many decisions around funding are dictated by policies and priorities of these people."

Difficulty in finding trainings/consultants – The field of racial equity consulting continues to grow, providing more options for nonprofits to choose trainings and consultants that best fit their needs, budget and culture. Yet, there is no clearinghouse to find these consultants, making it time consuming for organizations to vet potential providers. Additionally, a survey respondent noted the lack of "training available to rural areas of the U.S. Training such as this is VERY hard to find outside of large urban areas." NewSchools Venture Fund is developing a platform to streamline the process for searching for support in the education field. This is an important area of investment for advancing racial equity work.

Limited access to diverse networks/pipelines of talent – Organizations interested in hiring more people of color have noted the challenge of getting access to diverse networks of talent. When an organization is predominantly white, its board and staff often do not know where to look when trying to hire more diverse candidates. *Race to Lead* charges executive recruiters and search firms to recognize this issue and be upfront about addressing it with board members. "Recruiters and others conducting executive-level searches or involved in executive transition management should be able to present viable candidates across race as well as educate boards

and executive-level staff on race conscious hiring. Recruiters should be asked about their success in finding and placing candidates of color."[19]

Nonprofits working in highly specialized fields note that pipelines do not exist to encourage and incentivize people of color to pursue these fields. A survey respondent notes, "Environmental sciences and the issues of environmental conservation is a very predominately 'white' field." Some organizations are tackling this challenge head-on by intentionally developing pipelines of talent. One survey respondent explains, "[we] increased our starting salaries for fellows to attract more candidates [of color]. All takes time and we may not see fruit of that labor for years given how long it takes to advance in med school."

Internal Barriers

Nonprofit's history – The historical processes, procedures and culture of an organization can make it difficult to pursue racial equity work. A survey respondent specifically noted that "Overcoming historic practices and reputation as a white organization" is a challenge. The status quo bias in organizations is strong because there is often a clear group of people who benefit from it. It takes a long-term commitment and courage of the organization's leadership to make changes to the status quo, of which they are typically the beneficiaries.

Lack of board commitment – Almost a quarter of survey respondents noted that a lack of board commitment was a barrier to advancing racial equity. Through its governance role, the board controls important processes and procedures that influence an organization's ability to intentionally pursue racial equity work: strategic planning, budgeting, and hiring the CEO. Furthermore, if the board itself is unwilling to reflect on its own internal racial biases and level of diversity, this lack of commitment will be felt in its other governance decisions.

One focus group participant shared, "We have a board that has zero influence on policies [and is] weak on cultural guidance. The board does get us into the room with other white people with money, that's their role. That almost intrinsically means they don't help us with addressing racial equity within the org." Even a nonprofit leader that considers racial equity to be part of its DNA admitted that, "We want to get more funding to do work with boards. Get the board to understand what's at stake. A big part is fear."

Prioritization – Nonprofits often have trouble prioritizing racial equity work because it will take away from the pressing programmatic work that they receive funding to implement. One executive director that we interviewed said, "We are so busy and so siloed. It makes it easier to put any issue not critical to your functions to the side." Another executive director in our focus group noted that the biggest challenge in promoting racial equity is time. "We struggle with any big picture initiative when trying to tackle the day-to-day."

In some ways it is easier to integrate racial equity work into existing projects and programs, than it is to address internal organizational processes and procedures. A survey respondent noted a "Disconnect between supporting projects that highlight racial equity (which is generally being achieved) and the need to address racial equity internally (generally not a priority)." Almost one third of survey respondents noted that racial equity was not a top priority because of other more

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[19] Breitfeld and Kunreuther, page 19.

pressing programmatic work. Additionally, 21 percent of respondents highlighted that a lack of dedicated staff to the work was a limiting factor. One interviewee noted that without a line item in the budget, internal work on racial equity will not be taken seriously. It was also suggested in an interview that funders should require that a percentage of any grant on racial equity be spent paying staff for their work.

Lack of common language – More than a quarter of survey respondents cite a lack of common language for discussing racial equity as a barrier to their work. Organizations that cannot afford external trainers often rely on their staff to lead internal discussions. Yet, without a common lexicon, it is hard to get staff to push past their discomfort with the topic and have open conversations. Definitions of some terminology can be found here, but they need to be paired with guides for facilitating these types of conversations.

The existence of multiple approaches and frameworks can make it difficult to know where to start. "There is no singular vocabulary or monolithic acceptance of the 'right' way to address DEI and racial equity. How do you operate in an environment without such frameworks?" Without a clear roadmap it is hard to convince an organization's leadership to invest time and money into this work.

The challenges to advancing racial equity within nonprofit organizations are substantial, however, our research shows that many nonprofits are already taking positive steps to address them. In the next two sections, we take a deeper dive into the promising practices and ongoing challenges organizations face in promoting racial equity within their boards and staff.

VI. BOARD RACIAL EQUITY EFFORTS

Survey Demographics

143 respondents out of 195 answered the question on board demographics. Some survey respondents note that they are not privy to information about their board, often because they are frontline staff or mid-level managers. Our findings mirror those of other research, with the nonprofits' boards of directors being overwhelmingly white. Yet, compared to *Leading with Intent*, the board members of nonprofits completing our survey are 64 percent white. Board members are reported to be 18 percent Black, 8 percent Latino, 5 percent Asian and 2 percent Other. The average board size is eighteen members.

Scale of Engagement

As noted above, 30.4 percent of survey respondents report that the board is helping drive the organization's racial equity work. Yet, in response to the question "How frequently does your board discuss racial equity?", only 14.5 percent of respondents marked "often." More common responses are "sometimes" (34.9 percent) and "rarely" (36.8 percent). 13.8 percent of boards are reported to never discuss racial equity. Forty-three respondents skipped this question, with some noting that they do not have access to board meetings. This suggests that future research needs to be conducted specifically on boards, asking board members to self-assess their engagement. Still, it is telling that staff is unaware of the board's engagement on racial equity work.

The most interesting finding is that of the survey respondents reporting racial equity to be an *integral* part of their organization. Over one third of them cite that 1) their board rarely or never discusses racial equity and 2) their board has not participated in training or capacity building work on racial equity. This lack of board engagement is partially due to the fact that some nonprofits have weak, unengaged boards. A few of our focus group participants noted that, "our board has very little power," and "our board doesn't influence HR," when asked about their board's engagement in racial equity. Yet, for a nonprofit to truly embrace racial equity, boards cannot be left behind or ignored.

Trainings

More than three fourths of respondents note that their board has participated in at least one type of training or capacity-building effort (see Chart 7 in appendix). The most common response was "ongoing education about the role of diversity within the board or nonprofit" (41.1 percent). Only one fifth of boards have conducted an internal assessment of their diversity and ability to execute a racial equity agenda. Even fewer have participated in implicit bias, structural bias and/or racial equity training. A lack of education and training can result in board members' reluctance to discuss racial equity, because they have not developed a common language and understanding.

There are a variety of trainings that nonprofits report using to advance racial equity within their boards. We hope this list will provide a starting point for boards that want to engage in racial equity work or advance to the next level. They are listed in order of most commonly used to least common.

Ongoing Education on Diversity – Though conversations about racial equity have been going on for years, they have taken on various forms and adopted new language and understandings of power and privilege. Racial equity work is a continual process and cannot be solved in one diversity training. Ultimately, as cultural landscapes change but institutional barriers persist, organizations must "get the board to understand what's at stake" through persistent and evolving dialogue.

Internal Board Assessment – "By engaging the full board in a discussion about its performance, the board can establish a holistic view of what it is doing well and what may need to change. It also invites board members to self-identify how best to prioritize board development efforts, which helps ensure they are invested and engaged in those efforts and hold themselves accountable to making positive changes."[20] In the context of racial equity, board assessments typically measure board member diversity, board leader diversity, board recruitment practices, and accomplishments of strategic goals using a racial equity lens.

Implicit and Structural Bias Training – Acknowledging the systemic role of racial inequity through mandatory implicit and structural bias training is a common step organizations take to initiate reform and create a foundation onto which they can build a culture of trust and validation. Board members can be sent to attend these trainings, or consultants can be hired to conduct the trainings in house. It is important to vet trainings to see which best align with the board's culture and stage of engagement in racial equity.

Racial Equity Training – Beyond implicit and structural bias training, racial equity trainings can conceptualize racial equity work within the context of the organization's mission and ensure board members can recognize how racial equity work relates to their own roles and the responsibilities of the board. If trainers are brought into the organization, it is important that they spend time learning about your organization prior to the training. dRworks compiled a list of organizing and training resources in this [guide](#).[21]

Comprehensive Orientation Program – Laying the groundwork for racial equity efforts at the board level requires board members to begin talking about it from the first day they assume their roles. *Leading with Intent* finds that, "It is more likely that boards will do well in areas that are prioritized and clearly articulated during board recruitment and less well in areas that are not addressed during that process."[22]

In many cases, training the board on racial equity is lagging behind training nonprofit staff. One survey respondent noted, "[our] Policy committee will be part of setting the new process for analyzing and prioritizing our work through a racial equity lens. These activities are mostly planned - just starting the process." Another respondent explained that the organization's racial

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[20] "[Leading with Intent: 2017 National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices](#)," BoardSource, 2017, page 40.
[21] "Resources," dRworks, accessed March 22, 2018, http://www.dismantlingracism.org/resources.html
[22] Ibid, page 28.

equity work "has been primarily led by staff, with involvement of select board members with the intention of engaging the full board, whom we see as willing and interested."

Policies and Procedures

Survey respondents report boards to be more engaged in adopting policies and procedures around racial equity than engaging in training (see Chart 8 in appendix). 44.1 percent of respondents note that their boards have explicitly committed to racial equity as an institutional core value and 34.7 percent have an explicit commitment to racial equity in the organization's strategic plan. Over a third of boards are considering strategies that reduce bias in recruitment and hiring.

BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Racial Equity as Core Value – By acknowledging racial equity as an institutional 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. For example, *Leading with Intent* identifies a strong relationship between the incorporation of diversity and inclusion into the organization's core values and the prioritization of racially equitable board recruiting practices.[23]

Racial Equity Included in Strategic Plan – In order to codify racial equity as a core value of the organization and create actionable items, its inclusion in the strategic plan is necessary. Survey respondents identified a lack of funding as limiting internal racial equity work. However, as mentioned by an interview participant, outlining these efforts in the strategic plan can result in the creation of a line item in the budget to fund racial equity work.

Board and Staff Recruitment – Lack of access to diverse pipelines of talent and hiring networks can inhibit an organization's ability to recruit people of color. *Leading with Intent* charges boards to "define what the ideal board composition looks like" and work diligently to achieve that vision. This may require boards "changing the way they identify potential candidates by moving beyond the personal networks of existing board members and considering nontraditional recruitment strategies, such as a posted board search or use of a search firm."[24] See pages 18-19 and 27-28 for more on recruitment.

Diversity and Inclusion Plan – Action plans for diversity and inclusion ensure that a vision for racial equity and strategies to work towards it are understood and implemented at every level of the organization. Plans should include benchmarks to provide assessable goals over short- and long-term evaluation periods. Racial Equity Tools recommends that these strategies be based on organizational experience and industry research, but that flexibility and room for failure and growth are important. Find examples here.[25]

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[23] Ibid, page 16.
[24] Ibid, page 14.
[25] "Action Plan," Racial Equity Tools, accessed March 16, 2018, https://www.racialequitytools.org/plan/action-plan

Regular Board Self-Assessment – Boards that regularly perform self-assessments have the capacity to understand their work in the larger context of the organization's mission, particularly important as racial equity is being integrated into that mission. With regular board self-assessment, chief executives report boards that more effectively adopt and follow strategic plans and understand board roles and responsibilities.[26] Best practice is for boards to adopt a policy that requires annual self-assessments.

Explicit Board Role Definitions – *Leading with Intent* finds that "providing board members with ongoing opportunities to deepen their understanding of the organization's mission and work — as well as their responsibilities as a board member — is an important way to strengthen the board's performance and to build a more passionate and committed board."[27]

Common Language – 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. It also allows the work of the organization to be understood in its relation to racial justice. The Western States Center asserts that "To name & frame racism is to explicitly and publicly use language and analysis that describes an issue as a matter of racial justice. In other words, you are addressing an issue for which racism is one of the root causes, and you clearly explain how people of color are disproportionately impacted by the issue."[28]

Recruitment

Recruitment of more diverse boards is a central focus of many nonprofits that participated in our research. They find it particularly difficult to engage boards in racial equity work when their members are all, or predominantly, white. Nonprofit leaders acknowledge that their boards have historically been comprised of white members, often because of their fundraising capacity. One focus group participant noted:

> "I am trying to intentionally recruit board members from different backgrounds and genders. We made the false assumption that it's in our DNA. Because we didn't codify it, we didn't have active policies in place. I am having a tough time trying to get rich white men to get onboard with the mission. Rich white lawyers are giving us the checks, but if their values don't align with ours we don't have to take their money. [Our board is] saying, 'we don't want to alienate half of our donors by just addressing racial inequity.'"

According to our survey, nonprofit boards are taking seriously the need to diversify. 38.2 percent of respondents note that their board places "significant" emphasis on attracting candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Another 42.1 percent of boards are placing "some" emphasis on diverse recruitment. Additionally, more than half of the respondents note that their

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[26] Ibid, page 40.
[27] Ibid, page 38.
[28] "Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book," Western States Center, 2003, page 107.

boards are intentionally considering the race and ethnicity of the board members who assume leadership roles.

Yet, challenges still exist. One survey respondent notes, "Even for an organization that makes an explicit effort to cultivate a diverse board, it is surprisingly challenging to ensure that all walks of life are represented. This has to do with innate power structures that bring people of privilege together in networks around income, executive experience, alumni and professional associations, and power." Another respondent comments, "Too many of our board members think they can represent the needs of communities of color as white professionals; they rest on their progressiveness as a proxy for true equitable racial inclusiveness."

> ## A COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY IN HIRING
>
> A local nonprofit board was about to start searching for a new Executive Director and discussed the importance of hiring an African American to lead, since over 90 percent of the youth they serve are people of color, primarily African American. The board set up a search committee of five to six members and interviewed search firms, hiring a national firm that was not too big, but did nonprofit work. None of the firms they considered specialized in recruiting leaders of color. Once the firm was hired, the firm asked the search committee if they would hire a less qualified person of color over a white person. The board said they were committed to hiring an executive that the youth could relate to, but they also needed someone with fundraising experience.
>
> The search firm came back to the committee with some options that were narrowed down to five and then through interviews to two. Only one of the finalists was an African American — the candidate had fundraising experience, but limited management experience. The board introduced the candidate to the staff, who unanimously said they would leave if the board hired this candidate. The staff was concerned that the board placed too much focus on fundraising and not enough on programming experience.
>
> The board decided to hire the African American candidate and raised money to pay for an executive coach and training to help build up the new executive director's management skills. Within one year, all of the staff had either left the organization or were fired. Today, the organization has doubled its budget, hired a program director with strong experience, and started a housing program that they never had before. There were other factors that led to this success, including two African Americans on the search committee that helped in evaluating the candidates, board members that had lots of HR experience and could help with firing staff using a pro bono lawyer, and a board member that could raise the money needed to support the new ED.

Promising Practices

The many of the promising practices we gleaned from our research related to boards' recruitment processes.

Adapt Fundraising Requirements – "Racial equity and diversity is considered essential to the functioning of an effective board. In order to ensure diversity, we have 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."

Consider Alternative Funding Sources – "There is 'quiet money' in DC (middle/upper-class Black communities, middle/upper-class South Asian descendant communities) that haven't been accessed." Efforts should be made to diversify the funding pool to engage donors from communities that are under-represented on the board. These donors can then help recruit more diverse board members.

Use One-on-One and In-Person Recruiting – "In recruiting, those most responsive to public postings tend to be people not of color. Diversity board recruitment has worked best via one-on-one and in-person networking."

Consider Generational Representation – "We always have a young person trained to be at board meetings. They learn about board practices and the org's work. We never make hiring decisions without young people being in interviews." As noted by some survey respondents, younger generations seem to be more comfortable discussing racial equity. Having them at the table can help ease tensions and advance the discussion.

VII. STAFF RACIAL EQUITY EFFORTS

Survey Demographics

120 respondents out of 195 answered the question on staff demographics. Smaller organizations were more likely to answer this question than larger nonprofits that may not have this information readily available. Of the organizations that did respond, there was great diversity among the staff — 47.9 percent White, 26.6 percent Black, 6.7 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 17.4 percent Latino, 1.4 percent Other. The average reported staff size is 28.9 people. These responses are unable to provide a general sense of the size and diversity of the nonprofit staff represented in the survey. However, they do indicate that the survey captures the experiences of highly diverse nonprofits.

Scale of Engagement

Compared to the board, nonprofit staff is more engaged in racial equity efforts (see Chart 9 in appendix). 37.6 percent of survey respondents note that their staff takes initiative on the promotion of racial equity in the organization. Most common is the response that staff is somewhat involved in promoting racial equity, reported by 39.7 percent of respondents. This aligns with the finding in Chart 5 that the CEO and senior staff primarily lead racial equity efforts.

There are a number of variables that nonprofits should consider when designing their racial equity work, including who will lead the effort, the pace of the effort, and the areas for change.

Leading the Effort: Top Down or Bottom Up

Organizations have to determine who will lead the racial equity work at the organization. While initial discussions may occur organically, at some point organization leadership needs to decide if they want to assume the responsibility for driving the effort. A top down approach typically comes from the board or CEO and often involves changing policies and systems. While these are important steps to institutionalizing a racial equity approach, they can fail to change organizational culture throughout the staff. One survey respondent highlighted, "Our challenge is while we have great leadership and commitment from the board (and senior leadership), it has not yet permeated throughout the entire organization."

In comparison, a bottom up approach can address racial equity in daily interactions and staff policies, but can fail to influence change in top-level leadership or the board. "Within my organization, the Board is not the driving force for promoting racial equity. It comes mostly from the staff, who are all very committed to promoting racial equity in the organization. The makeup of the Board is not diverse, and they've struggled to recruit members of diverse backgrounds," noted a survey respondent. Another respondent found the bottom up approach to be easier. "I think the most successful thing we've done is lower level staff have banded together to deal with a lot of these issues at the ground level without the involvement of senior management. It goes smoother this way." A few different respondents noted that younger staff are at times more comfortable discussing racial equity. Overtime, the organizations that have advanced racial equity the farthest have found ways to engage leadership from the top, bottom and middle.

Pace of the Effort

Those leading racial equity work within an organization have to decide how to pace their journey. In some cases the availability of resources, such as grants for trainings or consultants, can push organizations to move quickly to take advantage of the current opportunities. Yet, those leading the work need to be careful to not leave others behind. "The equity work we did as staff felt 'too fast' for the board and there was regular push back from largest donor on board," shared a survey respondent. Getting regular feedback from board and staff can help leaders gauge when people are ready for the next step, or if a pause is needed to get everyone back on board. It is important to design your racial equity work as an ongoing process that requires a long-term commitment.

THE PACE OF CHANGE

One community-based nonprofit in Washington, D.C. has been working to advance racial equity for over two decades. Some of its first efforts—including bringing in a consultant and trying to facilitate internal discussions—did not seem to work. Tensions between racial groups within the staff rose and so the organization took a break. A decade later, a staff member challenged the organization to try again, encouraging the CEO and staff to attend a racial equity training. Today, almost 90 percent of the staff have participated in the training as well as half of the board. This was the first step in their commitment.

The organization understands that racial equity trainings are an essential starting point for cementing shared language and understanding of concepts among staff and community members. Yet, because it is an initial step, multiple forms of follow-up engagement are required to fully embed principles in the daily work of employees. In addition, the organization has come to realize that people will ultimately embrace racial equity at their own paces and levels. The challenge they face is to get everyone on the same page of racial equity practice, despite the inherent distinctions in their degrees of conviction.

Many trainings focus on structural racism in society with the next step being community organizing. Few trainings have a focus on how to make changes within your organization. This nonprofit has charted a course over the past ten years that is not completely linear. It has staff meetings to debrief and contextualize the trainings. It has brought in a consulting group to help operationalize the work through an action plan and specific strategies. While the action plan is not dogmatically followed, it helped create a thought pattern around what the nonprofit would do. The organization supports affinity groups in which people of individual racial groups can hold conversations that are difficult or impossible to have as productively in mixed race settings. Over time the organization has recognized that, because participation in and leadership of affinity groups is voluntary, the vitality of the groups will fluctuate will the availability and desire of its constituent members. The organization also hired a racial equity manager and formed a racial equity working group. It includes racial equity questions in its annual staff survey to measure where the organization is in its journey.

There is much that the nonprofit acknowledges still needs to be done. There are micro aggressions that play themselves out between white and POC staff. Additionally, staff have pushed back on the anti-black racism focus, wanting a broader discussion of the intersectionality with other oppressed groups. This work requires a serious commitment of time and money and can lead to frustration and cynicism when an organization isn't moving as fast as the drivers of change hope. Organizations, like this one, would benefit from best practices, a coalition, and peer groups to learn from and with as well as further support for ongoing training and facilitation.

Areas for Change

This report focuses on the internal areas an organization can consider for change: increasing knowledge of board and staff, adopting new policies and procedures, creating space for uncomfortable conversations and intentionally building recruiting pipelines, to name a few. Racial equity work can also focus externally, changing programming to address implicit biases, working with community members to address structural biases, and participating in collective advocacy efforts to change systems in order to advance racial justice. Given these many potential areas of engagement, organizations can choose an approach to advancing racial equity that best fits their culture and the needs of those they serve.

Trainings and Programming

There are a variety of trainings and programs that nonprofits use to teach their staff about racial equity and related topics. More than 80 percent of survey respondents have utilized at least one of these approaches. We hope this list will provide a starting point for nonprofit staff that want to engage in racial equity work or advance to the next level. They are listed in order of most commonly to least commonly used.

STAFF TRAININGS AND PROGRAMMING

Staff-Led Discussions – The guide, *Moving Past the Silence: A Tool for Negotiating Reflective Conversations About Race*, provides important insight on effective facilitation.[29] A survey respondent asserted that "honest discussion" was a successful approach their organization used. "[E]nsuring we are using respectful language, leaving room for checking intentions, and engaging all members of our team in these conversations from the onset has been very helpful in moving us forward in a short period of time."

Implicit and Structural Bias Training – Acknowledging the systemic role of racial inequity through mandatory implicit and structural bias training is a common step organizations take to initiate reform and create a foundation onto which they can build a culture of trust and validation. Staff can be sent to attend these trainings, or consultants can be hired to conduct the trainings in house. It is important to vet trainings to see which best align with the staff's culture and stage of engagement in racial equity.

External Training on Racial Equity – Often organizations find that sending staff to external racial equity trainings is a good first step that introduces the topic through a third party expert. The challenge with external trainings is that with staff turnover, it is hard to get everyone on the same page. One survey respondent noted, "Because we have some new staff members and not everyone has yet received the same training, we are all going to a half-day race equity training this spring to at least begin to have some common language. Some staff members are much more advanced, but non-programmatic staff have not been exposed to much training." Additionally, it is important to remember that these trainings should just be

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[29] Stephens, Vanessa McKendall, "Moving Past the Silence: A Tool for Negotiating Reflective Conversations About Race," Effective Communities, LLC, 2006.

the starting point of a longer-term commitment to racial equity education. Another survey respondent cautions, "Three years ago we had a session to explore racial issues, but there was no follow-up (as promised). It was successful only in that it caused people at that time to believe that the organization cared about racial issues."

Internal Facilitated Discussions – With a negotiation of a safe space, internal facilitated discussions work to build trust and engage staff with the development and implementation of new policies and initiatives. Bringing in an expert, who can confidently navigate trainings and use the appropriate language, helps organizations set the groundwork for ongoing discussions and work on racial equity. Most organizations do not have this expertise in house and as a common first step can rely on expert facilitators to spark internal conversations and get the work started. These discussions should occur cohesively with trainings and guidance from experts who are equipped to navigate difficult topics like privilege and power.

Staff-Led Reading Groups – Staff-led reading groups can help staff develop a common language for this work together. Contemporary discussions of issues regarding race can put the organization's mission into the context of local and national events and trends. Baltimore Racial Justice Action has compiled a very comprehensive reference for books, videos, and websites, which is indexed here.[30]

Comprehensive Orientation Program – When committing to the ongoing advancement of racial equity, it is crucial to set the tone for incoming staff. A comprehensive orientation program helps new staff understand their roles through an organizational racial equity lens and can make subsequent trainings, discussions, and procedures feel integral to their work at the organization.

With such a range of options for engagement, it can be difficult to know where to start. We asked the survey respondents which trainings and programming have been most helpful in advancing racial equity within their organizations. There is general agreement that external training can be a good place to begin, but is not enough. "External training about bias and opportunities to address DEI are good starting points to socialize the topic but inadequate to support significant progress and change in practices." The next step can be to hire a facilitator to help lead internal discussions. A survey respondent noted, "Facilitated discussions have been helpful in establishing a shared vocabulary and framework for talking about racial inequity at our organization and within the work we do." When deciding between facilitators, make sure the "consultant … has taken the time to understand staff before presenting." Finally, one survey respondent highlighted the success of combining multiple approaches including a "Racial Equity working group, all-staff implicit bias trainings being led by an expert, [and] department-level discussions on how to implement racial equity in departmental work."

When trainings and programming are offered, only a quarter of survey respondents note that all or most of them have mandatory attendance. It is much more common for these trainings and programs to be optional, allowing staff to opt-in when they feel comfortable. This uneven participation, however can result in a lack of shared language and commitment, which can be a barrier to advancing racial equity.

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[30] "Indices," Baltimore Racial Justice Action, November 23, 2013, accessed March 22, 2018, http://bmoreantiracist.org/resources/index/

Policies and Procedures

Survey respondents report greater engagement in staff training than in developing policies and procedures that advance racial equity. 43.4 percent of respondents note that their nonprofit has not adopted any policies or procedures. This list explains the policies and procedures that nonprofits are adopting. They are listed in order of most commonly used to least common.

STAFF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HR Mechanisms – The implementation of procedures and policies at the HR level can track, record, and substantiate the reality of issues related to racial inequity at the organization. Policies, such as monitoring the race and ethnicity of staff (specifically those who access professional development opportunities or apply for promotions) can help uphold the value of this work and institutionalize it. A survey respondent highlights how HR can build an employment pipeline from the communities that organizations serve, "We have a built in training program to mentor, train, graduate, contract with, and hire/place people of color who have faced discrimination of various kinds."

Anti-Racist Hiring Practices – As noted by a focus group participant, "HR is key in controlling the door. They [can] eliminate people early in the process and that's inhibiting equity." Nonprofits can adopt practices that help increase the likelihood of hiring people from diverse backgrounds, but on their own, such practices can fail. As noted by a survey respondent, "We make sure to interview minority candidates when a position opens up, but that has not resulted recently in the hiring of minorities." While it may take longer, recruiting successful candidates requires considering many different variables as well as committed support to help the individual succeed in her new role. A survey respondent reflected, "I think hiring individuals not only from a diverse background but [who] are also good professional and organizational-culture fit has helped put many in positions to exceed. I've seen bad efforts to promote racial equity in a previous organization where the effort seems to stop after the hiring decision is made."

Racial Equity Working Group – Acknowledging that applying a racial equity lens to nonprofit management is daunting, the creation and support of a racial equity working group can serve as a necessary starting point. This group can create a vision of racial equity at the organization and incorporate staff from all levels of the nonprofit. A group effort is needed to distribute the time-consuming work, emotional strain, and at times risk, that advancing racial equity work requires.

Racial Affinity Groups – By creating spaces where staff 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. When a nonprofit is too small to have its own racial affinity groups, it should consider looking for groups in their community that they can recommend their staff join.

CO-LEADING A RACIAL EQUITY WORKING GROUP

A community-based nonprofit started a diversity and inclusion group. Staff who attended regularly were interested in discussing racial equity specifically. After a few meetings, it was decided that racial equity is not diversity and therefore there should be two separate groups. There was no approval asked for or needed from the ED or board, the staff drove the decision making process.

The working group developed a group mission and norms. They shared an action plan and strategies for the racial equity work with leadership and key staff people who hold the culture and influence at the nonprofit. Overtime, they have gradually convinced more and more staff of the need for this work. The first item on the action plan was a racial equity self-assessment survey, which provided a baseline for how staff felt about race. All staff participated in a meeting where they discussed racial equity and broke up into people of color and white caucuses, for further discussion. Next, a consultant was engaged to conduct in-house interviews and trainings. The working group hopes to start reviewing current policies with a racial equity lens.

The racial equity working group is co-chaired by one black and one white staff member. The staff thought it was important have people of color, especially black people, lead the group because the nonprofit has been historically white. 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. Additionally, a lot of the work is done outside of work hours and is uncompensated. Both co-leaders of the working group worry about sustainability, "If we both left, what would happen? Would the work continue?"

When asked to share lessons learned, the co-leaders liken their work to community organizing. "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." They advise developing a strategy for gaining leadership buy-in by finding allies at all levels. Make sure to have a scope of work, so you can stay focused and maintain perspective. Most importantly, get a line item in the budget. It is one thing to say the work is important, but another to put money behind it. It would be great if funders required that a portion of racial equity grants be allocated to cover staff time.

In some cases, survey respondents downplay the necessity of policies and procedures. One notes, "Being a minority organization, racial equity is at the forefront of everything we do." Another respondent suggests, "No need. We do it naturally." These responses mirror some comments that we heard in our interviews and focus group. Some nonprofits believe that racial equity is "part of their DNA," and therefore does not require an explicit focus. This perspective, however, represents a small minority of the 200 nonprofit leaders that participated in our research. We believe that an explicit, intentional commitment to advancing racial equity is necessary, no matter the current racial diversity of an organization's staff.

Recruitment

Most of the challenges that survey respondents noted to advancing racial equity in staff recruitment were related to accessing more diverse pipelines. There is a clear acknowledgement that relying on personal connections is not sufficient. One respondent commented that,

"Management has over-relied on personal and professional networks to pull preferred applicants from. Due to inequities in education and professional opportunities, the majority of these networks are white. Prioritizing the hiring of well-qualified people of color too often falls second to an expedient hiring process through (mostly white) networks." Executive placement firms have received mixed reviews in their ability to help diversify recruiting pipelines. 87 percent of respondents are "unsure" whether executive recruiters help or hinder attempts to attract applicants of color. Much of this uncertainty is due to the fact only a small minority of nonprofits can afford to engage executive recruiters.

> "A couple of years ago I needed a copy editor. I told the board chair, who told his wife, who recruited her friend. They were all white. My program director was really upset. She called me on it, 'look at who you asked.' I realized how proactive we really needed to be. If you aren't actively working against inequity, you are perpetuating it. Every action we take needs to be through this lens."

Since many organizations consider their current staff for leadership level promotions, it is even more important that entry and mid-level staff are racially diverse. One survey respondent highlights their nonprofit's success, "Our statistics speak for themselves. 3 of the 5 senior managers (2 black) are in their positions as a result of internal promotions. The mid-level management (all African American) have been promoted from within. We also have a policy of advertising internally first to encourage staff development/promotion." Yet, even organizations with a history of diverse promotions, may not have completely changed their culture. A survey respondent cautions, "We have had staff of all races promoted to higher positions. But I'm not sure all staff believe they have this opportunity."

Some organizations trace their racial inequality to intern pipelines, which attract "younger, more privileged white grads who can afford to support themselves without bringing in a paycheck at the org. I'm not knocking these interns as many of them are wonderful (and I used to be one!), but these interns eventually become paid staff, middle management, and senior leadership, and they will eventually drive organizational decision making on how to serve audiences in need. If the operational structure (hiring, compensation, etc.) is not structured to draw in representatives from the audiences we're serving, how will we know how to design programs to address their needs in an effective way." Similarly, the challenge of retaining talented people of color is related to compensation. One survey respondent challenges the field,

> "I would like to see if the sector can collectively work to improve compensation for staff positions that would allow for people of color, who have been historically and systematically deprived of the ability to accumulate wealth, to be able to work and stay in the field for longer periods of time, allowing for upward mobility and promotions. I've noticed that many people of color, despite their passion for nonprofit work, cannot stay in the field for as long as they wish because they cannot afford the low pay of nonprofit life. It is more likely that individuals who have old, inherited wealth (many of whom are white) have the means and the networks to continue in the field without having to worry about their personal or family financial stability."

The size of an organization can limit its ability to address racial equity. A survey respondent notes that "Size and limited turnover has historically been more of a barrier to staff advancement." Another comments that, "We unfortunately have a fairly flat structure, so there is little opportunity for advancement regardless of race." Smaller nonprofits also struggle with access to funding, making hiring staff more difficult. "We are a very small nonprofit that is led and run by people of color. As such we are subject to structural and institutional racism that makes it difficult for us to raise the money necessary to even have full-time staff let alone have any of our volunteers advance to staff positions." Newly formed organizations can also face pipeline challenges. "I am concerned that as we grow the founders will start taking on paid positions and they are white, and that this will place a ceiling on later hired employees." Thus, small and new nonprofits face additional challenges that need to be considered in advancing racial equity.

Professional Development

Past research, including *Race to Lead,* has found that staff do not have equal opportunities for professional development. Our research supports these findings. Survey respondents report that while 79 percent of staff have equal access to on-the-job training, two-thirds or fewer have equal opportunity to attend conferences/workshops, receive mentoring, and participate in networking. While almost 90 percent of nonprofits provide funding for professional development, available funding typically ranges from $200 – $5,000 per staff member.

A quarter of survey respondents note that support staff do not have the same professional development opportunities as professional staff. Another 18 percent of respondents are unsure. In comparison, only 15 percent of respondents believe race is a barrier to staff advancement, while 20 percent are unsure. A few specific comments help to highlight the inequality.

> "Even in cases where the Black professional is far more competent, the Whites are the only ones considered for advancement."

> "Historically black staff members have not advanced as far as Latino or white staff members."

> "I believe that we have unintentionally created systems that are not as inclusive to people of color - whether it be a feeling of connection and community or, potentially, bias that exists in managerial relationships (management team is mostly white and front-line staff are mostly people of color). As a result, we have not seen as many staff who are people of color who are seeking opportunities to stay and grow within the organization."

Many survey respondents acknowledge that some of the barriers are embedded in our dominant culture and need to be identified and addressed. One nonprofit leader notes, "As the white CEO I

am working on addressing privilege and sharing power but I know I still have work to do that may be an unintentional barrier. Also, our Board is not as engaged as it might be in developing leaders of color." Another respondent reflects that "Unintentionally, dominant culture still guides how we define success, so creates more opportunities for people who align best with dominant culture practices. However, we are actively monitoring our own biases to ensure that race isn't a barrier." A number of these barriers are delineated in "Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups."[31]

EQUITY IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A local school surveyed its staff to assess how satisfied they were with professional development opportunities. The results showed a stark difference between faculty and non-faculty staff. The school had professionals dedicated to coaching the teachers and helping them grow. Yet there was no in-house professional development support offered to non-teaching staff. The action plan noted this as an area of growth, but what was not mentioned was that the non-faculty staff are predominantly people of color. The unequal treatment was not considered through a racial equity lens.

This year, a staff member at the school decided to address this inequity. A 3-month training was developed for non-faculty staff, specifically people of color, to create logic models for their departments. It was approved by the CEO and the executive team. One white manager expressed disappointment that she was not invited to participate, but the staff member designing the project knew that the initiative would not have worked if higher-level managers, who are predominantly white, were invited. It would have introduced a power dynamic. Not only did the participating staff learn new skills, but they also built rapport across departments, quickly finding common goals. They looked at a lot of the language the organization uses. Shifting away from a "needs-based model" to a social justice lens—it's not about "immigrants who don't have an education."

When asked to share lessons learned from the pilot, the staff member noted that non-faculty staff are often considered to be less professional in terms of their formal qualifications, but they bring life experiences that can be more valuable than formal education. Many people of color envision their work to be transformational, not about training workers to continue to work for minimum wage. Yet, some people in management have said, "We need to foster a curiosity mindset in non-teaching staff." From the staff member's perspective, "it's already there, we just need to be responsive to it and understand that that curiosity is about root causes for people of color, not about being charitable but about addressing systemic inequities." Due to the success of the pilot program, the staff member has been asked to create a professional development plan for the entire staff. Challenges ahead will be adopting a racial equity lens to professional development organization-wide that is sustainable.

Racial Tension

We asked a few specific survey questions about how racism influences the culture of an organization. First, survey participants were asked "Do you believe that any racial tension exists among your staff?" 142 responses were received, with 49.3 percent noting that no racial tension exists. The remaining 28.9 percent replied yes, and 21.8 percent were unsure. These responses illustrate the variety of racial tensions experienced within nonprofits.

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[31] Jones, Kenneth and Tema Okun. Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups. ChangeWork, 2001. Online: http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html

"While we are very diverse, there are sometimes perceptions of favoritism among the different racial groups, ex. Hispanic supervisors give Hispanic staff preference"

"We do not have enough people of color in management roles, but our front-line staff are mostly people of color. There have been incidences of racial microaggressions and implicit bias that have been brought to the fore by front-line staff that they have experienced with managers. Also, a majority of our community volunteers are white and our front-line have encountered many incidents between volunteers and students where the volunteers exhibit a lack of cultural competence or use racial microaggressions toward students of color."

"I see some of it on my own team, between support staff and program leadership. There is a lack of understanding in differences of culture, and how those differences present themselves in terms of speech, tone, etc. Some support staff of color have not received the care of management provided to other (white) staff, and while I do not believe it is wholly intentional, it has overtones of microaggression."

"If any tension exists, it would most likely be felt by white colleagues, who may feel they need to 'prove' their commitment to the community/cause."

One survey respondent reminds us that not all tension is bad. "To a degree there is [tension]— but it's a good tension in that we all realize we bring different experiences or perspectives to the table and we intentionally create space to dig into the hard conversations and to check each other's or the organization's assumptions." It is important to remember that advancing racial equity requires uncomfortable conversations, which can result in heightened tension for a period of time. Allowing space for these ongoing discussions and processing of current events is critical. As one survey respondent noted, "We have had staff, especially African American staff, since the election who feel that there are not enough open conversations about race at our organization. This was even more noted after the Charlottesville events."

We also asked "Do you think any of your staff are implicitly or explicitly asked or assumed to 'represent' their race?" 141 responses were received, with 44 percent saying no, 32.6 percent yes, and 23.4 unsure. The following quotes represent the responses received and illustrate the importance of differentiating between representation and tokenism.

"My 2nd in command is an African American and we have talked openly about this dynamic that I lean on/turn to her for 'interpretation.' Also we have to guard against asking the one Asian on our staff to represent all Asians, etc."

"Our leadership team is not very diverse, so we have implicitly "made sure" our African American staff are represented externally, which does smack of tokenism."

"As one of the two minorities on staff in a sector with historically low levels of diversity representation, I do feel 'pressure' to advocate and promote different viewpoints."

"When it does happen, the weight of a 'people' implicitly comes with representing your race since there's a feeling we may not get any other opportunities to be heard or represented any time soon or at all."

"Latinos working for a Latino-serving organization are effectively representing their race through their work. That's why they're there. Non-Latinos, specifically whites, may feel they are expected to not represent their race, since, in this context, it can be perceived as based on privilege/entitlement; they are expected to understand that regardless of their personal experience, the very fact they are not Latino gives them a different context. This in no way means that their work is not embraced and their commitment and solidarity is not appreciated or needed."

The external environment also plays a role in who is asked to represent the organization or cause. One survey respondent shared that, "Due to the lack of Latino leadership in this region we often will decide who to send where. Due to anti-Latino sentiment in this region we often will send African Americans who believe in diversity and stand for Latino issues in this region in addition to their primary commitment to the African American community. There still exists a great deal of anti Latino sentiment and often when leaders are talking about equity it really is only Black and White but not Brown." In addition to these comments, we also received a few more regarding issues of intersectionality, which while not addressed in this report, is an important area for future research.

Promising Practices

While many promising practices are highlighted throughout the report in blue boxes, a few survey respondents described the journeys of their nonprofits. We share a few below to illustrate what it takes to intentionally promote racial equity.

Integration into Organizational Culture – "We have created a series of conversations and trainings that are part of staff meetings (mandatory), orientation (mandatory), as well as facilitated dialogue (voluntary) around issues of race and our mission. It has taken time but speaking of race has become a part of our culture, although not without challenges."

Open, Honest Discussion – "We have open, honest dialogue; we ensure that our staff of color are director level staff whose voice and decisions carry great weight within the organization; we openly discuss the impact of systemic racism on the policy goals we are trying to achieve and outwardly acknowledge that we cannot reach our policy goals without tackling racism in our work."

Ongoing Education – "We regularly share articles and curriculum that address issues of racial equity, both in the community and within the nonprofit sector. Additionally, staff participate in professional development workshops that include topics such as cultural competency, cultural awareness, and biases."

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Importance of Accessibility and Flexibility

Over 90 percent of survey respondents said that they would consider participating in racial equity, implicit bias, or other types of training. Yet, they are more likely to do so if they are free or low cost, do not require travel, and are accessible during the workweek. It is clear that one size will not fit all, as some nonprofits prefer participating with other organizations, while others prefer in-house training options for their whole staff. Survey respondents would like the trainings to be relevant for a wide range of experience levels and racial and ethnic backgrounds and provide actionable takeaways. Most importantly, they want a training that "doesn't feel like a box you check off to give yourself cover and that it challenges you to actually commit to the work."

Trainings and Tools Desired

For trainers and facilitators doing this work, survey respondents specifically noted their interest in specific topics and tools. Organizations are looking for help in developing a shared language to discuss racial equity. They also want to learn how to incorporate a racial equity lens into organizational policies and procedures. In addition to implicit bias training, respondents asked for ongoing anti-racism training that links to practical tools to help organizations confront racism. As one respondent put it, "We need consultants/trainings to help us develop a shared language around equity issues and to learn skills and tools for applying a racial equity lens in our internal and external processes/policy work."

Many suggestions underlined the need for HR to act as a catalyst of this work within organizations including conflict resolution, affinity group training, and hiring policy reform. Some respondents noted the need for trainings specifically designed for HR professionals to help them facilitate this work as well as teach them how to advance racial equity through policies and processes. Case studies would be particularly beneficial as well as policy templates and model pathways that outline ways to promote racial equity and build awareness.

Respondents emphasized the need for resources connecting internal and external racial equity work. This includes cultural competency and awareness training, and reframing the messaging of organizations to appeal to, apply to, and be relevant to a diverse population. More specifically, one respondent identified the need for an "exploration of stereotypes in our field of practice and ways that we may be perpetuating them." Ultimately, nonprofits hope to utilize trainings that are specific to the existing cultures within their organizations and cognizant of demographics at every level of the organization, including the board.

Bringing Facilitators and Consultants In-House

A number of survey respondents were interested in bringing facilitators in-house to lead discussions among their staff and board. They noted the importance of finding facilitators that "understand racial paradigms and the community we represent" and are willing to learn about the organization's unique history. Respondents also wanted access to consultants who could help survey the staff and board, aid in the design and implementation of a racial equity work plan, and facilitate a strategic planning process that promotes racial equity. It was clear that because few nonprofits have staff specifically focused on racial equity, they need external support for

advancing this work. Finally, on-going coaching and mentoring for organizational leaders was highlighted as critical to long-term success.

The Role of Philanthropy

For racial equity work to advance, nonprofits need dedicated funding. Not only do they need funding to attend trainings and hire facilitators, but more importantly, funding needs to support the time and efforts of the staff. Survey respondents note that funding is needed to hire additional HR staff, provide equitable professional development opportunities, and pay for staff time devoted to racial equity work.

Foundations can also provide leadership by hosting convenings and trainings with a racial equity focus. They can help identify, and where needed, invest in the development of recruitment pipelines for people of color. For this work to be sustainable, networks need to form that continue to advance and fuel this work. Network building is a key role for philanthropic leaders.

Remaining Questions

In the survey, we asked respondents to share any remaining questions they have about advancing racial equity. We hope these questions will help guide future research and work in this field.

Advancing racial equity among POC staff – Survey respondents noted a desire to better understand how to advance racial equity within a nonprofit with a majority of black or people of color in its board and staff. One respondent noted, "I would like to understand how this issue is to be broached in largely Latino and/or African American organizations." Additionally, people of color want to know "How to build and increase capacity of white allies? Also, how to convince them this is also their issue?"

Advancing racial equity among white staff – Survey respondents want to know more about promoting racial equity in a predominantly white culture. A leader asks, "How can I best lead my organization on race equity issues if I am white?" Survey respondents are also concerned about losing support by taking on this work. One respondent wants to learn "How to frame our work through a racial equity lens without losing support of white privileged audiences."

How to get buy-in and measure impact – Nonprofit leaders are unsure of how to frame the case for the importance of racial equity work. One survey respondent wants to know the best way to address "the topic that changes the team's understanding of the issue and how it connects to their work." Once work has begun, nonprofit leaders want to know how to "demonstrate impact or outcomes of race equity initiatives." A focus on measurement, beyond tracking diversity percentages, will be important as this work continues to advance.

Connecting to bigger ideas – Finally, some survey respondents placed racial equity work with broader struggles that our country is facing. One asked, "How do we heal and achieve true restorative justice in a time of such pain and cruelty?" Another questioned, "How can we be actively working toward racial equity, and still meaningfully address other forms of inequity (gender, economic, disability, etc.) that merit attention?"

Conclusion

We hope this research paper and survey can serve as a tool for organizations to self-assess where they are in the journey of advancing racial equity and help them commit to next steps in institutionalizing their work. To this end, we have included the survey questions in the appendix, so they can be used and adapted by others. One survey respondent noted, "I personally advocate for racial and gender equity but didn't truly understand my absolute responsibility to advocate for it more formally. The survey was a strong reminder." We hope the survey and this report will similarly encourage others as they advance their organizations' work on racial equity.

IX. ATTACHMENTS

Chart 1 – Position in Organization

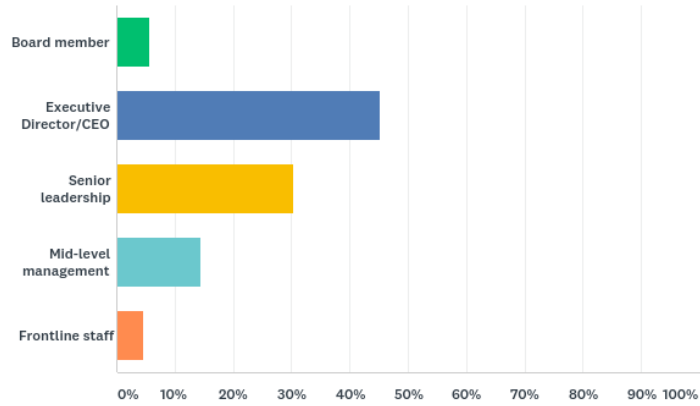Q1 Please identify your position within your organization

Chart 2 – Focus of Organization's Work

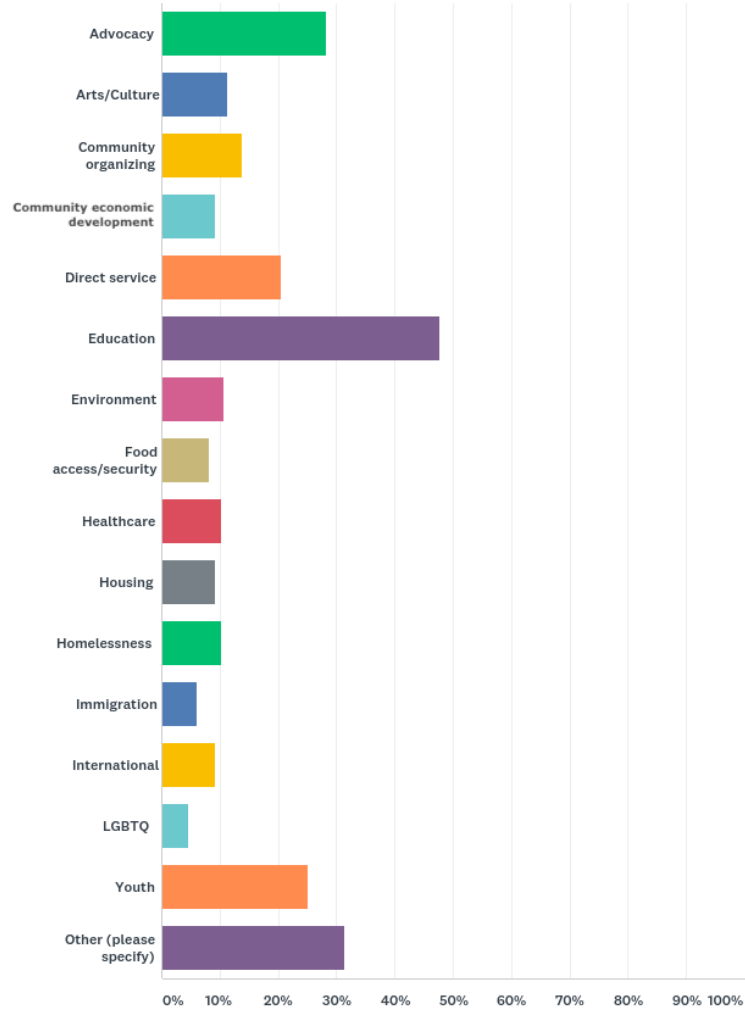Q2 What is the focus of your organization's work? (mark all that apply)

Chart 3 – Budget Size

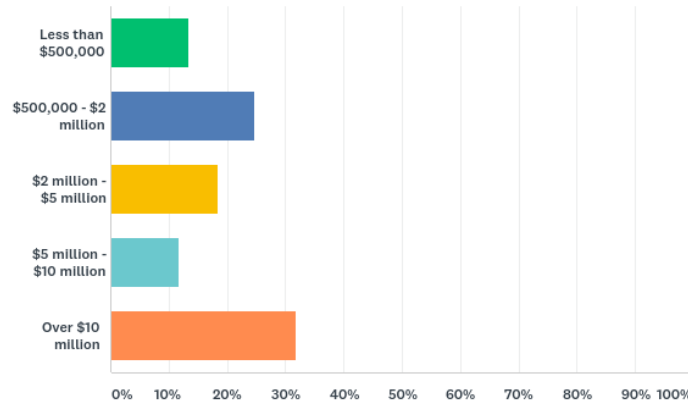### Q3 What is the size of your organization's annual budget?

Chart 4 – Stages of Racial Equity Engagement

Q5 Based on our definition, how advanced would you say your nonprofit is in promoting racial equity within your organization?
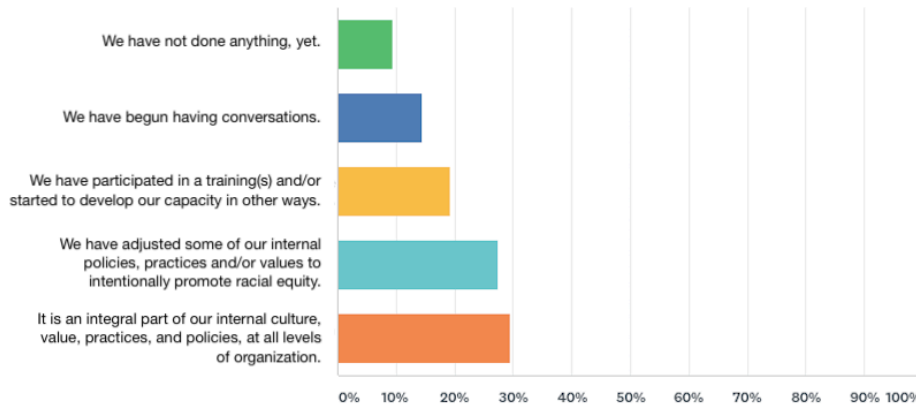
Chart 5 – Leading Racial Equity Efforts

Q6 Who is driving the efforts to promote racial equity within your organization? (mark all that apply)
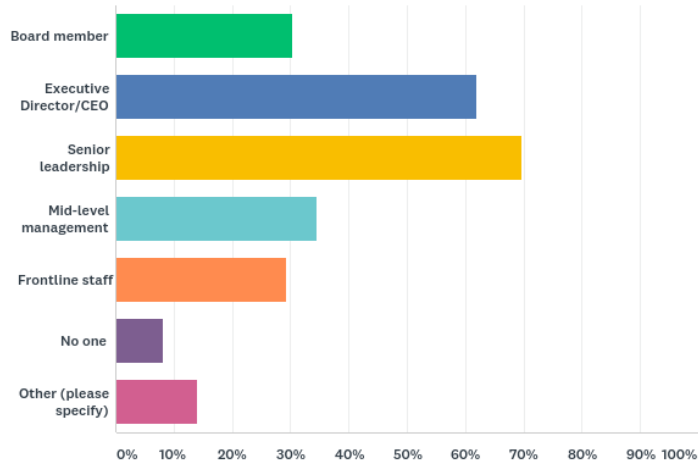

Chart 6 – Challenges to Promoting Racial Equity

Q8 What challenges does your organization face in creating institutional norms and practices that promote racial equity? (mark all that apply)
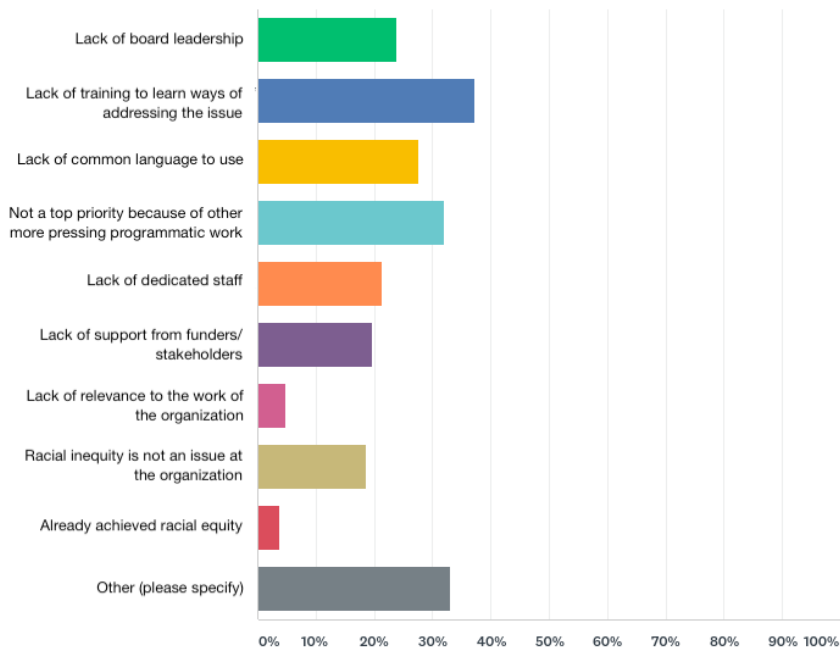
Chart 7 – Board Training/Capacity Building

Q13 Which of the following training/capacity building work has your board participated in or is it planning to? (mark all that apply)
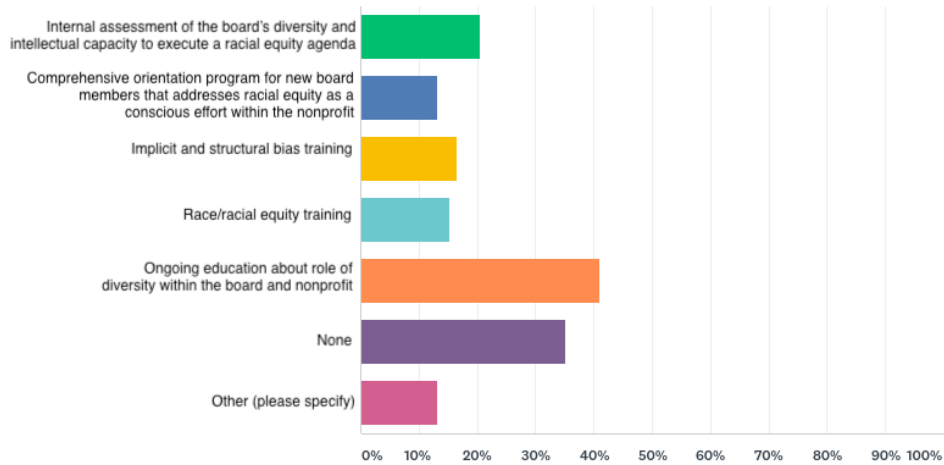
Chart 8 – Board Adopted Policies/Procedures

Q14 Which of the following policies and procedures has your board implemented to promote racial equity? (mark all that apply)
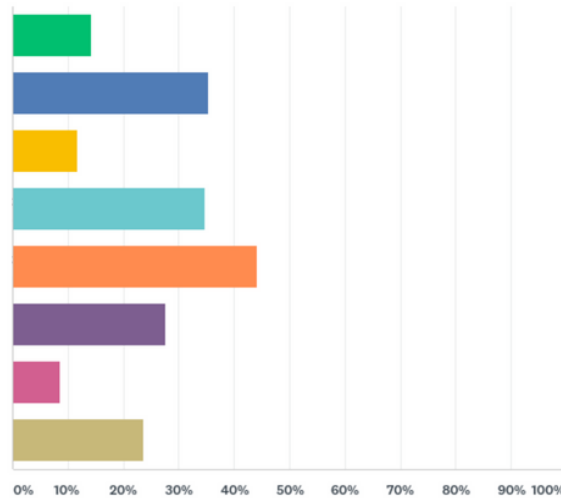

Chart 8 Key:

Green - Regular board self-assessment and reflection that includes evaluation of the board and chief executive's willingness to engage with issues of racial equity within the nonprofit

Dark Blue - Board and staff recruitment strategies that acknowledge and intend to diminish implicit bias in recruitment decision-making

Yellow - Explicit board role definitions that outline board members' and board leadership's stake in fostering organization culture that elevates racial equity

Light Blue - Explicit commitment to racial equity in the organization's strategic plan

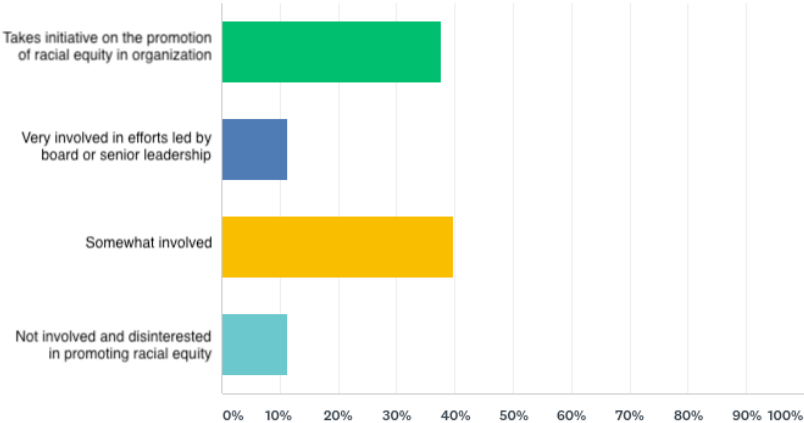**Orange** - Explicit commitment to racial equity as an institutional core value

Purple - Diversity and inclusion plan development and implementation

Pink - Board has agreed upon definitions for the terms "race," "racism," and/or "racial equity" at the organization

Tan - Other (please specify)

Chart 9 – Staff Involvement in Promoting Racial Equity

Q19 How involved is your staff in promoting racial equity?

Racial Equity Research Survey Questions

Georgetown University's Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership is conducting this survey as part of a research project to better understand how nonprofit organizations address racial equity with their board and staff. Through this research we hope to highlight some promising practices to promote racial equity within nonprofit organizations.

For the purpose of the research, we are using the following definition of racial equity:
   "The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares in society. Racial equity is more than the establishment of fair treatment, and fundamentally requires that past inequities be resolved so that the current conditions, and not just the treatment of people, cannot be predicted by race" (The Black Social Change Funders Network ii).

Our research project focuses on racial equity within the Washington D.C. region's nonprofit sector. We are interested in the establishment of conditions in which Black/African Americans have equal consideration in how nonprofits attract, hire, develop, and retain them and who is consciously or unconsciously included in decision making. Given the history and current data that demonstrate ongoing racial inequities for Blacks within the sector, that is our primary focus.

Your answers to the questions below will be kept confidential. Please answer as many as you can, however only answers to the first four questions are required.

We sincerely thank you for your participation in this research project.

Please answer as many of the following questions that apply to your role. Your answers will be kept confidential and will be included in our aggregate data.

1. Please identify your position within your organization
   o Board member
   o Executive Director/CEO
   o Senior leadership
   o Mid-level management
   o Frontline staff

2. What is the focus of your organization's work? (mark all that apply)
   o Advocacy
   o Arts/Culture
   o Community organizing
   o Community economic development
   o Direct service
   o Education
   o Environment
   o Food access/security
   o Healthcare
   o Housing
   o Homelessness
   o Immigration
   o International
   o LGBTQ
   o Youth
   o Other _____

3. What is the size of your organization's annual budget?
   o Less than $500,000
   o $500,000 - $2 million
   o $2 million - $5 million
   o $5 million - $10 million
   o Over $10 million

4. What is the zip code of your nonprofit's primary location?

5. Based on our definition, how advanced would you say your nonprofit is in promoting racial equity within your organization?
   o We have not done anything, yet.
   o We have begun having conversations.
   o We have participated in a training(s) and/or started to develop our capacity in other ways.
   o We have adjusted some of our internal policies, practices and/or values to intentionally promote racial equity.
   o It is an integral part of our internal culture, value, practices, and policies.

6. Who is driving the efforts to promote racial equity within your organization?
   o Board member
   o Executive Director/CEO
   o Senior leadership
   o Mid-level management
   o Frontline staff
   o No one
   o Other: _____

7. Of the person/persons you have identified above, what is/are their primary racial/ethnic background?
   o White
   o Black
   o Asian/Pacific Islander
   o Latino/a or Hispanic
   o Native American
   o Other race/ethnicity: _____

8. What challenges does your organization face in creating institutional norms and practices that promote racial equity? (Please mark all that apply.)
   o Lack of board leadership
   o Lack of training to learn ways of addressing the issue
   o Lack of common language to use
   o Not a top priority because of other more pressing programmatic work
   o Lack of dedicated staff
   o Lack of support from funders/stakeholders
   o Lack of relevance to the work of the organization
   o Racial inequity is not an issue at the organization
   o Already achieved racial equity
   o Other: _____

9. Do you participate in a broader group, or in meetings with other organizations, working on racial equity?

- o Yes
- o No

10. Please share additional details on how your organization is promoting racial equity and any challenges that your organization is facing.

Questions related to board engagement in racial equity

11. How many of your board members are:
    - o White _____
    - o Black _____
    - o Asian/Pacific Islander _____
    - o Latino/a or Hispanic _____
    - o Native American _____
    - o Other race/ethnicity: _____

12. How frequently does your board discuss racial equity?
    - o Never
    - o Rarely
    - o Sometimes
    - o Often

13. Which of the following training/capacity building work has your board participated in or is it planning to? (Please check all that apply.)
    - o Internal assessment of the board's diversity and intellectual capacity to execute a racial equity agenda
    - o Comprehensive orientation program for new board members that addresses racial equity as a conscious effort within the nonprofit
    - o Implicit and structural bias training
    - o Race/racial equity training
    - o Ongoing education about role of diversity within the board and nonprofit
    - o None
    - o Other: _____

14. Which of the following policies and procedures has your board implemented to promote racial equity? (Please check all that apply.)
    - o Regular board self-assessment and reflection that includes evaluation of the board and chief executive's willingness to engage with issues of racial equity within the nonprofit
    - o Board recruitment strategies that acknowledge and intend to diminish implicit bias in recruitment decision-making
    - o Explicit board role definitions that outline board members' and board leadership's stake in fostering organization culture that elevates racial equity
    - o Explicit commitment to racial equity in the organization's strategic plan
    - o Explicit commitment to racial equity as an institutional core value
    - o Diversity and inclusion plan development and implementation
    - o Board has agreed upon definitions for the terms "race," "racism," and/or "racial equity" at the organization
    - o Other: _____

15. How much emphasis does the board place on attracting candidates from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds?

- o None
- o Little
- o Some
- o Significant

16. Does your organization intentionally consider/monitor the race and ethnicity of the board members who assume board leadership roles?
    - o Yes
    - o No

17. Is there anything else you would like to share about the work that your board is doing to promote racial equity within your nonprofit, or any of the challenges that it is facing?

Questions related to staff engagement in racial equity

18. How many people on your staff are:
    - o White _____
    - o Black _____
    - o Asian/Pacific Islander _____
    - o Latino/a or Hispanic _____
    - o Native American _____
    - o Other race/ethnicity: _____

19. How involved is your staff in promoting racial equity?
    - o Take initiative on the promotion of racial equity in organization
    - o Very involved in efforts led by the board or senior leadership
    - o Somewhat involved
    - o Not involved and disinterested in promoting racial equity

20. If involved, what is/are the racial/ethnic backgrounds of staff involved in promoting racial equity?
    - o White
    - o Black
    - o Asian/Pacific Islander
    - o Latino/a or Hispanic
    - o Native American
    - o Other race/ethnicity: _____

21. Do you have a diversity and inclusion plan for your staff?
    - o Yes, and it's being implemented with intention as a priority for the organization.
    - o Yes, but it is not taken as seriously as it could be.
    - o No, but we're working to create one.
    - o No, and it is not considered a necessity.

22. Which of the following trainings and programming has your staff implemented or participated in or is planning to do so? (Please check all that apply.)
    - o Staff recruitment strategies that acknowledge and intend to diminish implicit bias in recruitment decision-making
    - o Comprehensive orientation program for new staff that addresses racial equity as a conscious effort within the nonprofit
    - o Implicit and structural bias training
    - o External training programs focused on racial equity
    - o Expert/trainer brought in to facilitate internal discussions on racial equity

- o Staff-led discussions on racial equity
- o Staff-led reading groups on racial equity
- o None
- o Other: _____

23. Are these trainings/programming mandatory?
- o None are mandatory
- o Some are mandatory
- o Most are mandatory
- o All are mandatory

24. Which of the following policies and procedures has your organization implemented, or is it intending to? (Please check all that apply.)
- o Formation of a racial equity working group
- o Operationalization of an anti-racist framework into hiring practices
- o Formation of racial affinity group(s) for staff support
- o HR mechanisms that monitor race and ethnicity of staff members who access professional development opportunities (i.e. trainings and mentorship)
- o None
- o Other: _____

25. Of the trainings and programming you have noted your nonprofit is engaged with, which do you feel have been the most helpful in advancing racial equity within your organization?

26. Have you found executive recruiters to help or hinder attempts to attract applicants of color?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Unsure

- o Please explain your answer:_____

27. Past research has shown that, often unintentionally, staff does not have equal access to leadership development opportunities within a nonprofit organization. Do all of your staff equally have opportunities for:
- o Mentoring
  - ▪ Yes
  - ▪ No
  - ▪ Unsure
- o On-the-job training
  - ▪ Yes
  - ▪ No
  - ▪ Unsure
- o Networking opportunities
  - ▪ Yes
  - ▪ No
  - ▪ Unsure
- o Attending conferences or workshops
  - ▪ Yes
  - ▪ No
  - ▪ Unsure

28. Does the organization pay for staff to take advantage of professional development opportunities outside the nonprofit?
    o Yes, professional development opportunities are funded by our organization.
    o No, individuals are required to pay on their own.

    o If yes, up to what dollar amount will your organization cover annually? _____

29. Does support staff have the same opportunities for professional development as professional staff?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Unsure

30. Do you believe race is a barrier to staff advancement?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Unsure

    o If yes, please explain your answer: _____

31. Do you believe that any racial tension exists among your staff?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Unsure

    o If yes, please explain your answer: _____

32. Do you think any of your staff are implicitly or explicitly asked or assumed to "represent" their race?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Unsure

    o If yes, please explain: _____

33. Please share any successful approaches that your organization has used and/or any challenges your organization has faced in promoting racial equity in your staff.

Questions related to training and support for racial equity work

34. What trainings or resources do you think would help your organization move forward in promoting racial equity?

35. Would you consider participating in any of the following types of trainings?
    o Racial equity training
    o Implicit bias training
    o None of the above
    o Other: _____

36. What conditions would make it more likely that you would participate in a training related to racial equity?

37. Do you have any questions about racial equity that remain unanswered? (i.e. What don't you know that you want to know?)

38. If you would be willing to further discuss your answers to these survey questions, please give us your email so we can follow up: _____

39. Are you willing to let us include quotes from your responses above in our research report? These quotes will not be attributed to you as an individual or your organization. If you are willing, please mark "yes."
    o Yes
    o No