REJI ORGANIZATIONAL RACE EQUITY TOOLKIT

2ND EDITION

Tool E: Sample Equity Plan – City of Seattle

JUSTLEAD WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON RACE EQUITY & JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Tool E: Sample Equity Plan – Race and Social Justice Initiative, City of Seattle

RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE
2019 – 2021 STRATEGY

WHO WE ARE:

We are advocates and organizers who act accountably, creatively, and strategically for racial justice. We harness our multi-racial and interconnected experiences to embody the change we want to see in the world. A transparent and supportive team, we honor the best in one another, practice radical self-acceptance, and see each other as mirrors and gifts. As we grow, we grow collectively, learning from and challenging each other while centering community leadership in order to move racial justice forward.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: (*Adopted from the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*)

- Undoing racism
- Sharing culture
- Learning from history
- Maintaining accountability
- Analyzing power
- Undoing Internalized Racial Oppression
- Identifying and analyzing manifestations of racism
- Developing leadership
- Networking
- Gatekeeping

Applying these principles to Seattle City government

- Power of history: Honor the history of racial justice organizing that birthed the Race and Social Justice Initiative.
- City role and impact: Understand the City of Seattle's institutional power and footprint in local communities most impacted by structural racism.
- Accountability: Accept responsibility for institutional actions and harm, and work to restore relationships, share information and follow-through with commitments.
- Value community: Value the wisdom, expertise and leadership of communities most impacted; and compensate community members for their contributions to the institution.
- Show up for community: Respect, support and show up for communities organizing for racial justice and systems-change.
- Learn from community: Center and learn from those who are burdened by the multiplicity of institutional harm.

RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE
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STRATEGY # 1

Build an anti-racist network within City government. Shift internal practices and develop decision-making skills that eliminate institutional and structural racism. *Organize within and across departments to ensure that racial equity drives behaviors, processes and decisions at all levels, from staff relationships to policies and practices that impact communities most affected by racism*.

TACTICS

1. **Complete RSJI Workplans**: Coordinate City departments' drafting of annual RSJI workplans that outline individual departments' RSJI commitments and actions, including alignment with RSJI's nine Equity Areas (equitable development; housing; education; environmental justice service equity; criminal justice; transportation; jobs/economic justice; health; arts & culture).
2. **Design and facilitate Citywide training:** Redesign Citywide RSJI training curricula and deliver high quality RSJI training to City employees through the Cornerstone system and department-specific requests. RSJI trainings build racial justice knowledge, awareness, network and organizing skills, and deepen analysis of racism and its intersections with other forms of oppression.
3. **Develop and facilitate a Citywide training cohort:** In partnership with Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), implement a Train-the-Trainer program to develop racial justice trainers across City departments to provide facilitation capacity for Citywide RSJI and SDHR trainings.
4. **Support departmental Change Teams**: Support 28-30 Executive and non-Executive City Departments' racial equity teams to advance racial equity within their own departments' business lines.
5. **Convene RSJI Sub-Cabinet**: Convene monthly meetings with Department Directors or their designees to address RSJI projects, prioritization, Citywide trends and needs.
6. **Convene Directors' Forums**: Facilitate quarterly RSJI training for Department Directors.
7. **Strengthen Citywide use of the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET)**: Build a practice of racial equity across City departments through regular training and use of the RET, including implementing racially equitable community engagement tactics.
8. **Support CORE Team**: Convene and support cohorts of City employees focused on racial justice organizing, movement building and leadership development.
9. **Host gatherings and special events**: Engage city employees and community members through speakers events, summits and other events designed to build community, deepen understanding and develop solutions to pressing social ills.

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STRATEGY #2

Transform the internal government culture of the City toward one rooted in racial justice, humanistic relationships, belonging and wellbeing. *Replace the norms and patterns of white supremacy culture with those that promote healthy relationships, collaboration, transparency, "both/and" thinking, deliberative decision-making, and an understanding of our shared history. This requires reckoning with the impacts of internalized racism and implicit bias and using arts-integration and mindfulness to inform the ways we envision and do our work.*

TACTICS

1. **Expand definition of racism to include four types:** In all aspects of our work, use the expanded definition of racism to include its four interconnected manifestations – interpersonal, institutional, structural, and internalized. To achieve racial equity, we must approach our work holistically, with the understanding that we must transform ourselves in order to transform the institution.
2. **Address Internalized Racial Oppression:** Use caucusing, training, and facilitated dialogue to bring City employees together to explore how internalized racism affects the way we see ourselves and each other.
3. **Navigate racialized conflicts within City Departments:** Build a practice of relational culture by designing and facilitating healing circles, dialogues, restorative practices, and other customized experiences for departments and teams to address racialized patterns of behavior and institutional power dynamics that get in the way of healthy, productive relationships within our workforce.
4. **Co-facilitate Workforce Equity Planning and Advisory Committee (WEPAC):** As part of a long-time partnership between SOCR and SDHR, support interdepartmental teams to develop workforce equity strategies, policies, trainings and investments that address historical and current harm to employees of color, and create systems that support a racially just workplace environment.
5. **Implement the Creative Strategies Initiative (CSI)**: Use arts, culture, embodiment and mindfulness practices within City policy processes, trainings and community engagement efforts to cultivate racial justice in areas such as workforce equity, use of the RET and environmental justice. This work is supported through a long-time partnership with Office of Arts & Culture.

STRATEGY #3

RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE
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Align our racial justice efforts with local community organizing and strengthen relationships with communities most impacted by structural racism. *Be accountable to communities of color and be mindful of Seattle's ongoing history of racism in housing, employment and development.*

TACTICS

1. Support community-led racial justice campaigns: Assist community-led racial justice efforts that center those most directly affected by structural racism.
2. Redirect funding to communities most impacted by structural racism: Restructure City funding processes (grants, commissions, contracts) to directly benefit communities most impacted by structural racism.
3. Conduct racially equitable community engagement: Use the RET and other Departmental systems and processes, support racially equitable community engagement strategies and tactics that restore past and current harms, and create opportunities for healthy, sustained relationships.

STRATEGY #4

Work in relationship with national and regional racial justice leaders from all communities and sectors to advance racial justice. *This will be realized by building sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships, sharing strategies and tactics, being transparent about our missteps and shortcomings, and recognizing our roles as racial justice-driven government institutions*.

TACTICS

1. Contribute to regional events and conferences: Develop shared analysis, learning and planning with governments within the Northwest region, including King County and members of the Regional Equity & Inclusion Group.
2. Support national racial justice initiatives within government: Participate in events, peer exchanges and best practice resource-sharing organized by the Government Alliance for Race and Equity (GARE), Race Forward, PolicyLink, National League of Cities and other groups.