



Diversity, Inclusion, & Equity in Community Foundations

Organizational History Journey Map

History permeates and shapes the structure, practices and culture of an institution. It is helpful for *changemakers* to know the history of their organization with regard to inclusion, equity and diversity; and to reflect together on the ways in which that history can inform their current change efforts.

Inclusion, diversity and equity work can be understood through a broad lens that accounts for historical, social and political experience that shape an organization. Seeing our own work as part of this history of change deepens our understanding and appreciation for the contributions of our predecessors and our own current efforts. This understanding and appreciation are key ingredients for sustenance over the long haul.

This activity is designed to assist your team in recovering and using that history. On a practical level, this activity is also helpful as a way to share information and insights within your team; and, as a strategy to begin developing a shared analysis about the institution you are working to change.



Overview & Directions

In this activity your team will work together to:

- ◆ Draw an Organizational Journey Map (30-45 Minutes)
- ◆ Engage in personal reflection (5-15 Minutes)
- ◆ Collectively consider how your organization's history can be harnessed to deepen commitment and practice in the areas of diversity, inclusion, and equity (30-45 Minutes)

The Power of Culture

“Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres.”

Old Mexican Saying that means:

“Tell me who you walk with and I will tell you who you are.”

Directions for Drawing Journey Map:

Working together as a team, think back over the entire history of your foundation—as far back as your group has knowledge. Construct a timeline along which you can draw a historical journey map that traces the foundation’s evolution and development with regard to issues of equity and diversity. The timeline should begin with the establishment of the foundation and include important events and experiences related to the following:

Major Historical & Organizational Milestones and Events:

Note along this part of the timeline major events in the foundation’s history (e.g., founding date, first president and successors, board is expanded, a major initiative is launched, major donor development campaigns, etc.).

The Foundation’s Experiences With Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity:

Note any important diversity or equity related activities or milestones in the life of the foundation (e.g., first Board member of color, first woman or person of color hired in senior management, internal dialogues and workshops with a diversity consultant, new diversity initiative is funded, the foundation sponsored big citywide forum on racism, a new mission statement crafted to address diversity, three staff members of color quit in protest over a policy, etc.)

Related Community Events, Issues, and Dynamics:

Note along this timeline major events or episodes that put equity and diversity issues on the front-burner for the community or region the foundation serves (e.g., 1992 civil unrest in Los Angeles after Rodney King verdict, a major citywide labor strike, a racially divisive political campaign, an escalation of racialized conflicts or tensions on high school campuses or in a neighborhood, etc.).

Note: We suggest the team tape together 3 long strips of butcher paper to form a banner size chart which can be marked according to attached diagram. The team will need this chart and plenty of markers.

Reflection & Discussion:

Suggested Questions for the Reflection:

What can you now say about the foundation’s journey in dealing with issues of equity and diversity? What patterns do you see? Cyclical? Have there been many starts and stops? Or has there been steady progress? Has it been volatile at times? Was the journey impacted by a lot of external forces? Or, was the journey mostly driven by internal leadership? In either case, whose voices and actions were most critical to shaping the course of that Journey? Are there any underlying power balance issues reflected in the priority given to one set of voices over others? Were there bad experiences within the foundation that might result in resistance now to working on these issues? Has there been a long history of work on these issues or has it come up relatively recently?

Suggested Topics For Discussion:

How might this history inform your team’s work to develop strategies to raise and deal with issues within our foundation over the next few years? What lessons can you gain from our analysis of the journey that will be helpful as you raise these issues within your foundation? How can your team benefit from past efforts? In what ways should we be careful to do things differently? What will ensure your work is meaningful and sustainable?