

How to Get Started

At this point, you may not know where your organization will enter this work, or the precise path your organization will take on its journey towards a Race Equity Culture. Rather than let this uncertainty impede your progress, move forward with the knowledge that it is normal. Even in the absence of a defined path, there are actionable steps your organization can take to launch its race equity work:

- 1. Establish a shared vocabulary.** Ground your organization in shared meaning around race equity and structural racism. These terms work hand in hand; by achieving race equity, you will be dismantling structural racism. Many organizations maintain a running dictionary of terms from which to draw when needed; the [Glossary](#) found in the Appendix is a helpful starting point.
- 2. Identify race equity champions at the board and senior leadership levels.** While race equity work only succeeds as an organization-wide effort, a critical component is buy-in from board members and senior leaders who can set race equity priorities and communicate them throughout the organization. As these constituent groups make up distinct levers, it's imperative that they independently demonstrate a firm commitment to race equity. Senior leaders must encourage others in the organization to engage in the work, influence the speed and depth at which race equity is embedded in the organization, and continuously drive progress and accountability.
- 3. Name race equity work as a strategic imperative for your organization.**³³ Hold race equity as a north star for your organization. Define and communicate how race equity work helps the organization achieve its mission. The more you connect the reasons for doing this work to your mission, vision, organizational values, and strategies, the more critically important it will feel to everyone in the organization, at every level.

- 4. Open a continuous dialogue about race equity work.** There are numerous ways to engage in effective conversations on race equity. Host a brown-bag lunch about race equity efforts on your team, or for individuals who are invested in your organizational cause, and secure an external facilitator to ensure discussion is both objectively and effectively managed. Whether it's environmental justice, access to education, or philanthropy and grantmaking, you can find research and examples of organizations that have done race equity work and shared their learnings. Use these stories to start the conversation about race equity within your team, and discuss how the approaches of other organizations might apply to your work.
- 5. Disaggregate data.** Start looking at your numbers. The only way to get a clear picture of inequities and outcomes gaps both internally and externally is to collect, disaggregate, and report relevant data. Organizations should examine staff engagement, performance, and compensation data by race, at all staff levels. Program data should also be disaggregated and analyzed by race. Hold yourself and your leadership accountable for this work.

