Unrealized Impact 2.0

The Hard Truth About Where We Are and Ways to Move Forward

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A Note from Xiomara Padamsee

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In this country, social justice organizations work year after year to solve society's most vexing and persistent challenges. However, this already complex work is made more difficult because many organizations themselves operate ineffectively or inconsistently when it comes to how they treat their people. We often find that an organization's culture, policies, and practices — both in theory and in action — actually inhibit their ability to accomplish their critical missions.

Promise54 partners with organizations to help them shift their culture and practices to create the conditions necessary for all leaders and staff to thrive <u>and</u> do their best work. Given our country's history of systemic **racism** and oppression, we believe that creating diverse, inclusive, equitable, and antiracist work environments is a precondition to achieving social justice. We envision, and are working toward the day when, social justice organizations achieve maximum impact because they have the right people excelling in the right roles, their teams reflect the communities they serve, their cultures are compassionate and value all people and perspectives, and identity markers no longer predict staff outcomes.

At Promise54, we strive to take a radically human[1] approach in all of our work. This approach means prioritizing deep, authentic, and trusting relationships with each other as well as with our colleagues in the field. It means redefining professionalism to allow natural human emotion and vulnerability into the workplace. We believe strongly in every person's innate brilliance. We believe in imperfection and in lifelong learning. We work hard — for ourselves and for our partners — to create space to heal from past pain and trauma experienced in workplaces defined by **white supremacy culture**[2].

In a number of ways, our **radically human** framework informed this project, in which we seek to understand the current state of **diversity**, **inclusion**, and **equity** (DEI) in education and enable leaders to do better. Our project intentionally incorporates the voices and experiences of staff in multiple ways — quantitative and qualitative, in broad aggregate trends, and in individual experiences. Further, we aim to acknowledge and include experiences that can't always be quantified and the experiences of populations that often fall below sample size reporting cutoffs in traditional research. Finally, we push ourselves to boldly share our own observations and experiences as Leaders of Color in the education space now working to support more than 100 organizations a year to advance this work.

On a personal level, I have a love-hate relationship with this project. Throughout my career, I've worked at and with organizations that rely on People of Color to point out the ways that the status quo of white supremacy culture fails Black and Brown people. Due to a historical lack of aggregated data on staff experiences around diversity, inclusion, and equity in the education sector (in and of itself a statement of low prioritization), we are usually forced to share our own painful experiences to agitate toward progress — and when we do, we are often met with skepticism or outright denial.

This regular occurrence of having our own lived experiences invalidated compelled my colleagues and

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[1]   Padamsee, X. (2019). Radically human. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/radically-human/

[2]   Padamsee, X. (2020). We can't disrupt white supremacy and Anti-Blackness without a mirror. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/we-cant-disrupt-white-supremacy-and-anti-blackness-without-a-mirror/

me to write the original Unrealized Impact[3] report in 2017, which at the time was the most comprehensive study ever completed on diversity, inclusion, and equity (DEI) in the education sector. The report demonstrated that the experiences I and others like me have so often endured are substantiated by considerable aggregate quantitative evidence. I hate that such a report was necessary, that aggregate quantitative data hadn't previously been prioritized, collected, and communicated; that the field requires this form of data to acknowledge things that Black and Brown people know to be true from our own experiences; and that the challenges exist in the first place. That said, once the report was released, I was touched and overwhelmed by the number of people who shared similar stories, who found validation and affirmation in the pages of the report, and who experienced relief and freedom in having the ability to leverage aggregate, anonymous data to drive toward change versus having to relive and expose personal pain and trauma. That's the part I love. This overwhelming response encouraged us to continue collecting this data for version two.

We continue to feel a strong sense of responsibility to share and update this data, as in the last few years the number of organizations leveraging our hallmark DEI surveys to monitor their progress has more than doubled and the number of individual respondents has increased fivefold. I firmly believe that collecting and holding this large base of data is a privilege. Further, I believe that being in the room with organizations as they grapple with their most complex people-related challenges — including substantial messiness related specifically to diversity, inclusion, equity, and **antiracism** — is a privilege. And with these privileges comes the responsibility to mine for trends, insights, and promising practices, and to share those with the field.
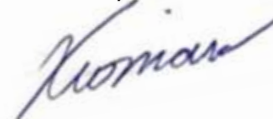
> **"** On a personal level, I have a love-hate relationship with this project. I hate that such a report is necessary. That said, I was touched and overwhelmed by the number of people who found validation and affirmation in the original report. That's the part I love. This overwhelming response encouraged us to continue collecting this data. **"**

I hope that this report provides a powerful call to action for organizations to engage in the work of becoming diverse, inclusive, equitable, and antiracist. I hope that the evidence we provide and the promising practices we point to will relieve at least some of the pressure that so often is placed on people with historically marginalized identities to begin or sustain this work .

If the past few years have taught me anything, it is that we must do better to take care of each other. I am disheartened that three years after Unrealized Impact, we find ourselves facing the same challenges. Yet I am energized by the opportunity to leverage an even larger data set to dig deeper into key findings and insights as to how we can move our collective work forward. We must do better to ensure that people of all identities feel — and are — safe, seen, valued, and included in this country. The strength, courage, and kindness exhibited by so many throughout the COVID-19 crisis, and the outrage, resistance, and solidarity demonstrated through Black Lives Matter protests must be sustained and carried into our organizations so that we can be better humans, build better organizations, and do better with and for the communities we serve to create a better society. It's time to do better.

Pa'lante,

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3   Padamsee, X., Crowe, B., Louis, L., Messano, F., & Paperny, T. (2017). Unrealized impact: The case for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Promise54. http://www.unrealizedimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Unrealized_Impact-Final-072017.pdf

Introduction

The United States is a country founded on the enslavement of Africans and the genocide of Indigenous people. From this sordid beginning, we created institutions, policies, and practices to protect and perpetuate white dominance, power, and control. The result is that white supremacy permeates every social, political, and economic dimension of the United States.

Ongoing and repeated instances of racial oppression — as in institutionally sanctioned violence and murder of **Black** people in the United States, and disproportionate impacts of health crises like COVID-19 — lay bare the fundamental truth of institutionalized racism in the United States: Public institutions fail People of Color and other historically marginalized groups. And worse, they often enact violence on them. As a result, race, more than any other identity marker in the United States, is correlated with a slew of life outcomes. On the whole, People of Color experience more adverse outcomes across educational attainment,[4] housing,[5] employment,[6] health,[7] wealth,[8] incarceration,[9] and even life expectancy.[10]

U.S. schools and the education system more broadly uphold and perpetuate white supremacy. On a macro level, school finance systems perpetuate race-based disparities by giving white and/or wealthy families better options and opportunities. And on a micro level, educators and administrators often carry out disproportionate discipline for Students of Color and advance in-school lessons and curricula that remain largely white- and Euro-centric. While education is believed to be an equalizer, for many in the

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4   Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., Nathan, A., & Hwang, Y. A. (2017). Completing college: A national view of student attainment rates by race and ethnicity — Fall 2010 cohort (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Retrieved from https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport12-supplement-2/

5   Solomon, D., Maxwell, C., & Castro, A. (2019). Systemic inequality: Displacement, exclusion, and segregation: How America's housing system undermines wealth building in Communities of Color. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2019/08/07/472617/systemic-inequality-displacement-exclusion-segregation/; Matthew, D., Rodrigue, E., & Reeves, R. (2016). "Time for justice: Tackling race inequalities in health and housing." Brookings Institution. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/research/time-for-justice-tackling-race-inequalities-in-health-and-housing/

6   Williams, J., & Wilson, V. (2019). Black workers endure persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes. Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://www.epi.org/publication/labor-day-2019-racial-disparities-in-employment/; Solomon, D., Maxwell, C., & Castro, A. (2019). Systemic inequality and economic opportunity. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2019/08/07/472910/systematic-inequality-economic-opportunity/

7   Carratala, S., & Maxwell, C. (2020). Health disparities by race and ethnicity. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2020/05/07/484742/health-disparities-race-ethnicity/; Matthew, D., Rodrigue, E., & Reeves, R. (2016). Time for justice: Tackling race inequalities in health and housing. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/research/time-for-justice-tackling-race-inequalities-in-health-and-housing/

8   Kochhar, R., & Cilluffo, A. (2017). "How wealth inequality has changed in the U.S. since the great recession, by race, ethnicity, and income. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/01/how-wealth-inequality-has-changed-in-the-u-s-since-the-great-recession-by-race-ethnicity-and-income/

9   The Sentencing Project. (2018). Report to the United Nations on racial disparities in the U.S. criminal justice system. Retrieved from https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/un-report-on-racial-disparities/

10   Arias, E., & Xu, J. (2017). United States life tables, 2017. National Vital Statistics Reports, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr68/nvsr68_07-508.pdf

U.S. it actually reduces the social, economic, and health outcomes of Black and Brown students, adults, and communities.

All organizations are accountable for playing a role in either perpetuating or dismantling these same inequities internally among their staff, and subsequently with the populations they serve. To disrupt white supremacy and racism, education-focused organizations themselves must interrogate and fundamentally transform not just their demographics but also their culture and practices.

Deconstructing the systemic racism embedded in U.S. education requires a sustained commitment to antiracism. In the U.S., power over,[11] a form of power based on domination and control and built on a belief that power is a finite and scarce resource, has been enacted and institutionalized across multiple identities beyond and intersecting with race. To create a society where all people are seen, valued, heard, and have true agency, we must center radical humanity[12] and work toward shared liberation by intentionally disrupting the current status quo. Diversity, inclusion, and equity enable this disruption.

The goal of this paper is to support leaders of education and education-aligned social justice organizations to grow and strengthen diversity, inclusion, equity, and antiracism within their organizations, whether they are looking to start this work or have already begun.

Since we published the original "Unrealized Impact" report[13] in 2017, the field at large has acknowledged that advancing DEI is critical but has not made material shifts. Education organizations remain grossly unrepresentative of the students they serve and struggle to build and sustain inclusive cultures and equitable systems and structures.

To honor the promises of the Brown v. Board verdict more than half a century ago, this report assesses the state of DEI across the education field, identifies and shares lessons from organizations experiencing success, and supports leaders to define clear and tailored paths forward to become more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and antiracist.

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11   Stuart, G. (2019). 4 types of power: What are power over; power with; power to and power within? [Blog post]. Sustaining Community. Retrieved from https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2019/02/01/4-types-of-power/

12   Padamsee, X. (2019). Radically human. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/radically-human/

13   Padamsee, X., Crowe, B., Louis, L., Messano, F., & Paperny, T. (2017). Unrealized impact: The case for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Promise54. Retrieved from http://www.unrealizedimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Unrealized_Impact-Final-072017.pdf

Project Approach & Methodology

"Unrealized Impact 2.0" focuses on the following key questions:

1. Since our original "Unrealized Impact" report of 2017, have the organizations in our study become more racially/ethnically diverse?

2. What patterns emerge in staff perceptions and experiences of DEI when we view results by both independent and intersecting racial and ethnic, gender, or **LGBTQIA+** identity lines?

3. Are there associations between the racial and ethnic identities of organizational leadership and the experiences of their staff?

4. What policies, structures, or practices are associated with more positive staff DEI experiences?

5. Based on these insights, what actions do we recommend?

To answer these questions, Promise54 leveraged our broad data set consisting of 28,000 individual respondents and 500 organizations at the time of this analysis. We collected this data through our two surveys — our Organizational Profile Survey and DEI Staff Experience Survey. For the purpose of this report, we ended data collection in February 2020 to control for the widespread organizational impacts of COVID-19 on staff experiences. We augmented survey results with direct experience supporting more than 100 organizations each year and qualitative research from our 2019 DEI in Action Case Studies.

To our knowledge, at the time of publication, our surveys have generated the most comprehensive available data on the DEI status of education organizations in this country. (Limitations of our data set are explained on page 16 of the full report, and commitments we make for our own organizational growth and to improve these tools are shared on page 74.)
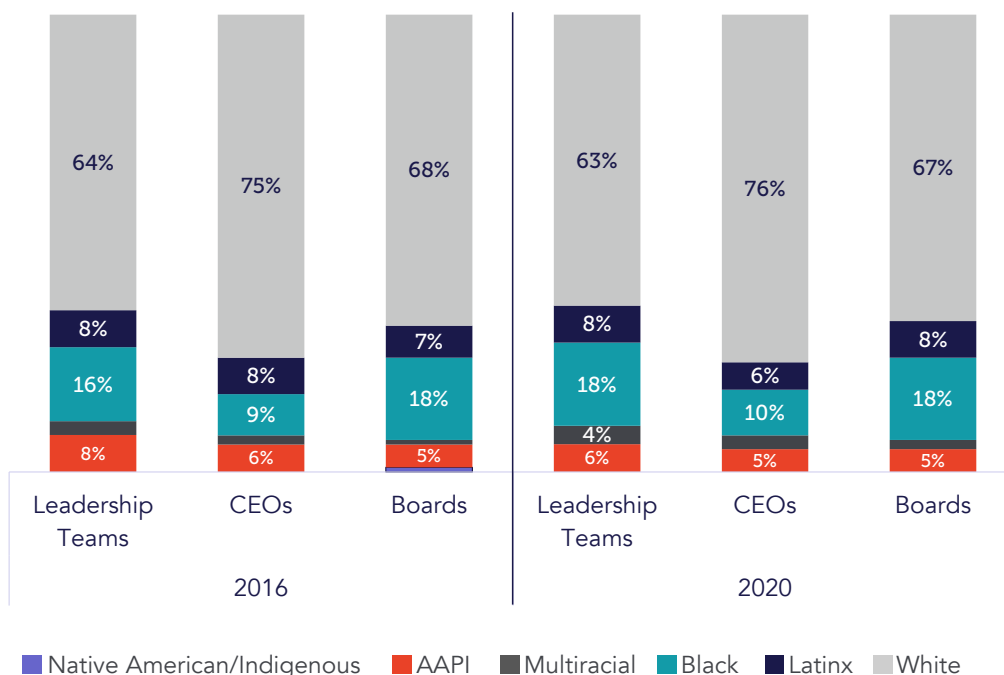
We surfaced key insights through the analysis of over 100 cross-tabulations from our DEI Staff Experience Survey data. We have included just a few illustrative examples of key data points below; please see our full report for more detailed findings.

1. Who Runs the (Education) World? Still White People. That Needs to Change

Education organizations remain unrepresentative of the students they serve. Our study tends to attract organizations that are intentionally focused on DEI, and yet 80% of the students served by organizations in this study are Students of Color, as compared to only 53% of staff, and these numbers have been nearly stagnant since 2017. This is particularly true in leadership roles, where power and privilege are concentrated and where white people still disproportionately serve in positions of power.

Leaders of Education Organizations Still Overwhelmingly White: 2016 to 2020

	2016			2020		
	Leadership Teams	CEOs	Boards	Leadership Teams	CEOs	Boards
White	64%	75%	68%	63%	76%	67%
Latinx	8%	8%	7%	8%	6%	8%
Black	16%	9%	18%	18%	10%	18%
Multiracial				4%		
AAPI	8%	6%	5%	6%	5%	5%
Native American/Indigenous						

Legend: Native American/Indigenous, AAPI, Multiracial, Black, Latinx, White

The most pronounced representation disparity is within the fast-growing **Latinx** population (40% of students, only 8% of leadership, stagnant since 2017). Funders are the least diverse organization type, including at the senior-most staff level, with 80% white CEOs.

2. Diversity Without Inclusion and Equity Perpetuates Harm

Diversity is important but not enough. In fact, 25% of surveyed organizations experienced relatively high levels of diversity without accompanying higher levels of inclusion or equity. At best, we see this exclusive emphasis on diversity result in a costly revolving-door staff attrition phenomenon along with perceptions of an assimilationist culture. At worst, organizations focused exclusively on diversity perpetuate pain and trauma that disproportionately impacts staff with historically marginalized identities.

Diversified Organizations Experience High Diversity but Low Inclusion and Often Lower Equity
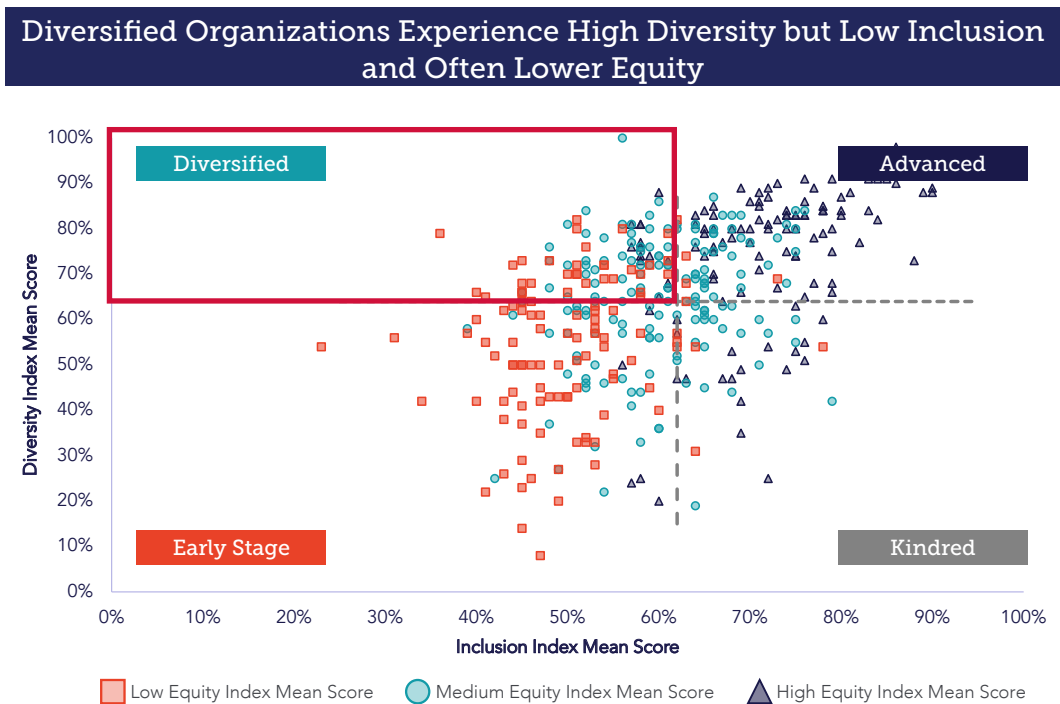
3. Disaggregate the Data: Oppression Is at Work…at Work

As we look across a multitude of identities, including race, gender, and LGBTQIA+, we find that nearly all participating organizations had significantly different staff experiences for at least one or more identity subgroups. As an example, in the majority of education organizations that participated in our survey, at least one race/ethnicity group of staff feels markedly less able to "bring their whole self to work," as compared with their colleagues. More than half of organizations had a gap of at least 20 percentage points between their highest-scoring and lowest-scoring subgroups, and this gap was more than 30 percentage points for over a quarter of participating organizations.

Q: I can bring my "whole self" to work

Mean % Positive by R/E Subgoup

Subgroup	%
Native American / Indigenous	71%
AAPI	77%
Black	69%
Latinx	75%
White	78%
Multiracial	65%
Range	13%

R/E Gap Range, % Orgs Distribution

Gap Range	%
0% to 10%	17%
10% to 20%	27%
20% to 30%	29%
30% to 40%	14%
40% to 100%	12%

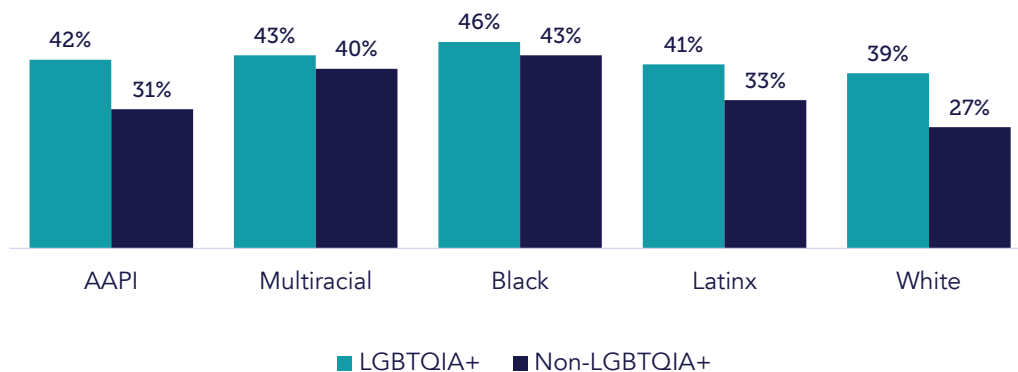*Gap range = highest subgroup score - lowest subgroup score
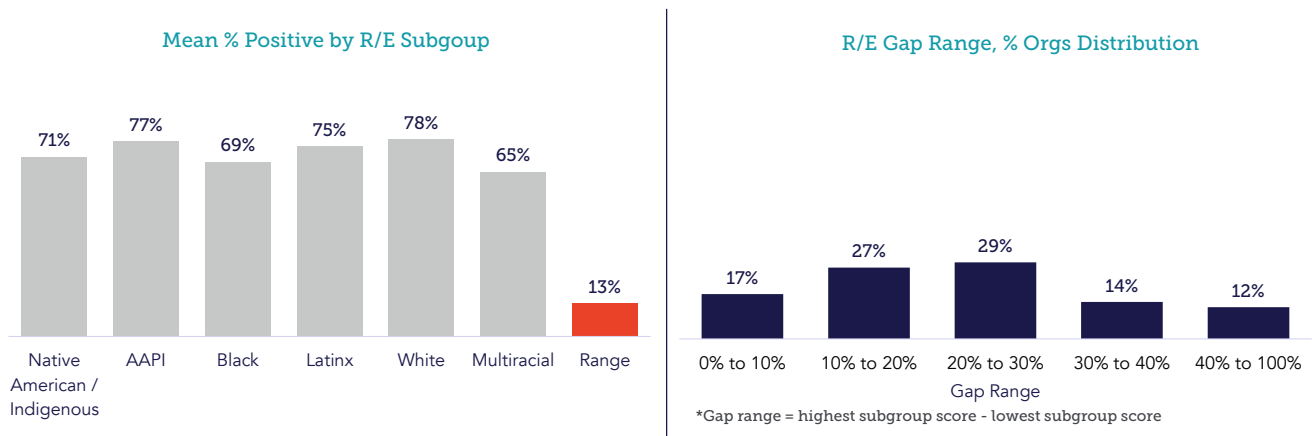
Further, our examination of racial/ethnic subgroups at either the highest or lowest end of their organization's scoring distribution revealed that white staff are far more likely to be the highest-scoring subgroups within their organizations (74%) than they are to be the lowest-scoring subgroup (26%). The inverse is true for Black (lowest scoring 75% and highest scoring 25% of the time) and Multiracial staff (lowest scoring 77% and highest scoring 23% of the time).

4. Greater Than the Sum of Parts: Oppression Compounds

All people carry multiple and intersecting identities. Our data highlights that negative experiences often compound at the intersection of multiple historically marginalized identities. For example, while people who identify as LGBTQIA+ experience higher rates of bias across every racial and ethnic group, Black LGBTQIA+-identifying staff reported the highest rates of experiencing bias.

LGBTQIA+ Staff Consistently Report More Experiences of Bias Across All Racial/Ethnic Groups, With Notably Higher Rates Among Black LGBTQIA+ Staff

Group	LGBTQIA+	Non-LGBTQIA+
AAPI	42%	31%
Multiracial	43%	40%
Black	46%	43%
Latinx	41%	33%
White	39%	27%

■ LGBTQIA+ ■ Non-LGBTQIA+

Note: Due to limited respondent group sizes, identities included in this analysis are limited (e.g., respondents identifying as Native American/Indigenous and non-binary are not included here (see pages 26 and 31 in our full report for more)).

5. 400+ Years and Counting: Anti-Blackness Persists

As we review staff experience data, a consistent pattern is clear: On nearly every measure, Black staff, and in particular Black women, report among the least positive experiences. Black women report the highest rates of experiencing bias, and among the least positive experiences on both the Inclusion and Equity Indices. Black and Multiracial are also the only subgroups to report negative Net Promoter Scores. Our data points to the fact that education organizations, even those working explicitly to advance equity and justice, have a persistent challenge around — and, in fact, may be perpetuating — anti-Blackness.

Women Consistently Report Lower Net Promoter Scores Across All Racial/Ethnic Groups, With Notably Lower Scores Among Black and Multiracial Women

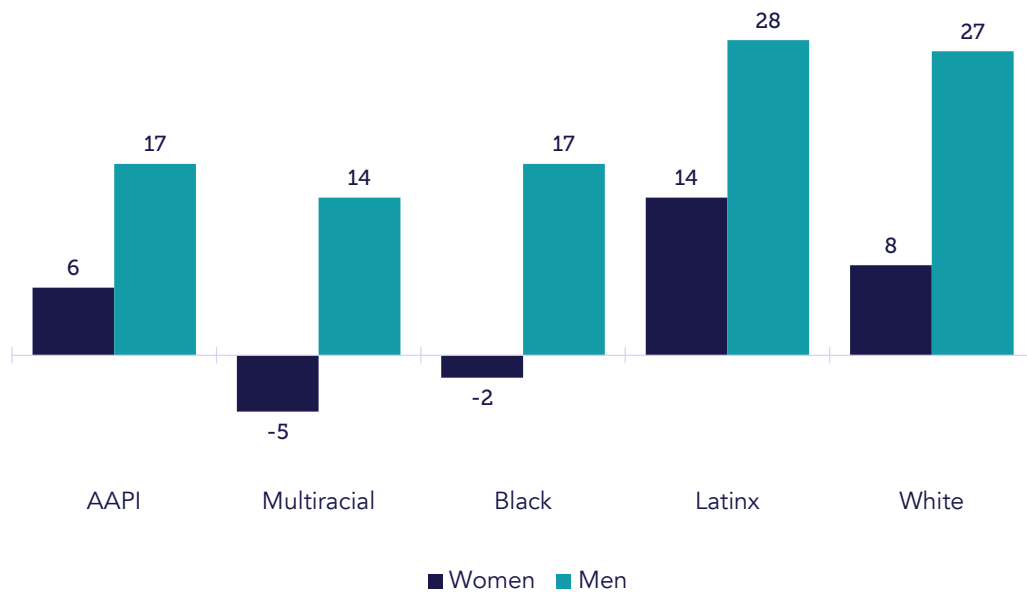| Group	Women	Men
AAPI	6	17
Multiracial	-5	14
Black	-2	17
Latinx	14	28
White	8	27

■ Women ■ Men

As noted above, due to limited respondent group sizes, identities included in this analysis are limited (e.g., respondents identifying as Native American/Indigenous and non-binary are not included here (see pages 26 and 31 in our full report for more)).

6. No Quick Fixes: DEI Structures Are Supports, Not Solutions

DEI policies, positions, and structures can support organizational leadership to advance DEI, but they alone are not enough. The hiring of a single person, or even a team, will not transform an organization's outcomes on its own because what matters most is not *whether* you create a position or structure to lead DEI and antiracism work but rather *how* it is implemented. For example, as illustrated below, organizations with CDOs are no more likely than organizations without CDOs to land in the Advanced DEI Profile (the profile representing organizations with the highest diversity and inclusion ratings in our database).

33%
Advanced
Profile

35%
Advanced
Profile

Without a Chief
Diversity Officer

With a Chief
Diversity Officer
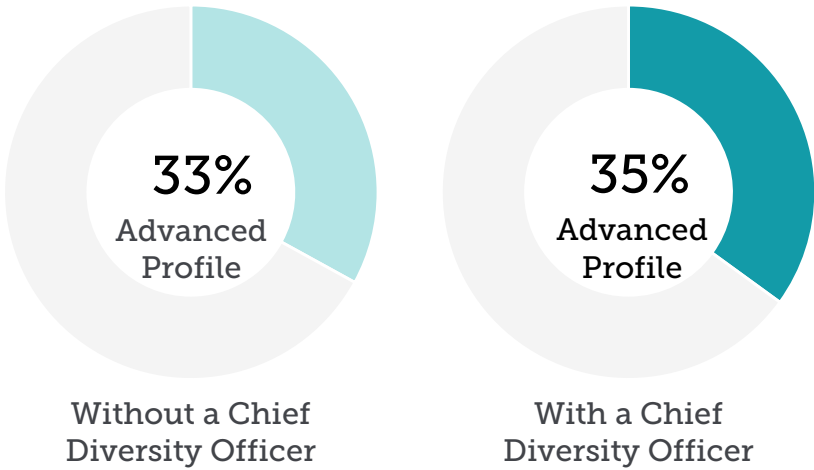
7. Stronger DEI, Stronger Organization

Stronger staff experiences of DEI translate to higher satisfaction and retention — and stronger organizations. Specifically, staff who experience their organization as Early Stage (i.e., lowest on diversity and inclusion, and often equity) report the poorest Net Promoter Scores and the lowest Intent to Stay. The highest ratings show up for individuals who experience their organization as Advanced (i.e., highest on diversity and inclusion, and often equity), with the strongest Net Promoter Score and Intent to Stay scores. When we factor in the organizational risks and costs of overall negative staff perceptions and high turnover, this data is a compelling call to action for organizations to invest in DEI work.

Diversity Index Mean Score

Diversified

Advanced

Early Stage

Kindred

Inclusion Index Mean Score
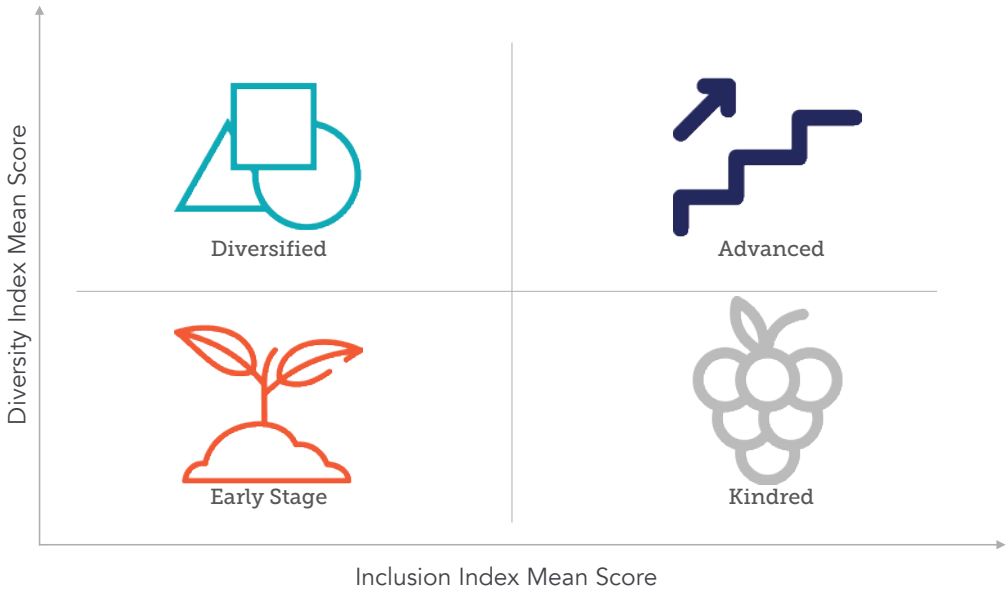
NPS and Intent to Stay Increase as Diversity and Inclusion Scores Increase

Net Promoter Score

48

35

-15

-35

Intent to Stay

38%

48%

60%

69%

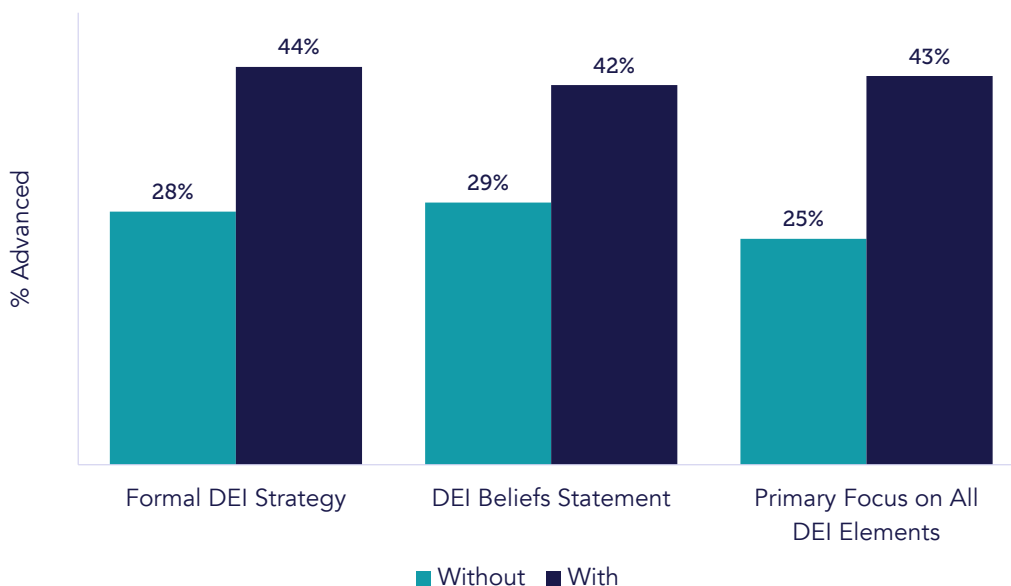■ Advanced ■ Kindred ■ Diversified ■ Early Stage
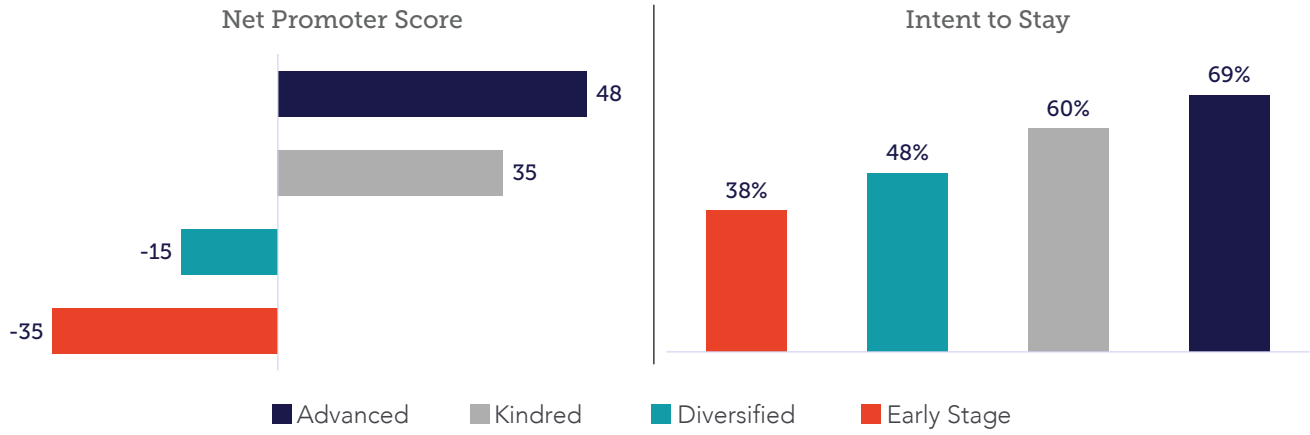
Promising Practices

Based on our analysis of practices most strongly correlating with Advanced DEI Profile placement (organizations scoring relatively high on diversity, inclusion, and typically also equity), we identified a number of promising practices. These practices are not one-size-fits-all solutions but rather strategies and frameworks that need to be adapted and customized:

1. Moving Past Random Acts of DEI

Our research indicates that beyond a general high-level acknowledgment of DEI as important, aligning on a clear vision and direction for advancement on all three mutually reinforcing dimensions of diversity, inclusion, and equity simultaneously leads to stronger DEI outcomes and a more likely placement in the Advanced DEI Profile.

Organizations With a Clearly Delineated Strategy, Beliefs Statement, and Focus on DEI Are More Likely to be Advanced

% Advanced

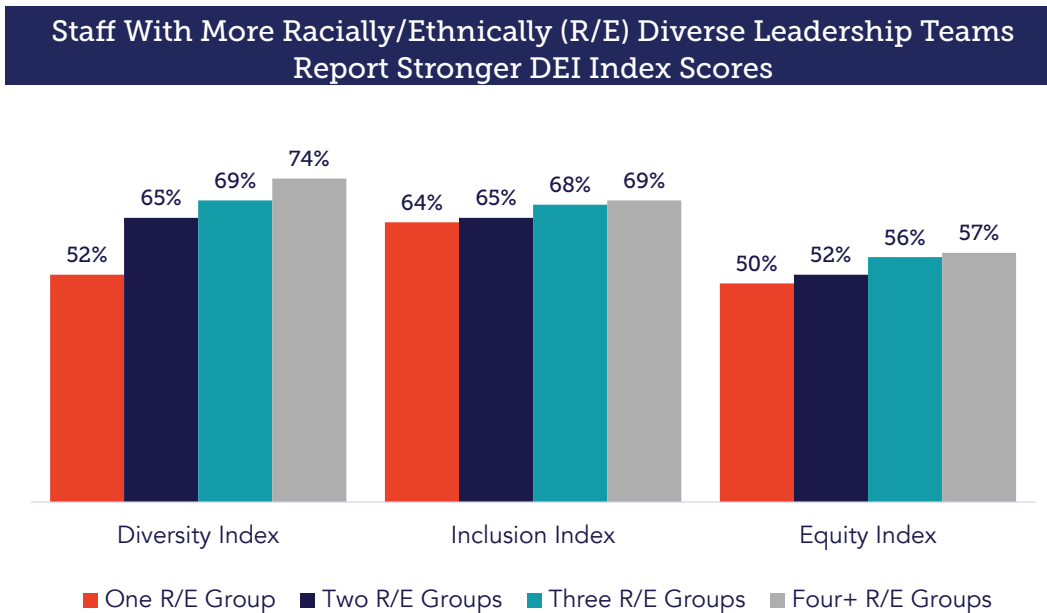|	Without	With
Formal DEI Strategy	28%	44%
DEI Beliefs Statement	29%	42%
Primary Focus on All DEI Elements	25%	43%

Even so, only 34% of surveyed organizations have articulated DEI beliefs, and only 20% have defined the terms, which is virtually unchanged since 2017.

2. Diversifying Leadership Beyond the CEO

Placing People of Color in top leadership positions without a support network will not automatically result in stronger DEI outcomes. Instead, staff with more racial/ethnic diversity across the entire leadership team have more positive experiences with organizational diversity, inclusion, and equity (e.g., have more positive perceptions of the degree to which their organizations recognize and eliminate exclusion, and perceive more overall fairness in promotions).

Staff With More Racially/Ethnically (R/E) Diverse Leadership Teams Report Stronger DEI Index Scores

	Diversity Index	Inclusion Index	Equity Index
One R/E Group	52%	64%	50%
Two R/E Groups	65%	65%	52%
Three R/E Groups	69%	68%	56%
Four+ R/E Groups	74%	69%	57%

3. Sharing Power Through Meaningful Engagement

Participation across the organization is critical for an organization to become diverse, inclusive, and equitable. Organizations that enact practices in support of an authentic and broadly participatory approach to DEI produce more positive staff experiences of DEI.

Organizations That Invite Diverse Input and Employee Feedback Are More Likely to be Advance

% Advanced

	Include Diverse Input	Invite Employee Feedback
Don't	25%	26%
Do	46%	42%

4. Moving Beyond Icebreakers to Authentic Relationships

DEI work takes people coming together to navigate through uncomfortable moments. Organizations that create structures to support authentic and trusting relationships and invest in professional development to help staff members build critical skills to connect across lines of difference are more likely to be categorized in the Advanced DEI Profile. For example, organizations that employ relationship-focused practices as early as the selection process are more likely to be Advanced. Once staff arrive, organizations that offer continued opportunities for relationship- and trust-building, such as mentorship and coaching, are more likely to be Advanced. Further, organizations that provide support structures like affinity groups (spaces intentionally designed for connection among individuals who share common identities or experiences) and DEI-related professional development to build the skills for engaging in difficult conversations and spotting and interrupting bias are more likely to be Advanced.

Organizations Which Include DEI Training, Have Affinity Groups, and Provide Coaching Are More Likely to be Advance
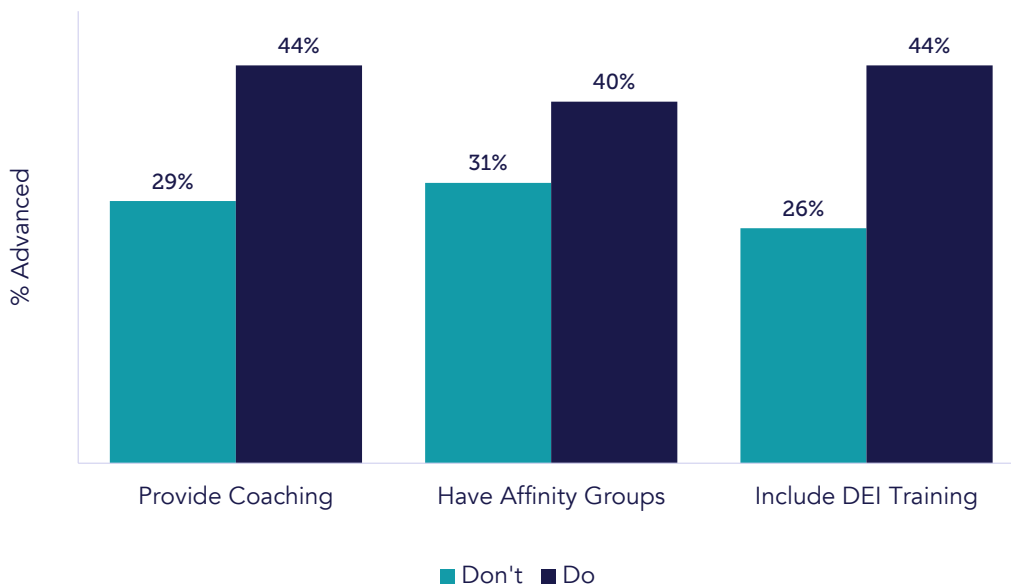
5. Infusing Accountability for Things That Matter

Organizations improve most at the things they measure. As illustrated below, organizations that focus on equity-based outcomes of policies and processes rather than merely the inputs — and use what they learn to enhance accountability to their DEI work — are more highly correlated with the Advanced DEI Profile.

Organizations That Track DEI Goals and Outcome-Focused DEI Metrics Are More Likely to be Advanced
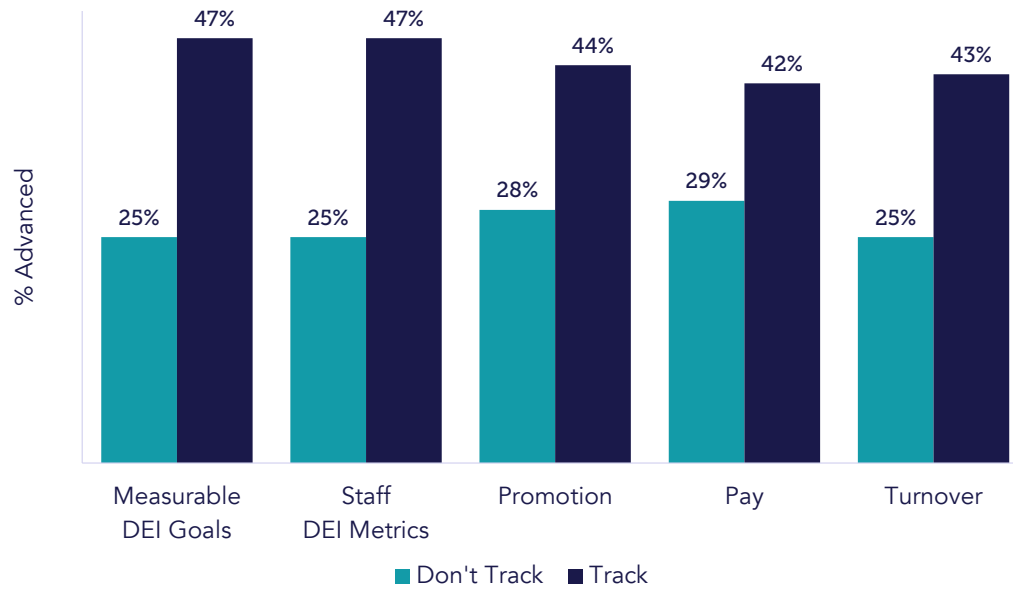

Further, Advanced organizations are more than twice as likely to provide outcome-focused equity statements (versus an emphasis on opportunities, for example) than Diversified and Early Stage organizations.

Recommendations

Personalizing a Path Forward Based on Your DEI Profile

There is no "right" or "best" strategy to become diverse, inclusive, and equitable. Organizations need to utilize approaches tailored to their context and where they are on their journey. As in 2017, we identified four DEI Profiles of organizations where we observed similar structures, staff experiences, and outcomes:
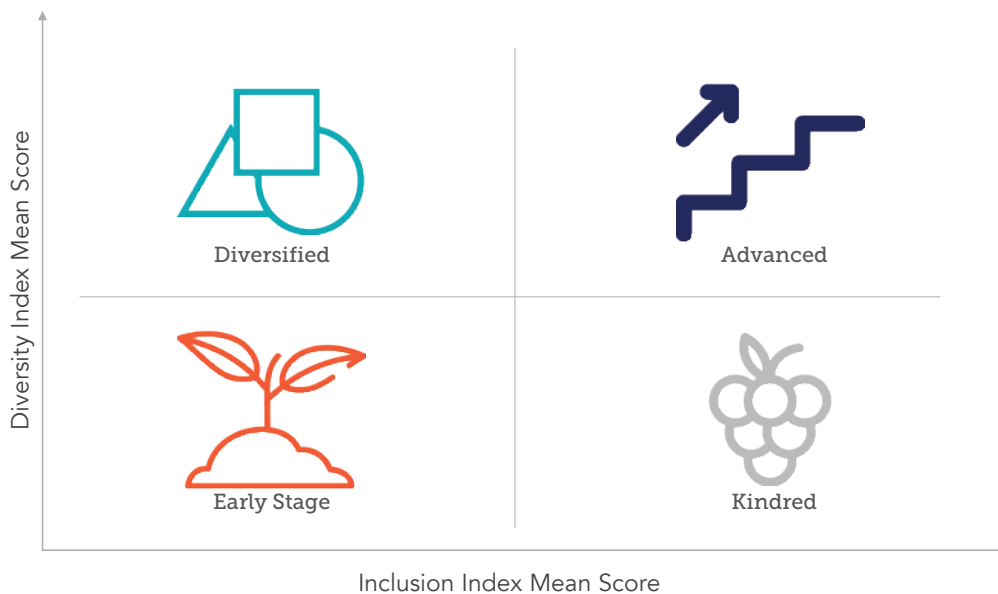
While all of the strategies mentioned below are important for every organization, we are suggesting a few starting points to prompt reflection based on which DEI Profile organizations fall into.

Early Stage

Early Stage organizations are characterized by relatively low staff perceptions of diversity, inclusion, and typically low equity. Individuals who perceive their organization as Early Stage report experiencing bias at higher rates and tend to have low Intent to Stay and Net Promoter Scores.

Early Stage DEI Profile

Diversity		Inclusion	
Equity		"Noise"	

Comments point to good intentions combined with low management commitment and/or difficulty prioritizing DEI.
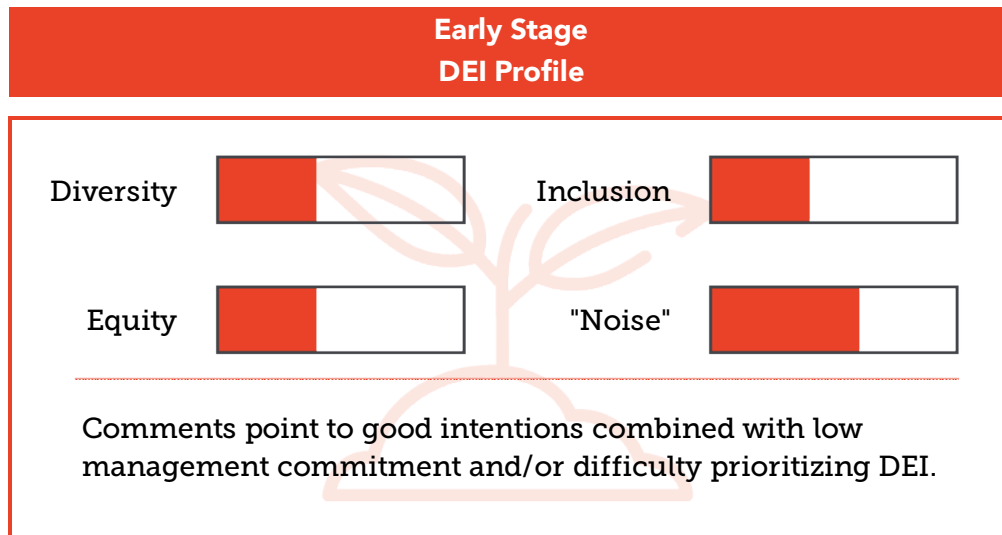
① Commit and Invest

In the face of a multi-year, nonlinear, challenging journey ahead, Early Stage organizations must unapologetically commit to and communicate the importance of this work, and invest as needed to assess and enact necessary changes. They should clearly align on and articulate the value of DEI as it relates to the organization's work and mission, and invest/protect the resources necessary (including staff time, budget, and support) to effectively live out this commitment.

② Define Your Terms

To build aligned expectations, Early Stage organizations should invest the time and capacity necessary to collaboratively examine and define what diversity, inclusion, equity, and antiracism mean within an individualized organizational context. This should include a process to surface dissent, explore complexities related to each term, and agree on a tailored set of definitions that invite involvement from across the organization.
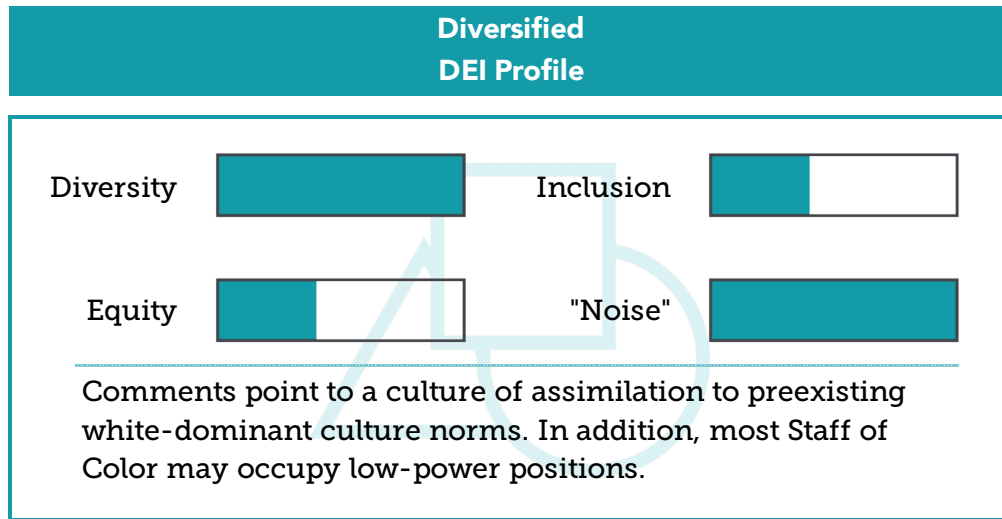
③ Take Stock

Early Stage organizations should conduct a broad audit of organizational demographics, practices, and structures to assess the current state of DEI and antiracism. This process should include intentional efforts to surface current strengths or assets to build upon, as well as to understand pain points and gaps within staff experiences to enable strong planning for the path ahead.

④ Plan and Prioritize

Early Stage organizations should create a high-leverage, prioritized, thoughtfully sequenced plan for progress that is anchored in organizational beliefs around DEI and antiracism. We recommend a planning process designed to invite input and ideas from across the organization along with a high degree of transparency about which ideas ultimately made it into the plan, where, and why. Lastly, organizations must establish progress monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and regularly reassess and adjust accordingly.

Diversified

Staff at Diversified organizations perceive relatively strong diversity but lower levels of inclusion and typically also equity, as illustrated below. Similar to Early Stage, we find that individuals who experience their organization as Diversified report experiencing bias at higher rates and tend to have low Net Promoter Scores and Intent to Stay.

**Diversified
DEI Profile**

Diversity		Inclusion
Equity		"Noise"

Comments point to a culture of assimilation to preexisting white-dominant culture norms. In addition, most Staff of Color may occupy low-power positions.

1 Shore Up the Basics

Diversified organizations should commit to and communicate the importance of DEI and antiracism work, including intentionally defining beliefs, aspirations, and key terms in a way that is tailored to organizational context. These organizations should take stock of strengths upon which to build and challenge areas that need to be addressed, and leverage that understanding to create a thoughtful multi-year plan for forward progress.

2 Interrogate and Shift Culture

Diversified organizations should prioritize policies and practices focused on equity and inclusion. These organizations might begin by identifying culture norms that inhibit staff engagement or discourage challenges to the status quo, and shift toward cultural norms that support equity and inclusion. For example, an organization can engage in a process to explicitly name communications norms as well as the behaviors, habits, structures, and systems that keep them in place, how they serve or inhibit, and the impacts of each. Finally, the organization can pilot, refine, and adopt alternative ways of communicating.

3 Develop Capacity

Diversified organizations should invest in well-thought-out and intentional training, coaching, and advising. This can equip staff with the skills and shared experiences needed to engage in challenging conversations, share feedback, build or repair trust, and interrupt inequitable practices and painful moments in real time. These organizations should develop a scope and sequence for capacity-building[14] that engages all staff collectively while also thoughtfully differentiating to meet varying needs.
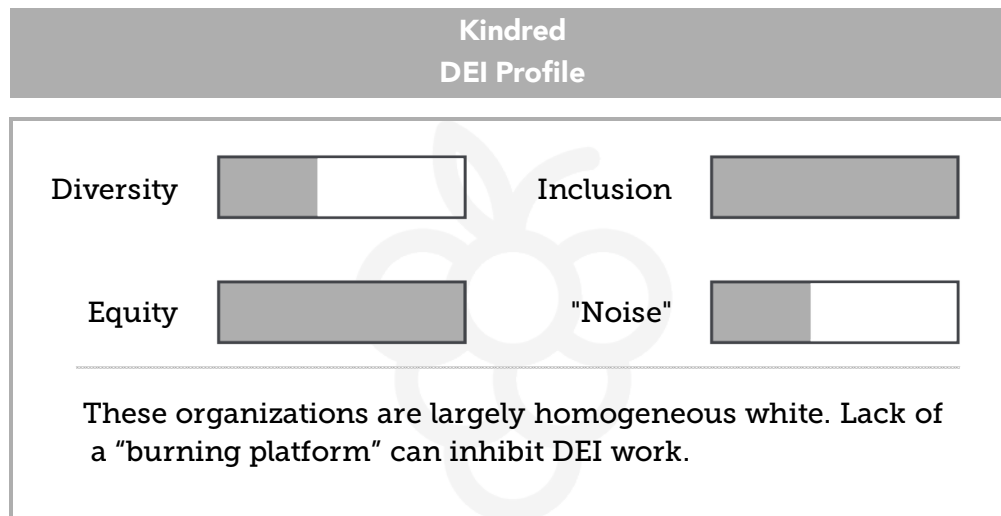
4 Ensure Accountability

Diversified organizations should also focus on effective accountability structures. Accountability is critical to tracking progress and surfacing learnings related to DEI and antiracism. These efforts can position organizations to make necessary adjustments based on learnings and provide support for shared responsibility of organizational DEI and antiracism goals. For example, organizations can clearly articulate DEI and antiracism-infused competencies and link them to performance development. In addition, organizations should examine key decision-making processes for susceptibility to bias and implement improvements along with continued monitoring for a shift in outcomes.

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14   What is capacity building? (2020). National Council of Nonprofits. Retrieved from https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/what-capacity-building

Kindred

Staff at Kindred organizations perceive relatively low diversity with high levels of inclusion and typically high equity as well. We find that individuals who experience their organization as Kindred experience bias at lower rates and tend to have high Net Promoter Scores and Intent to Stay. In our data, we find that these organizations are primarily homogeneously white in terms of race/ethnicity. As such, Kindred organizations do not enjoy the myriad benefits[15] that come with a more racially/ethnically diverse staff.

Kindred DEI Profile		
Diversity ▮▮▯		Inclusion ▮▮▮
Equity ▮▮▮		"Noise" ▮▯▯

These organizations are largely homogeneous white. Lack of a "burning platform" can inhibit DEI work.

1 Define the Value

An important first step for Kindred organizations is to align on and clearly communicate the benefits of diversity to an organization's mission, culture, and work, and why these changes are critical and must happen now.

2 Rebuild for What You Want to Be True

Kindred organizations must intentionally interrogate for whom they want to be inclusive and equitable. Organizations that desire to be inclusive and equitable for a more diverse staff (racially and/or otherwise) will need to invest boldly in making proactive changes to culture, behavior, structures, and policies in alignment with that aspiration. For example, Kindred organizations will need to identify the underlying assumptions, values, and practices that led to, maintain, and protect existing homogeneity. Kindred organizations will need to interrogate what is gained from current homogeneity and willingness to change. They will then need to make the necessary shifts to effectively attract and, most importantly, to receive and retain a more diverse workforce.

3 Increase Diversity

Kindred organizations should hire staff who bring new and different identities, beliefs, and experiences (especially racial/ethnic diversity), but they should intentionally sequence this to happen after efforts to rebuild culture and practices are meaningfully underway. Kindred organizations will also need to guard against a pattern where most or all People of Color are brought into the organization at lower levels such that white staff continue to occupy the positions that hold the most power, agency, autonomy, decision rights, and access to resources.

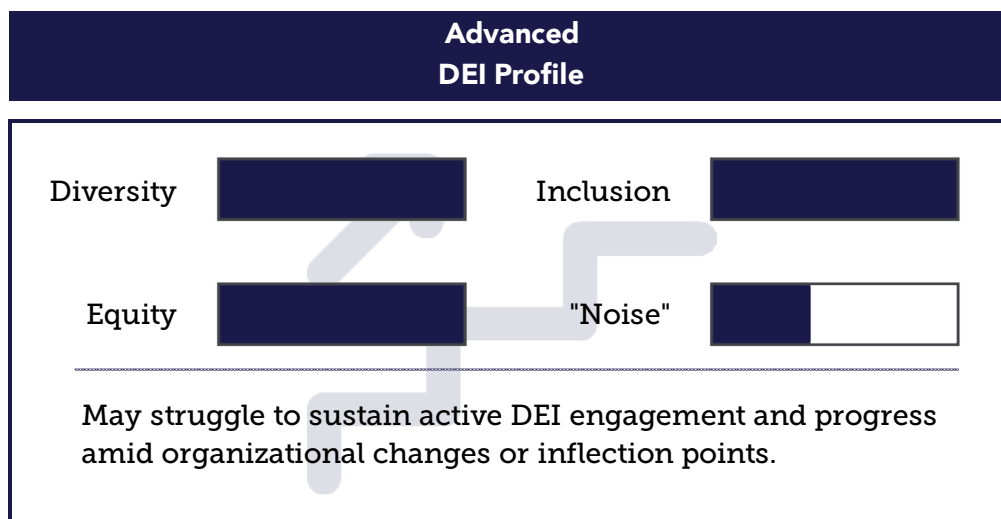**4 Prepare for Nonlinear Progress**

In our experience, Kindred organizations may see an initial decrease in staff experiences of inclusion

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15   Hewlett, S. A. Marshall, M., & Sherbin, L. (2013). How diversity can drive innovation. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-diversity-can-drive-innovation

and equity as they make progress on diversity. We believe this happens for two reasons. First, as the organization diversifies, the need for new ways of operating typically shifts at a faster rate than does the organizational culture. Second, while many organizations can build staff awareness and skill around spotting opportunity areas for DEI relatively quickly, consistently implementing and sustaining improvements in these areas takes much more time. Kindred organizations must sustain their commitment and work, despite often nonlinear progress, to reach material improvements on DEI and antiracism in the long term.

Advanced

Advanced organizations have relatively high staff perceptions of diversity, inclusion, and equity. Individuals who experience their organization as Advanced experience low rates of bias and have high Net Promoter Scores and Intent to Stay. In our experience, there are two kinds of organizations that land in this profile: Organic Advanced and Learned Advanced. Organic Advanced describes organizations that were typically founded with DEI and antiracism as a key part of the organizational fabric. Alternatively, Learned Advanced organizations are those that developed into this DEI Profile through ongoing work over time. The combination of both codified practices and deeply embedded habits best supports sustained success.

Advanced
DEI Profile

Diversity	�	Inclusion	�
Equity	▉bar	"Noise"	▉▉

May struggle to sustain active DEI engagement and progress amid organizational changes or inflection points.

1 **Remain Diligent**
DEI and antiracism work requires intentional lifelong practice. Advanced organizations should regularly assess and reassess changing staff needs, and refine strategies and priorities, as the organization changes over time. It is critical for Advanced organizations to regularly collect and disaggregate staff experience data to discern and address concerning trends and gaps in experiences.

2 **Support Staff to Toggle Between Worlds**
Many Advanced organizations face the ongoing challenge of continually toggling between what may be an internal culture experienced as high on DEI while simultaneously working externally within broader systems that are still deeply anchored in white supremacy culture. Advanced organizations should acknowledge and hold space for the challenge and effort this constant toggling can require.

3 **Shift the Paradigm Toward liberation**
Advanced organizations should make space for conversation and alignment around what role

staff can and should play in deconstructing white supremacy culture in interactions with partners, funders, communities, and external systems. Advanced organizations can be particularly well positioned to push toward a new liberatory paradigm based in Radical Humanity[16] as opposed to white supremacy.

④ Plan for Sustainability
The distinction between these two types of Advanced organizations is particularly important in relation to sustaining strong DEI staff experiences over time.

» *Codify Your Practices*
Organic Advanced organizations often lack clear documented policies, practices, and accountability structures. DEI and antiracism efforts have instead relied heavily on informal mechanisms and interpersonal relationships. Organic Advanced organizations should document and codify the strategies and surrounding beliefs that led to the organization's success. This process can serve to concretize strong practices, making Organic Advanced organizations less susceptible to disruptions in DEI and antiracism progress during key inflection points.

» *Make Sure Your Culture Takes Root*
Learned Advanced organizations may find it tempting to rely exclusively on the structures and systems that led them to be Advanced. Long-term sustained success, however, requires DEI and antiracism to be fully embedded within cultural values and beliefs. To enable this continued shift, Learned Advanced organizations should support staff (e.g., through coaching, space for guided reflection, and employing real-time interruptions) to keep building the deeply ingrained habits and behaviors to live out DEI and antiracism beliefs in real time, every day.

Leveraging Your Vantage Point to Drive Progress

Beyond DEI Profiles, we offer recommendations for different audiences to leverage their unique vantage points and drive progress.

Organizational Leaders

Organizational leaders play a particularly important role in driving change, and with disproportionate power (e.g., positional power) and privilege (e.g., racial privilege) comes disproportionate responsibility. Here are some ideas of what organizational leaders can do:

① Lead Here, Too
Leadership involves demonstrating and modeling organizational beliefs around DEI and antiracism in day-to-day work across all settings. Leaders should demonstrate vulnerability, narrate tensions while grappling with them, invite alternate ideas and experiences, listen deeply, act boldly, and choose courage over comfort. Organizational leaders are best equipped for this when engaged in a continued personal journey of reflection, learning, and change to better identify and disrupt implicit bias before it continues to influence leadership.[17] When organizational leaders are not at the forefront of DEI and antiracism work, it is unlikely that the rest of the organization will follow.

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16   Padamsee, X. (2019). Radically human. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/radically-human/

17   Padamsee, X. (2020). We can't disrupt white supremacy and anti-Blackness without a mirror. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/we-cant-disrupt-white-supremacy-and-anti-blackness-without-a-mirror/

② Honor Experiences, No Matter the Sample Size

A hope that staff experience the organization positively can result in leaders valuing feedback that reinforces the current state while distrusting or pushing back on critical feedback. Among staff, this tendency can decrease comfort and increase fear to express different perspectives, experiences, or ideas.[18] In turn, we see this pattern silence the very voices that are illuminating and/or offering solutions to the most vexing challenges. Instead, leaders must provide clear avenues for input, work to strengthen organizational conditions for psychological safety,[19,20] seek to understand, and then center that understanding in planning and decision-making.

③ Make Necessary Investment to Enable the Work

To position DEI and antiracism work for success, leaders must cede and share power with others while also supporting them with realistic allocations of time and budget to enable success. Specifically, CEOs and executive directors should engage their leadership teams to develop buy-in and model DEI and antiracism work. Senior leaders should empower others who are more proximate to the work. For example, this could look like giving full authority to a DEI- and antiracism-focused team to create an equitable recruitment and hiring process. Further, leaders must invest and protect the necessary resources (e.g., staff time and compensation, budget, technical support) to advance the work.

Board Members

In our sample, 67% of all board members identify racially as white. This racially privileged lens can leave boards especially susceptible to recreating the very inequities that their organizations seek to address.[21] Given the amount of influence and direction that board members provide to organizations, it is critical that they engage in DEI and antiracism work fully and deeply alongside the organizations they govern. Here are some ideas on what board members can do:

① Interrogate and Align

Each board member must examine the ways in which their identities impact how they see the world and how the world experiences them — including owning privilege and interrogating biases. These factors influence how people lead as board members, and, left unexamined, they run the risk of perpetuating exclusion and harm.[20] Further, the collective board should critically examine norms (with each other and in interactions with the organization) to spot and interrupt established ways of operating that perpetuate or protect inequitable outcomes and harmful practices. Finally, board members should engage in a focused and intentional process to align with staff on organization values, beliefs, and language regarding DEI and antiracism.

② Diversify the Room

Boards should seek out, engage, and center perspectives from those whom the organization seeks to serve. Boards should diversify on multiple levels, including establishing concrete avenues to enable individuals from the communities served to join the board itself. In addition, they should create regular, accessible opportunities for organization staff and individuals from the communities

18   Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. Qualitative Inquiry, 8(1), 23-44.

19   Frazier, M. L., Fainshmidt, S., Klinger, R. L., Pezeshkan, A., & Vracheva, V. (2017). Psychological safety: A meta-analytic review and extension. Personnel Psychology, 70(1), 113-165.

20   Douyon, V., & Vinson, K. (2020). Psychological safety: What's keeping your team from taking critical risks? Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/psychological-safety-whats-keeping-your-team-from-taking-critical-risks/

21   Theoharis, G. (2018). White privilege and educational leadership. In J. S. Brooks & G. Theoharis (Eds.), Whiteucation: Privilege, power, and prejudice in school and society (pp. 52-61). New York: Routledge.

served to engage in and influence key decisions, even without board membership.

3 Enable Authentic Participation

Boards must interrogate and actively disrupt the structural and cultural practices that have often produced and sustained their homogeneity (e.g., interrupting communications norms, ensuring meeting accessibility, demonstrating asset-based thinking[22]). Further, board members should engage in intentional power-sharing[23] and center voices of the community (e.g., allow community member votes to have more weight in determining decision outcomes or require at least half of the board to identify as community members).

4 Find the Optimal Balance

Boards must support (e.g., approving DEI and antiracism budget investments) and hold organizations accountable (e.g., partnering with the organization to set clear and concrete performance indicators and including DEI and antiracism outcomes in CEO performance evaluations). Further, boards should identify the moments or places where playing a more active, driving role in the organization's DEI and antiracism work will best enable success (e.g., when the organization is unsure of how to move forward) versus when to listen, learn, and absorb from the organization's staff (e.g., if the organization is boldly reimagining in service of DEI and antiracism).

Organization Staff

Material progress on DEI and antiracism requires shifts in organization structures, systems, and culture. This work belongs to — and requires — all staff. Here are some ideas on what staff can do:

1 Divest from White Supremacy Culture

Each staff member must interrogate their own identities, privileges, and biases, and how those impact modes of operating. Staff should determine which white supremacy culture norms they are most susceptible to upholding, as well as who those practices ultimately benefit and hold back. This self-reflective work will enable staff to engage within their sphere of influence — be it their team, peers, or direct reports — to spot, question, and interrupt practices (including their own) that enact harm. Further, staff can leverage their individual and collective voice, perspectives, knowledge, and experiences to agitate, support, and hold the organization accountable to broader organizational progress on DEI and antiracism.

> **Read More**
>
> *Please see our full report for a discussion of the undue burden that staff who hold historically marginalized identities often face around DEI and antiracism work.*

We all hold a variety of intersecting identities that carry varying levels of privilege and marginalization in different contexts. Engagement in DEI and antiracism work should look different depending on whether individuals engage from a place of relative privilege or systemic oppression. It is incumbent upon each individual to determine, at any given point, whether they are entering more or less from a place of privilege. Below, we offer some differentiated recommendations based on this entry point.

22   Sudsberry, M., & Kandel-Cisco, B. (2013). Transformative leadership: An asset-based approach to leadership for diverse schools and learners. Scholarship and Professional Work — Education, 9. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/coe_papers/90

23   London, M., Bear, J. B., Cushenbery, L., & Sherman, G. D. (2019). Leader support for gender equity: Understanding prosocial goal orientation, leadership motivation, and power sharing. Human Resource Management Review, 29(3), 418-427.

② Lean in/ Lean out with Intention

» *From Privileged Identities: Learn and Listen (Google It)*
As staff with privileged identities begin to raise their awareness around areas of institutionalized oppression, there is often a tendency to ask those with historically marginalized identities to teach, which can create additional burden or harm. Instead, staff should seek to educate themselves and connect with other allies and co-conspirators to engage in shared learning. Should someone with a historically marginalized identity choose to share their experiences, perspectives, or knowledge, staff on the receiving end of that generosity should take an authentic learning orientation, listen, absorb, and honor the sharing with gratitude, acknowledgment, and compensation, where appropriate, for the potential cost and emotional labor involved.[24]

» *From marginalized identities: Recover and Draw Boundaries*
Staff with historically marginalized identities may feel pressure to lead DEI and antiracism work and/or share painful experiences or trauma as a pedagogical tool for the learning of others.[25] Staff must take care to engage when and where they feel a desire to do so, and to intentionally disengage at other times for healing and recovery. It is important for staff who hold historically marginalized identities to name and honor their boundaries around time, energy, and emotional labor wherever possible to support overall well-being.

③ Share the Burden

» *From privileged identities: Leverage privilege*
Through the lens of privileged identities, staff must seek to understand what conditions leave them most susceptible to becoming complicit. Further, staff should examine the differences between engaging in DEI and antiracism work from a place of saviorism (a paternalistic tendency based in an assumption of superiority to want to "save" others) versus as allies (engagement that comes with an expectation of recognition, acknowledgment, or appreciation from those who do not hold that identity-based privilege), versus as co-conspirators (those who "acknowledge that they are the architects and beneficiaries of white supremacy and, in turn, feel duty-bound to dismantle it"[26]), and lean into the latter (e.g., spotting, naming, and interrupting harmful patterns or behaviors).

» *From marginalized identities: Identify and activate allies*
Staff with historically marginalized identities can work to identify, engage, and activate co-conspirators.[27] First, staff should identify individuals who, from a place of privilege, take risks to raise uncomfortable topics, notice and elevate harmful trends, and/or demonstrate authentic care and curiosity. Staff with historically marginalized identities can then leverage co-conspirators to hold safe space, move first, or take on situations that will require more emotional labor. Activating co-conspirators enables staff with historically marginalized identities to offload burden while inviting those with privilege to disrupt the status quo and rebuild together.

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24   Lee, C., & Padamsee, X. (2020). Ring the alarm: When the "burden alert" sounds, think informed consent. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/ring-the-alarm-when-the-burden-alert-sounds-think-informed-consent/

25   Roberts, L. M., & Mayo, A. J. (2019). Toward a racially just workplace. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/cover-story/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace

26   Albert, D., & Cover, L. (2019). From saviorism to co-conspiring. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/from-saviorism-to-co-conspiring/

27   Osagie, K., & Zucker, U. (2019). All of the above: The unpaid labor of People of Color in DEI work. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/all-of-the-above-the-unpaid-labor-of-people-of-color-in-dei-work/

Funders

Given the history of a philanthropic sector predicated on the accumulation of immense wealth by very few, and designed to advance "top-down, closed-door, and expert-driven" practices[28] and the majority-white demographics of the sector today (62% of staff overall, 80% of CEOs), unless funders proactively work to interrogate and interrupt existing power dynamics, they are likely to perpetuate existing oppression.[29] Here are some recommendations for foundations:

1 Do the work

Funders should work to make true internally the changes that they seek to advance externally. Effective internal DEI and antiracism can interrupt the existing mechanisms that maintain status quo inequities and give funders a better understanding of what grantees are working through as they engage in this work. Organizations in this space should take stock of their current policies, practices, staff experiences, and demographics across levels to then leverage the DEI Profile-specific recommendations detailed in the section above. Meanwhile, they must offer transparency with grantees about where they are in their journey, what they're working on, and what they're struggling with — all while asking grantees to do the same.

2 Orient around those most impacted

We often see funders establish their theory of change, set strategy, and develop funding opportunities as the "experts" regarding what is best for the communities they seek to impact while lacking the lived experience or cultural understanding critical to informing effective approaches. Instead, funders need to orient decision-making, especially in early stages, to engage and center those they serve and support.[30] Specifically, funders should bring members of the communities they seek to impact into the room to inform critical philanthropic strategy and design decisions (along with appropriate compensation for time and expertise). Further, funders must intentionally employ practices that create psychological safety, interrupt protection of white comfort, and mitigate the impact of hierarchy, privilege, and positional power to enable full involvement in the room.

3 Invest in leaders from communities served

Funders should directly invest in leaders that come from and represent the communities served. To do this well, funders must work intentionally to spot bias in decision-making, and interrogate the ways in which current grantee recruitment and selection practices may be negatively impacting leaders with historically marginalized identities. Further, funders must implement systems to audit and assess the distribution of their investments, including number of grants, grant amount, proportion of overall, and length of investments in Leaders of Color. This isn't just about equal or proportionate funding or support; rather, it's about disproportionate investment to help course-correct a long-standing inequitable system.[31] Additionally, through the grant period, funders must balance staying connected enough to be responsive to shifting needs while trusting that grantees will advance the work as they best see fit.

28   Villanueva, E. (2018). Decolonizing wealth: Indigenous wisdom to heal divides and restore balance. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

29   Albert, D., & Cover, L. (2019). From saviorism to co-conspiring. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/from-saviorism-to-co-conspiring/

30   Burton, D. O., & Barnes, B. C. (2017). Shifting philanthropy from charity to justice. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/shifting_philanthropy_from_charity_to_justice

31   Dorsey, C. (2020). Racial equity and philanthropy: Disparities in funding for leaders of color leave impact on the table. Bridgespan Group. Retrieved from https://www.bridgespan.org/bridgespan/Images/articles/racial-equity-and-philanthropy/racial-equity-and-philanthropy.pdf

④ **Set and elevate the standards**

Until the overarching field of philanthropy is fundamentally oriented around a new paradigm anchored in justice, funders have the power to either incent and enable advancement of DEI and antiracism across the field, or be complicit in the continuation of harm. To leverage existing power through grantmaking, funders can establish a carefully considered and clearly defined set of baseline indicators related to DEI and antiracism that they expect to see for any organization to receive investments (e.g., clear statements of organizational commitments around DEI and antiracism, or clear expectations of improvement, growth, change, or gains over time). Further, funders can make investments in maintaining and growing a healthy ecosystem of available supports for organizations driving progress on DEI and antiracism.

It takes a sustained commitment, an explicit focus on addressing the most acute areas of pain, and an orientation toward continuous learning for organizations to interrupt ongoing oppression and transform the ways in which we operate. We must do better to create radically human environments where people of all identities feel — and are — safe, seen, valued, and included.

For additional detail on all of the insights, promising practices, and recommendations highlighted here, please refer to the full Unrealized Impact 2.0, which can be found here. If you would benefit from partnership or support as you work to create an environment where you and your staff can truly thrive, please contact Promise54 here.

Explanation of Terms

Language is powerful; it helps to shape norms, assumptions, and context in our interactions and communication. As we evolve and learn from our own reflections, and from our work with communities and partners, we continue to evolve our language to be maximally inclusive and consistent with our core values and mission. With that in mind, we made intentional decisions about the language we used in this report and, below, we'll elaborate on our orientation and rationale for some of our choices.

We recommend that organizations work intentionally to develop definitions that are tailored to their own specific context, to examine their own language choices and the rationale for them, and to make common meaning of terms that they are using. This process can build skill and alignment to support organizations' DEI and antiracism efforts and expectations.

AAPI
Throughout this report, we use this acronym to capture a range of identities, including "all people of Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander ancestry who trace their origins to the countries, states, jurisdictions and/or the diasporic communities of these geographic regions" and including those who identify as Native Hawaiian.[32]

Antiracism
The "active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared..."[33] We believe that antiracism requires rigorous self-examination around our individual roles in creating, perpetuating, and upholding white supremacy. We have made an intentional choice to use one word, rather than a hyphenated "anti-racism," as we believe it better connotes the necessarily proactive nature of antiracist work, as opposed to reactive incremental change.

Black
We intentionally use the term Black instead of African American throughout this report because we recognize the important distinctions in these terms. While the term Black is inclusive of the entire African diaspora (i.e., all African-descended people), the term African American refers primarily to descendants of enslaved people in the United States.[34]

Diversity
For the purposes of our wide-reaching surveys and this broadly focused report, we define diversity as the presence of different types of people (from a wide range of different identities and with different

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32   Census Data & API Identities. (2020). Retrieved from https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/census-data-api-identities

33   Anti-racism. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.aclrc.com/antiracism

34   Segal, R. (1995). The Black diaspora: Five centuries of the Black experience outside Africa. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

perspectives, experiences, etc.).

Equity
For the purposes of our wide-reaching surveys and this broadly focused report, we define equity as enabling uniform outcomes for all and removing the predictability of outcomes based on any specific identity marker.

Inclusion
For the purposes of our wide-reaching surveys and this broadly focused report, we define inclusion as embracing diversity by creating an environment of meaningful connection, engagement, and belonging — where people experience a deep sense of value and respect for their full humanity.

Latinx
Throughout this report, we chose to use this term because we believe it to be the most inclusive language option encompassing a wide range of people of Latin American descent or origin along with their varied ancestry and diverse racial and gender identities. While the terms Latina/o and Latin@ are inclusive in terms of both ancestry and binary gender, these terms can exclude people who identify as non-binary, non-conforming, agender, genderqueer, etc.

LGBTQIA+
Throughout this report, we use this acronym to capture a range of identities: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and the + to acknowledge the additional range of identities within the LGBTQIA+ community that may not be captured within the boundaries of existing terms or labels.[35]

Native American/Indigenous
Throughout this report, we use this term because we believe it most specifically describes the communities we are referring to here as captured in our survey tool today: native peoples from the North American continent in addition to the more general term Indigenous, which could refer to native peoples from any land.

Non-Binary
We use this term to identify people whose gender is not accurately defined through the gender binary (man/woman).[36] We also acknowledge that this term has many limitations and can also marginalize people that do not identify with gender in any shape or form (agender) or identify more closely with a different term from among a wide range (e.g., genderqueer, gender non-conforming).

Racism
"The marginalization and/or oppression of People of Color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people"[37] and proximity to whiteness. We believe that racism can be intentional and unintentional, plays out in the form of explicit and implicit bias, and takes place on individual, organizational, and systemic levels.

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35   Glossary of terms. (n.d.). Human Rights Campaign. Retrieved from https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms

36   Non-binary inclusion. (n.d.). LGBT Foundation. Retrieved from https://lgbt.foundation/who-we-help/trans-people/non-binary

37   Racism. (n.d.). Anti-Defamation League. Retrieved from https://www.adl.org/racism

Radically Human/Radical Humanity

The concept of "radical humanity" at Promise54 originated in a blog post by CEO Xiomara Padamsee in October 2019[38] as an alternative to white supremacy culture. A radically human approach enables people to be whole at work — to bring the fullness of complex and intersecting identities, honor their histories, and acknowledge their pain. Radical humanity requires regular demonstrations of authenticity, vulnerability, and compassion, alongside ownership and responsibility for pains caused to others. It nurtures risk-taking and meets mistakes with grace and reflection, knowing that imperfection is a fundamental part of being human and that learning fuels growth. In a radically human environment, we prioritize trusting, authentic relationships and deep engagement. We prioritize physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs at all times, including when it is messy; we slow down and insert intentionality, planfulness, care, humor, joy, and love into our work.

White Supremacy Culture

The norms,[39] values, beliefs, and subsequent ways of thinking, behaving, and decision-making valued and centered in white, western-dominant culture that uphold white supremacy and thereby continuously privilege white people and proximity to whiteness.

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38   Padamsee, X. (2019). Radically Human. Promise54. Retrieved from https://www.promise54.org/radically-human/

39   White supremacy culture: Characteristics. (n.d.). Showing Up for Racial Justice — SURJ. Retrieved from https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html

Acknowledgments

About the Authors

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Michael's 10-plus years of education and research experience include roles as: a middle and high school math teacher in Phoenix, AZ, adjunct professor and research assistant at the University of Connecticut, Director of State Affairs at Teach For America, and Research Associate at Inflexion. Michael holds a B.S. in Business Administration from Eastern Oregon University, an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Administration from the American College of Education, and a Ph.D. in Learning, Leadership, and Education Policy from the University of Connecticut.

Lucerito Ortiz (she/her) is: the proud daughter of immigrant parents from Guatemala and Mexico, a first-generation college student, sister, friend, native Angeleno, data nerd, foodie, Lime Hot Cheeto connoisseur, escape room lover, and very easily distracted by dogs.

Lucerito's 10-plus years of education and data experience include roles as: Senior Manager of Data and Impact and Escalera Manager at UnidosUS, Education Pioneers Fellow at The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems, and Senior Admissions Officer at Harvard College. Lucerito holds a B.A. in Social Studies with a focus on race and education from Harvard College, and an M.Ed. in Education Policy and Management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Xiomara Padamsee (she/her) is: a proud Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Indian cisgender gay woman; a family-first mother and wife, daughter and sister; an enthusiastic piñata maker, former pianist, and a dedicated educator and activist.

Xiomara's 20-plus years of education and organizational effectiveness experience include roles as Founder and CEO of Promise54, Talent Advising Practice Leader and Management Team member at Bellwether Education Partners, Manager in Deloitte Consulting's Human Capital practice, and as Vice President of Staffing & Organizational Development on Teach For America's management team, where she built the organization's first national talent team. Xiomara holds a B.S. in Human Service Studies with a focus on U.S. Latino Studies from Cornell University and an M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

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Advisory Panel

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- Aimée Eubanks Davis (she/her), Founder and CEO of Braven, is a Black entrepreneur deeply rooted in her experience growing up on Chicago's South Side and being a former sixth grade teacher and human capital executive.

- Amelia Parnell, Ph.D., (she/her) is Vice President for Research and Policy at NASPA and is an optimist, researcher, connector, and friend.

- Andresse St. Rose, Ed.D., (she/her) is the Managing Director at the Center for Collaborative Education, a dedicated educator and friend, a proud Trinidadian and now American citizen.

- April Chou (she/her) is a board member of Promise54 and identifies as a proud Chinese American daughter and mother of biracial sons.

- Becky Crowe (she/her) is President and CEO of Clayton Early Learning, Mason's mother, and a relentless co-conspirator for justice.

- Chris Gibbons (he/him) is the Founder & CEO of STRIVE Prep in Denver, and is a proud father in a multi-racial family.

- Constance Jones (she/her) is Chief Executive Officer at Noble Schools, and identifies as a Black woman.

- Frances Messano (she/her) is the President at NewSchools Venture Fund and identifies as a first-generation college graduate and proud daughter of a Colombian immigrant.

- Dr. Heather Harding (she/hers) is Senior Director of Education Grantmaking at the Schusterman Family Philanthropies, and identifies as a proud educator, mom, and mentor.

- Justin C. Cohen (he/him) is a Brooklyn-based community organizer and activist who identifies as an abolitionist, aspiring accomplice, and new dad.

- Laura Brewer (she/her) is a coach and doula, and identifies as a queer, prodigal southerner and Charlottesvillian.

- Melanie Perez Johnson, M.Ed., CPS, (she/her) is the Program Director for the National Indian Education Association and identifies as American Indian, Sac and Fox on her mothers side, and Mexican on her fathers side.

- Taishya Adams (she/her) is founder of the Mukuyu Collective and identifies as a Black African American woman.

- Dr. Tasleem J. Padamsee (she/her) is an Assistant Professor at the Ohio State University's College of Public Health, and identifies proudly as a Latina, Indian American, and daughter and granddaughter of immigrants.

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Any opinions or errors are the responsibility of the authors alone. If you have ideas, questions, or feedback on this report, want to administer Promise54's DEI surveys, or need support to drive forward progress on this work within our own organization, please email info@promise54.org. For additional information on Promise54, the services we provide, and to sign up for our newsletters, please visit our website at www.promise54.org.