# Organizational Racism: Self-Assessment

Developed by CommunityWise Resource Centre

These questions are meant to get you thinking about how well your organization is addressing organizational racism. There's a lot more to it than these five questions suggest, so for more comprehensive assessments, see the links below.

| Questions | | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| 1. How racially diverse is your organization (staff, board, volunteers)? | O Not diverse<br>O Somewhat<br>O Very diverse | |
| 2. Does your organization (staff, board, volunteers) reflect the racial diversity of the communities you serve? | O No<br>O Somewhat<br>O Yes | |
| 3. Do people of different racial backgrounds hold positions of power (C-suite, executive director, chair of board, president, etc.)? | O No, never<br>O At times<br>O Yes, always | |
| 4. Does your organization understand that addressing racism is critical to achieving your mission? | O No<br>O Somewhat<br>O Yes | |
| 5. Does your organization collect data by race about your impact on the communities you serve? | O No<br>O Somewhat<br>O Yes | |

More comprehensive assessments:

- "Assessing Organizational Racism" from the Western States Center: https://goo.gl/7g2Z3E
- Racial Equity Organizational Assessment" from the Race Matters Institute: https://goo.gl/CT69cZ
- "Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization" from Crossroads: https://goo.gl/GTx73y

# Definitions

**Diversity** refers to the wide array of differences among people and their perspectives on the world.  Diversity is an important organizational goal in its own right, but it may or may not be linked to the issue of equity.  A diverse workplace is not necessarily an equitable workplace.  Nor does the presence of people who are diverse necessarily produce decision-making that optimizes results for the groups their diversity reflects. (Race Matters Institute)

**Inclusion** is reflected in the ability of diverse peoples to raise their perspectives authentically, and for those voices to matter and impact decisions, where the organizational culture has been enabled for that to happen.  Inclusion promises a broader view of the world and a more democratic process of decision-making.  Inclusion is an important organizational *process* goal, but it does not on its own guarantee equity in an organization's mission-critical *results.* (Race Matters Institute)

**Equity** refers to achieved results where advantage and disadvantage are not distributed on the basis of race and ethnicity. Strategies that produce equity must be targeted to address the *unequal* needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers.  Equity requires a set of informed policies and practices, intentionally designed to promote opportunity and rectify disparities, as well as informed people positioned to implement them effectively. (Race Matters Institute)

**Organizational racism** refers to the way normal, seemingly neutral or objective organizational policies and systems (e.g., the way we hire people, recruit board members, develop programming, etc.) can create disparities in access and outcomes for racialized and Indigenous individuals and communities. If not addressed, these policies and systems can reproduce and exacerbate disparities in power. It refers to organizational practices, which are related to but different from the racist behaviour or unconscious bias of individuals. (CommunityWise)

**Anti-racism** is the active, on-going process of dismantling systems of racial inequity and creating new systems of racial equity. Anti-racism demands that this work be done at the individual, organizational/ institutional, and cultural levels in order to effectively address systemic racism. Anti-racism is an approach, not an end-point, and thus provides a useful frame for an organizational change process. (CommunityWise)