

Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool

RACE FORWARD: RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

What are Racial Equity Impact Assessments?

A Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) is a systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. REIAs are used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs, plans and budgetary decisions. The REIA can be a vital tool for preventing institutional racism and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities.

Why are they needed?

REIAs are used to reduce, eliminate and prevent racial discrimination and inequities. The persistence of deep racial disparities and divisions across society is evidence of institutional racism—the routine, often invisible and unintentional, production of inequitable social opportunities and outcomes. When racial equity is not consciously addressed, racial inequality is often unconsciously replicated.

When should it be conducted?

REIAs are best conducted during the decision-making process, prior to enacting new proposals. They are used to inform decisions, much like environmental impact statements, fiscal impact reports and workplace risk assessments.

RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

What issue, policy, regulation, program, practice or budget will the organization advocate for?

1. Identifying stakeholders

- Are people of color disproportionately and adversely impacted by this issue, policy, regulation, program, practice or budget? If yes, in what way and why?
- Does this issue, policy, regulation, program, practice or budget affect more than one community of color, offering an opportunity for relationship building among communities of color and organizations of color? If yes, in what way? How does it affect more than one community of color? If yes, how can relationship building take place?

2. Engaging stakeholders

- Are stakeholders from different racial/ethnic groups – especially those most adversely impacted, leading the development of proposals to address the issue, policy, regulation, practice, program or budget? If not, who is missing? If yes, in what way? If not, why not and how can they become engaged?
- Do the stakeholders know the systems of power that must be interrupted in order to gain racial equity? If no, what would be needed to make that possible?

3. Identifying and documenting racial inequities

- Within communities of color, are some racial/ethnic groups more advantaged or disadvantaged when it comes to this issue, policy, regulation, practice, program or budget? If yes, why and how?

4. Examining causes

- If there is a policy, regulation, practice, program or budget under consideration to address an issue, does it address the root causes of racial inequities and racialized outcomes? If not, how could it address the root causes?

5. Clarifying the purpose

- If there is a policy, regulation, practice, program or budget under consideration, will it reduce or eliminate racial inequity and undo racialized outcomes? If yes, in what way? If not, how could it do so?

6. Considering the adverse impacts

- If there is a policy, regulation, practice, program or budget under consideration, can you anticipate adverse impacts of unintended consequences? If yes, what might it be; who might be negatively affected; who might be leading the backlash; and how could these impacts be minimized?

- What other proposals/efforts should be considered alongside or instead of the proposal under consideration to maximize positive impacts?

7. Ensuring success

- Are the policies, regulations, practices, or programs adequately funded for them to be successfully implemented and sustained? If not, how could these be achieved?
- Are there provisions to ensure data collection, public reporting, stakeholder leadership, and public accountability? If yes, what are they?

This tool was developed in partnership with the Western States Center and also borrows from REIA tools from other organizations, including Race Forward.