Getting Started: Moving From Words to Action

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ICMA: Governing for Equity Project


- ICMA is the membership organization for city and county managers across in the US and Internationally.

- Looked at 7 different cases across the country of how an equity lens is being implemented.
Equity is Organizational Change
“I think what we say is that equity isn’t like an initiative or a program, rather it’s a fundamentally different way of doing work.”
Equity is Organizational Change

Phase I: Initiation

Phase II: Readiness

Phase III: Infrastructure

Phase IV: Sustaining

New Policies and Practices

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Equity is Organizational Change

- Don’t forget the words
- Data Drives Action
- Equity is a Team-Game
- Foster Partnerships
- Understand “Success”
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<td>Establishes equity as a key value and develops a shared meaning around key issues. Recognizes historic legacy of local governments.</td>
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Data Drives Action

• What gets measured gets done.

• Measuring equity is hard – it “forces” deeper understanding and effort.

• It is critical to communicating progress toward equity.

“So, for me it is data, data, data, and more data. Data will tell you your problem, data will tell you where you are making progress, data will tell you when you are on the right or wrong path.”
Equity is Organizational Change

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Equity is a Team Game…Know your Team

• **Equity Teams** provide the foundation for equity to disperse through the organization
  - Departmental Teams
  - Core Teams

• **Equity Leaders** are found throughout the organization.
  - Know when to “bring in” equity officers.
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Foster Partnerships

• Inside and Outside the Organization

So, those partnerships are really important in this space. What we know is that there’s all those groups that are working on their own racial equity plans and struggling in this space. So, let’s bring it together so we can struggle in this space together.
Foster Partnerships

• Inside and Outside the Organization
  • Partnerships within the organization helps spread ideas about best practices, insights from data, and resources for expanding capacity.

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  • Partnership outside the organization include other community partners and the broader network of equity-oriented local governments.

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• What does the successful implementation of an equity lens look like?
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• For us, the way the new structure can work is that we have a pretty aggressive goal, and by 2020, 100% of our city departments will be doing racial equity assessments.

• Fully mature is that we have 100% of our departments deeply rooted in this work with a really strong and sound understanding of it.
Understand “Success”

• What does the successful implementation of an equity lens look like?
  • For us, the way the new structure can work is that we have a pretty aggressive goal, and by 2020, 100% of our city departments will be doing racial equity assessments.

• It won’t happen overnight
  • Start small
  • Celebrate “wins” along the way!
  • Fully mature is that we have 100% of our departments deeply rooted in this work with a really strong and sound understanding of it.

• When we moved beyond just four departments and were at a more system-wide equity effort …. in the sense that staff were recognizing and putting on the equity lens when they make decisions [that was a mature equity program].
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Thank YOU!!
Thank YOU!!

“Instead of holding back we must have the courage to step forward, take our bureaucratic structures down to the studs and rebuild them through the lens of racial and social equity.”

Marc Ott, Executive Director, ICMA