

# Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government

**VLGMA Keynote**  
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## Today's Objectives:

- Gain understanding of the government's role in contributing to racial inequity and our responsibility to advance racial equity
- Develop a shared racial equity analysis, including definitions of key racial equity terminology and concepts
- Be motivated to take action!



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## Creating a learning environment:

- Take space, make space
- What is said here, stays here...and what is learned here, leaves here
- Brave space
- Offer what you can, ask for what you need
- One mic, one conversation



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## Overview and Assumptions

- Race matters
- We aren't just talking about individual acts of bigotry.
- Institutions rely upon processes and procedures that can perpetuate inequity. We are all a part of institutions and systems.
- We have a responsibility for advancing racial equity.



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# The Role of Government

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## Values and realities

- All men are created equal
- With liberty and justice for all
- Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth

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## History of government and race



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## Why GARE leads with race

- Racial inequities deep and pervasive
- Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
- Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
- Specificity matters!

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## When Leading with Race, we are...

....Race **explicit, not exclusive**

always bring an “intersectional” analysis

Race and

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability status....
- income / class
- Religion
- sexual orientation

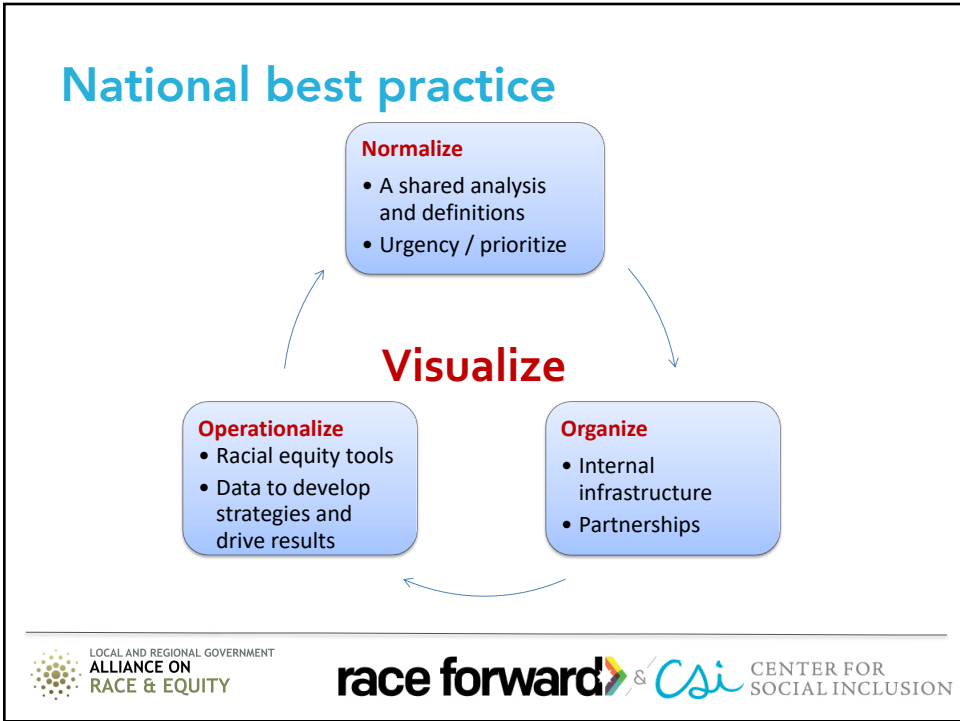


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## Advancing Racial Equity A national practice



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### Racial inequity in the U.S.

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do...

Education	Jobs	Housing
Criminal Justice	Arts and Culture	
Health	Environment	Equitable Development

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## Racial equity means:

**Closing the gaps** so that race does not predict one's success, while **improving outcomes for all**



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## Achieving racial equity requires us to...

....**Target strategies** to focus improvements for those worse off

....Move beyond service provision to focus on changing **policies, institutions and structures**




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## DE&I - NOT a single concept


DIVERSITY ●●► INCLUSION ●●●●●●●●► EQUITY



**Quantity**  
Different identities & cultures



**Quality**  
Participation across identities & cultures



**Justice**  
Policies, practices, & procedures to ensure equitable outcomes

Courtesy of City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights

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# How we think How we behave

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## The Unconscious Mind



**Schemas:** the “frames” through which our brains help us understand and navigate the world:

1. Sort into categories
2. Create associations
3. Fill in the gaps



## How We Think

Humans need meaning.

- Individual meaning
- Collective meaning

Only **2%** of emotional cognition is available consciously

Racial bias tends to reside in the **unconscious** network



**We unconsciously think about race even when we do not explicitly discuss it.**




Explicit bias	Implicit bias
Expressed directly	Expressed indirectly
Aware of bias / operates consciously	Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously
Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “whites only”	Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.

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### What to do with bias?

- Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.
- Openly acknowledging and challenging biases allows us to develop strategic interventions.



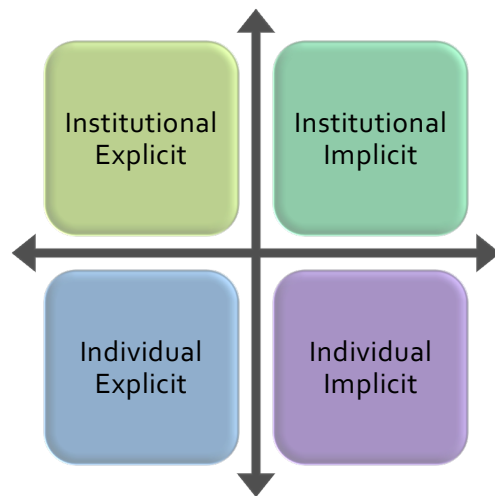
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# What creates different outcomes?



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## Seattle Policing Example

<b>Institutional / Explicit</b> <i>Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.</i> <b>Example:</b> Police department refusing to hire people of color.	<b>Institutional / Implicit</b> <i>Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.</i> <b>Example:</b> Police department focusing on street-level drug arrests.	<b>Individual / Explicit</b> <i>Prejudice in action – discrimination.</i> <b>Example:</b> Police officer calling someone an ethnic slur while arresting them.	<b>Individual / Implicit</b> <i>Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.</i> <b>Example:</b> Police officer calling for back-up more often when stopping a person of color.
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## Examples from your work –

<b>Institutional/Explicit</b> <i>Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.</i>	<b>Institutional/Implicit</b> <i>Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.</i>	<b>Individual/Explicit</b> <i>Prejudice in action – discrimination.</i>	<b>Individual/Implicit</b> <i>Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.</i>
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**Individual racism:**

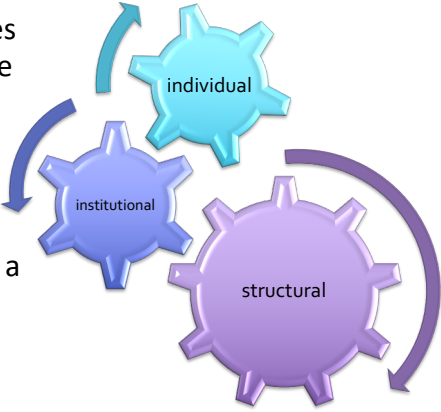
- Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Institutional racism:**

- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color.

**Structural racism:**

- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.



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## Asking Different Questions

FROM:	----->	TO:
<b>Blame</b> Who's a racist?		<b>Causes</b> What's causing the racial inequities?
<b>Intentions</b> What did they mean? What was their attitude?		<b>Effects</b> What were the actions? What are the impacts?
<b>Prejudice</b> What beliefs made them do it?		<b>Systems</b> What institutions are responsible?
<b>Grievance</b> How can we fix what just happened?		<b>Solutions</b> What proactive strategies and solutions?

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## Opportunities for Change

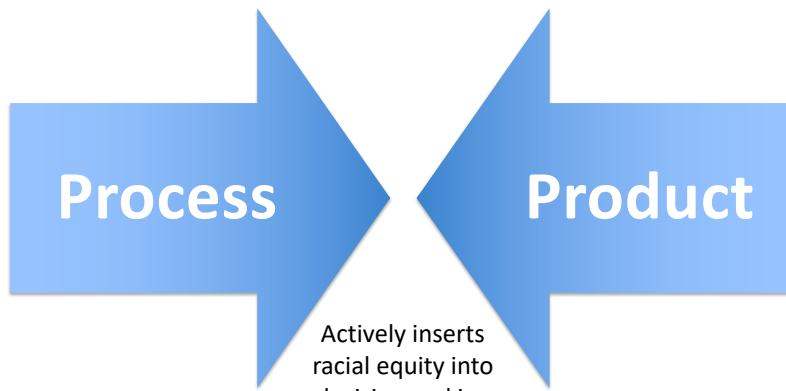
- What is one action you can take to help advance racial equity?
- What are the opportunities for institutional actions to advance racial equity?



# Operationalizing



## What is a Racial Equity Tool?



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## Race in institutional policies

### Federal Housing Administration



### Interstate System



### Streetlights



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The image shows the cover of a document titled "Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity". The cover features a graphic of interlocking gears at the top. The text on the cover includes "TOOLKIT" in a small green box, the title "Racial Equity Toolkit", the subtitle "An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity", and the logo for the "LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY" at the bottom. A URL is provided in a light blue box to the right of the cover.

<http://www.raciaequityalliance.org/resource/s/racial-equity-toolkit-opportunity-operationalize-equity/>

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## Who should use a Racial Equity Tool?



The image contains three photographs, each in a separate box, illustrating different groups that should use a Racial Equity Tool. The first photo shows a group of people in a formal meeting setting, labeled "Top leadership". The second photo shows a group of people sitting at tables in a meeting room, labeled "Organizational staff". The third photo shows a group of people sitting around a table in a community meeting, labeled "Community".

Top leadership

Organizational staff

Community

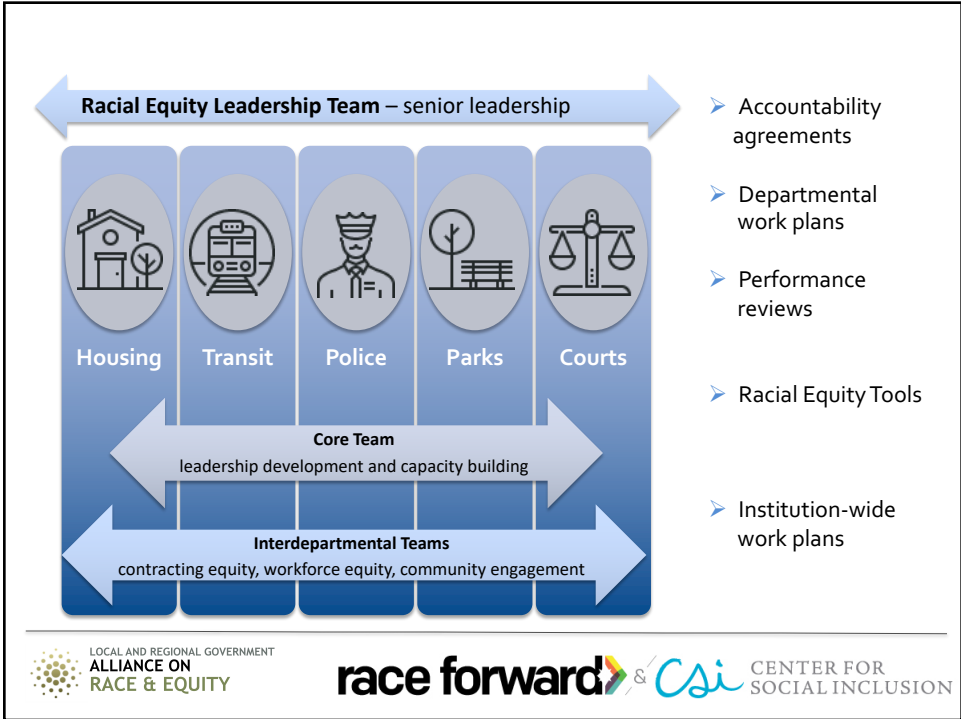
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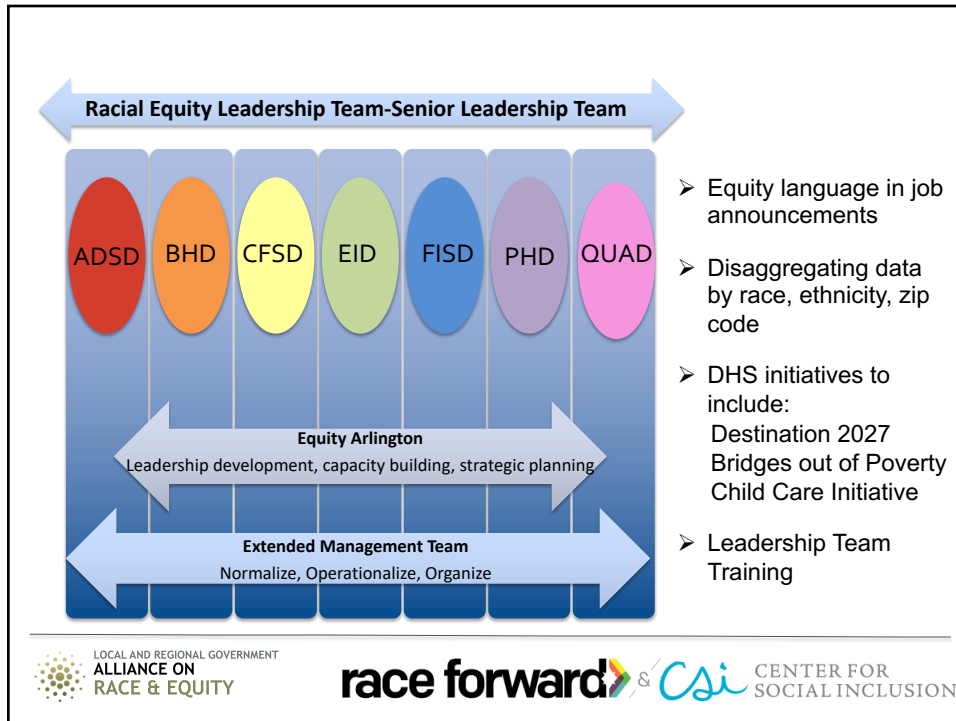
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# Organizing

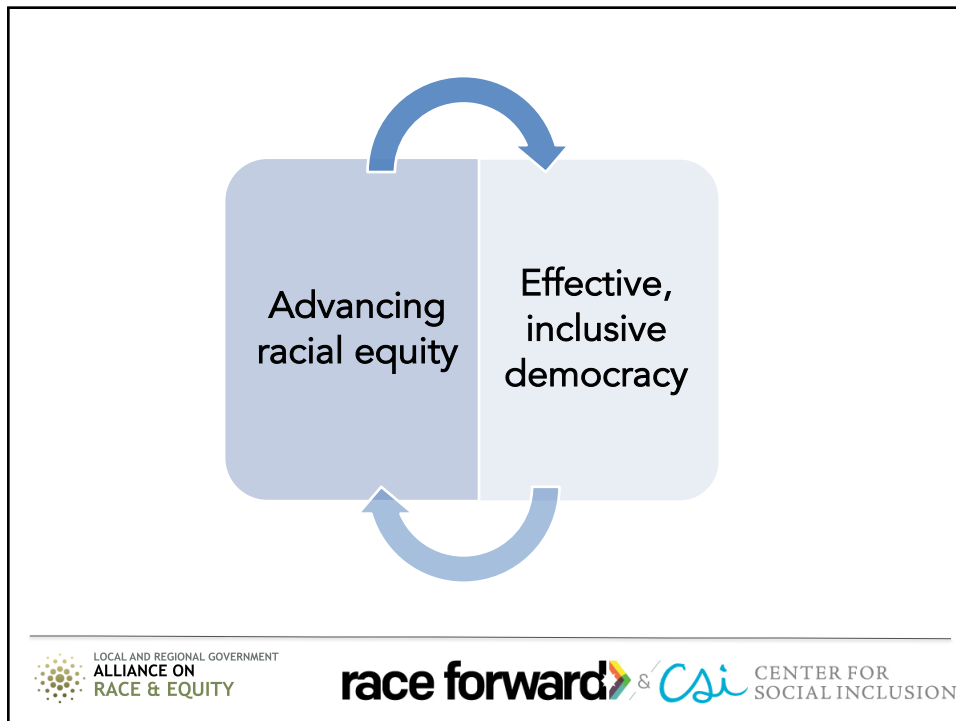
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## A Path Forward

- What would successfully advancing racial equity look like?
- What are the challenges you face?
- What do others need to know about your work?
- What resources and relationships need to be leveraged to build capacity and operationalize?



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## Contact information

Jaqueline Tucker, Esq

[www.raceforward.org](http://www.raceforward.org)  
[www.racialequityalliance.org](http://www.racialequityalliance.org)



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