



Achieving Equity

**The leadership potential of
government**

ICMA

September 14, 2014



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**ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY**

Racial inequity in the U.S.

Education

Jobs

Housing

Criminal Justice

Arts and Culture

Health

Environment

Equitable Development

100%

Likelihood that race is a determinant for key health and social indicators in life.

10 years

Difference in life expectancy based on zip code in King County.



Racial equity means:

- “Closing the gaps” so that race does not predict one’s success, while also **improving outcomes for all**
- To do so, have to:
 - ✓ Target strategies to focus improvements for those worse off
 - ✓ Move beyond “services” and focus on changing policies, institutions and structures



Bias

- The evaluation of one group and its members relative to another.
- We all carry bias, or prejudice. Acting on biases can be discriminatory and can create negative outcomes for particular groups.





Explicit bias

Expressed directly

Aware of bias

Operates consciously

Example -- “I like whites more than Latinos.”

Implicit bias

Expressed indirectly

Unaware of bias

Operates sub-consciously

Example -- sitting further away from a Latino than a white individual.



Examples of implicit bias

- When conductors were placed behind a screen, the percentage of female new hires for orchestral jobs increased 25% - 46%.





Examples of implicit bias

- Job search - identical resumes, apart from names
- More “white-sounding” names
 - ✓ 50% more callbacks for jobs than “African-American sounding” names.

Susan Smith

50% more
call-
backs.



LaKesha
Washington



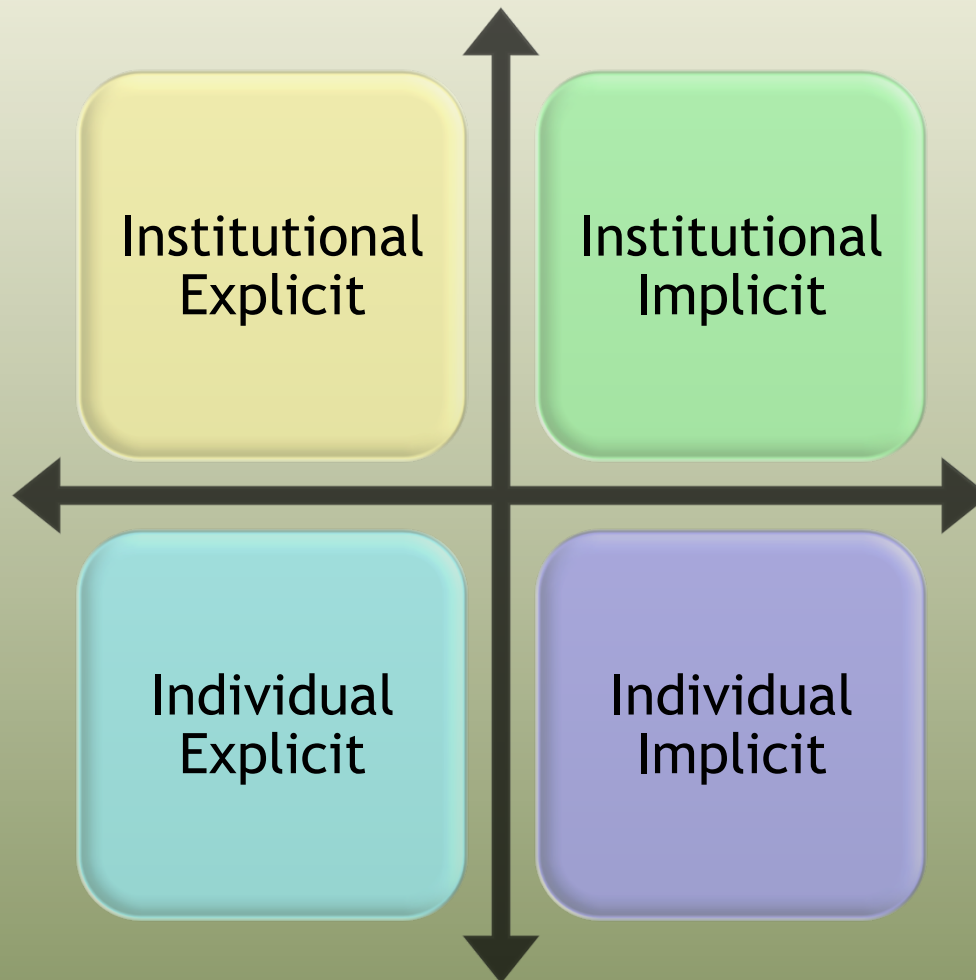
What to do with bias?

- Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.
- Research has confirmed that if we openly acknowledge and directly challenge our biases, we can make more progress.





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Institutional / Explicit

Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.

Example:

Police department refusing to hire people of color.

Institutional / Implicit

Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.

Example:

Police department focusing on street-level drug arrests.

Individual / Explicit

Prejudice in action - discrimination.

Example:

Police officer calling someone an ethnic slur while arresting them.

Individual / Implicit

Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.

Example:

Police officer calling for back-up more often when stopping a person of color.



Individual racism:

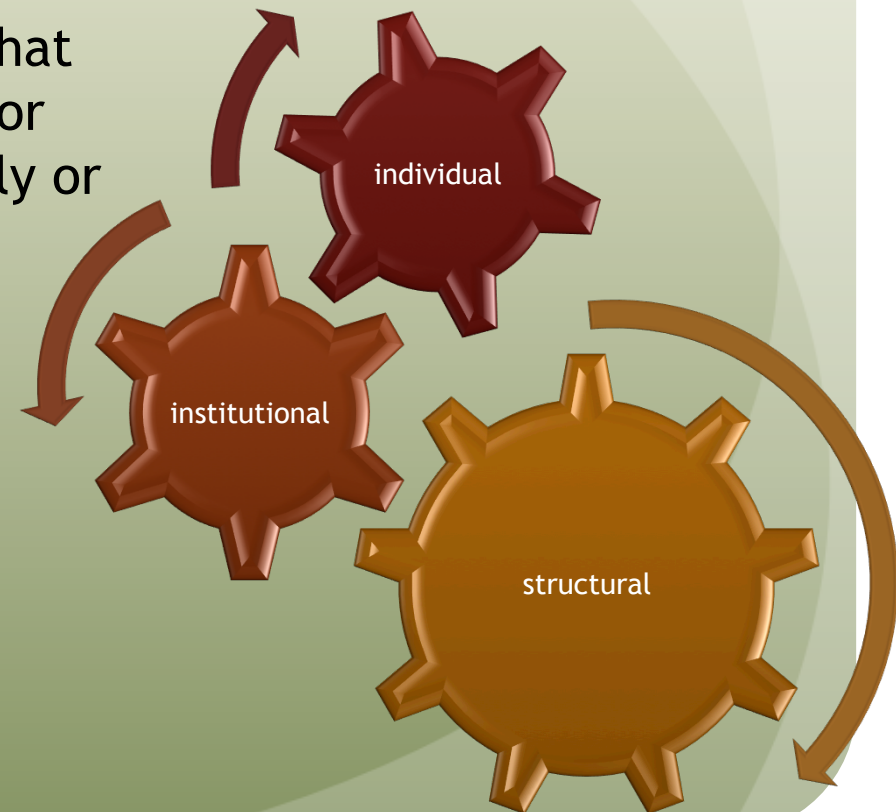
- Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:

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

Structural racism:

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





Racial Equity Tools

- Proactively seek to eliminate inequities and advance equity
- Identify clear goals and objectives, measurable outcomes
- Develop mechanisms for successful implementation



Racial Equity Toolkit

- A Racial Equity Toolkit can be used in budget, policy and program decisions.
- Seattle examples:
 - ✓ Enacted a Citywide policy of restricting blanket criminal background checks for employment
 - ✓ More than tripled the use of WMBEs in non-construction goods and services
 - ✓ Stopped prosecuting people with suspended licenses
 - ✓ Changed street lamp replacement to insure equitable access



Workforce equity examples of institutional bias:

1. Job descriptions that put undue emphasis on college degrees over work experience.
2. Unnecessary use of criminal background checks.
3. Hiring processes that are based on “networks.”



Workforce equity examples of institutional bias (continued):

4. Lack of upward mobility strategies for entry level positions.
5. Job descriptions and performance evaluation systems that do not integrate racial equity.
6. Unnecessary requirement for a driver's license in a job announcement

U.S. Workforce: Public vs. Private

Public sector

- More accessible for people of color and women.
- Lower gaps in income disparities



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- Government is the single largest employer of women and communities of color.
- Public agencies are the single largest employer for black men and the second most common for black women.
- State and local public-sector workers of color face smaller wage disparities across racial lines, and at some levels of education actually enjoy a wage premium over similarly educated white workers.





Work Force Equity: problems after entry

- Lack of upward mobility/advancement
 - Need to go beyond accessibility and look at numbers in individual departments and functions within departments.
- Low Retention
- Government Cutbacks





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Government cutbacks disproportionately impact communities of color



**AGE OF
AUSTERITY**

- Job losses in the state and local public sectors stand in contrast to the jobs recovery in the private sector.
- Attacks on government — disproportionately affect people of color and women.



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Government Alliance on Race and Equity

A national network of government
working to achieve racial equity
and advance opportunities for all.

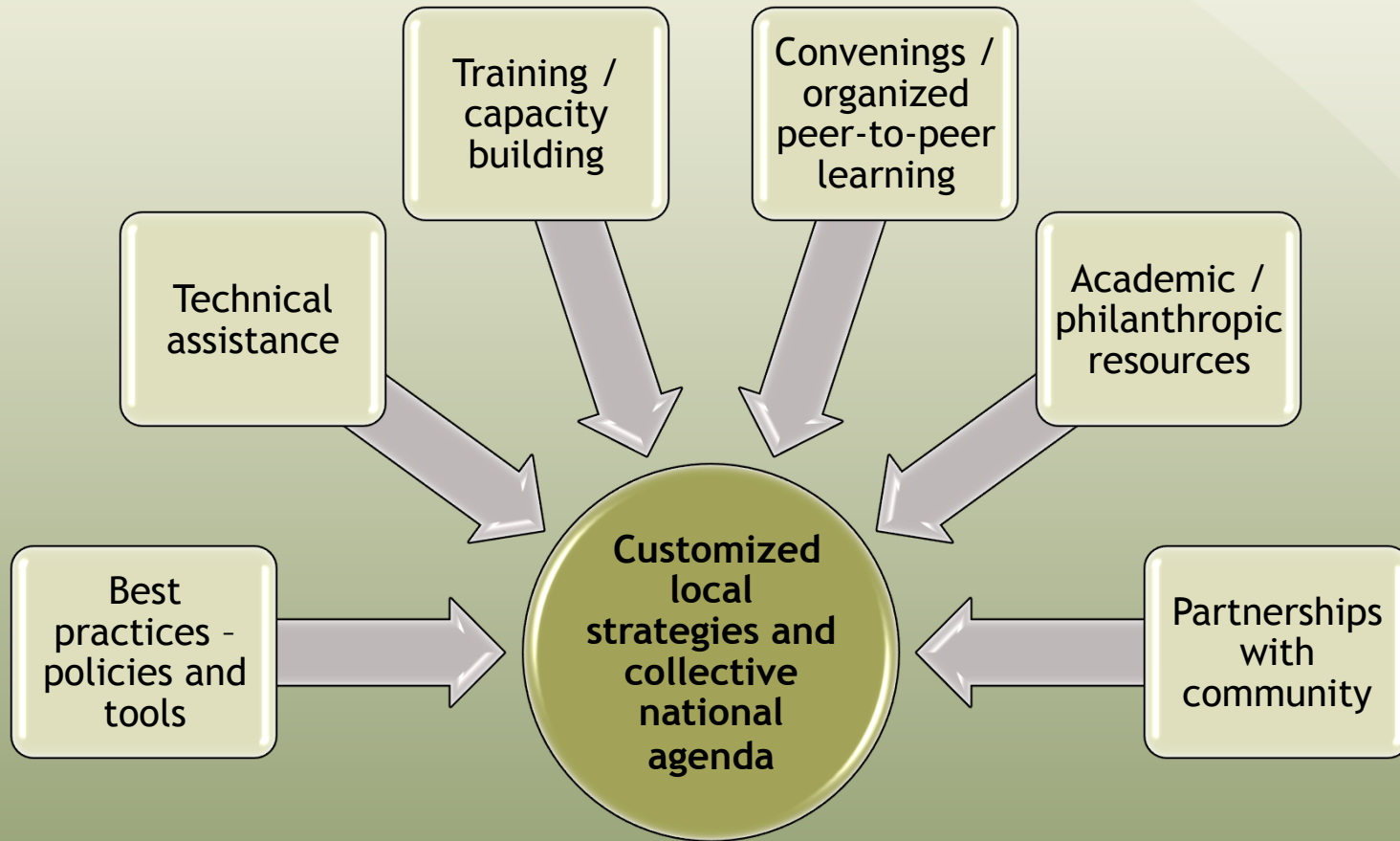


Objectives of the Alliance:

- ◆ Support a cohort of governmental jurisdictions.
- ◆ Develop a “pathway for entry” for new jurisdictions.
- ◆ Build cross-sector collaborations to achieve equity in our communities.



Cohort model





Cohort of jurisdictional leaders:

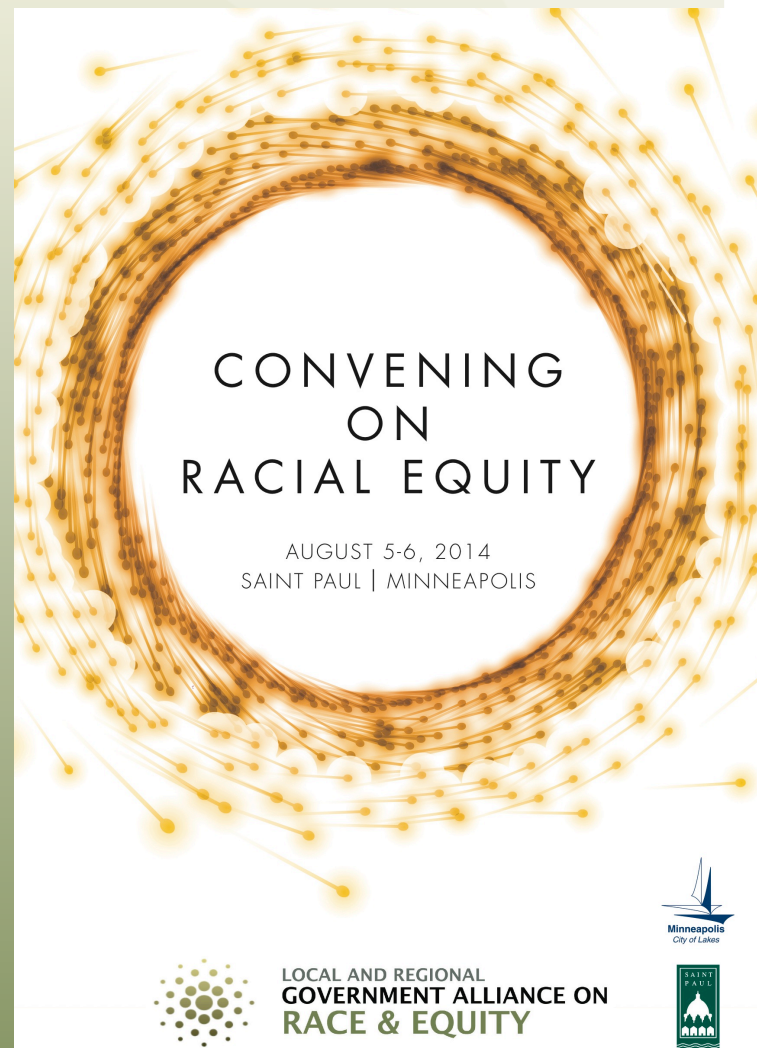
- ◆ Commitment to racial equity.
- ◆ Supportive electeds, department leadership and expertise within front-line staff work with community
- ◆ Supportive stakeholders and partners.





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Pathways for new jurisdictions





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Collective impact -

- Transformative change in government
- Community driven and supported





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