Module 7: Institutionalizing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DEI Institutionalization is the systematic embedding of DEI lens and practices in all levels of our organizations and evaluation practices. It involves aligning minds & hearts, behaviors, and systems towards diversity, equity, and inclusion. Institutionalization of DEI normalizes inclusion and contributes to a new organizational culture where everyone belongs.

At the level of evaluation practice, we invite you to begin with these reflection questions on embedding DEI in evaluation from the Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook (2015) Co-authored by City for All Women Initiative and the City of Ottawa:

1. Have we considered what populations will be missed by only using specific methods? (e.g., online surveys, interviews, general public consultations) What other approaches might we use?

2. Are those designing and implementing the evaluation representative of the target groups who will participate in the evaluation? How can we ensure their perspectives are included?

3. Do the evaluation questions allow for consideration of the experiences of a diversity of residents/participants?

4. What are you using as evidence to develop your questions and evaluation? What assumptions may be embedded within the evaluation questions and data analysis? How can I maintain the spirit of inquiry in evaluation practice and genuinely cultivate curiosity?

5. Can we hold interviews or focus groups at a location where participants are most comfortable? (e.g., Indigenous women at an Indigenous women's center)

6. Can we make it easier for respondents to participate by using interviewers from the same population, providing transportation and childcare, and offering an honorarium for focus groups?

7. Can we interview in the language in which the people are most comfortable or have a cultural interpreter available? (i.e., spoken language, braille, sign language). Can we use accessible language and verify that interviewers and participants have a shared understanding of terms being used?

8. When analyzing our data, did we maintain a diversity of perspectives in the findings?

9. Have we validated the findings with the community to minimize any biases?

10. How can we report back to the people who participated in the evaluation process?

11. Any further reflections?

At the organizational level, we highly recommend you read through the Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook (2015) by City for All Women Initiative and the City of Ottawa, mentioned above as a guide book for embedding a DEI lens into many facets of organizational work.

The *Institutionalizing Equity and Inclusion with the Four Dimensions of Sustainable Impact* from Solid Ground Consulting is another excellent resource and offers excellent questions for assessing the institutionalization of DEI in leadership, strategy, culture, and brand.

Here are some **questions for assessing DEI at the organizational development level**, which we invite you to explore with a DEI working group/leadership team within your organization. (Solid Ground Consulting, 2018)

1. What are we doing as evaluators to assess our organizational capacity to enhance DEI? Is this work embedded in your Strategic Plan? How often is it revisited?

2. Do you have DEI goals that are actionable and measurable? How often are these goals re-visited every year to ensure plans are implemented? How is accountability held?

3. Have you moved from just awareness and sensitivity to integrating DEI into your systems and operational practices? Procedures such as recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion/career development, and compensation/benefits: are they equitable and inclusive, is there pay equity, who gets the corner office, cool projects, etc.?

4. Does your workforce and evaluation teams mirror or at least represent to some degree the communities or clients you are serving?

5. What is your definition of equity? Do you have an equity lens, framework, and equity statement that you use to guide the way you operate and function as an organization?

6. Whose voices are you unintentionally/intentionally engaging with or leaving out in your strategic plan or human capital management policies and practices?

7. How are you creating spaces for meaningful collaboration embedded in work cultures?

8. What is not working with DEI? (e.g., in retention. Do you know why people are leaving?)ƒ What are the areas that need the most significant improvement?

9. What are the barriers to having an equitable and inclusive culture here? Does everyone understand your reasoning for DEI? What are the opportunities and liabilities of not having an equitable and inclusive organizational culture?

10. What would equity look like if it were working well?

References

Bloom Consulting (2020). *Transformative Social Change in Organizations.* https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IrP820THda-b7eIXEvHpPKw9x2-2xsan/view?usp=sharing

City for All Women Initiative (2015). *Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook.*https://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/ei-lens-handbook-en-web-2018.pdf

City of Ottawa (). City of Ottawa's plan. https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/get-know-your-city/statistics-and-economic-profile#equity-and-inclusion-lens

Saskatchewan Treaty Commission (). https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.otc.ca/resource/purchase/reconc…

Tsai, L.A.(2018). Institutionalizing Equity and Inclusion with the Four Dimensions of Sustainable Impact. Solid Ground Consulting. http://pgediversitysummit.com/downloads/Handouts.pdf