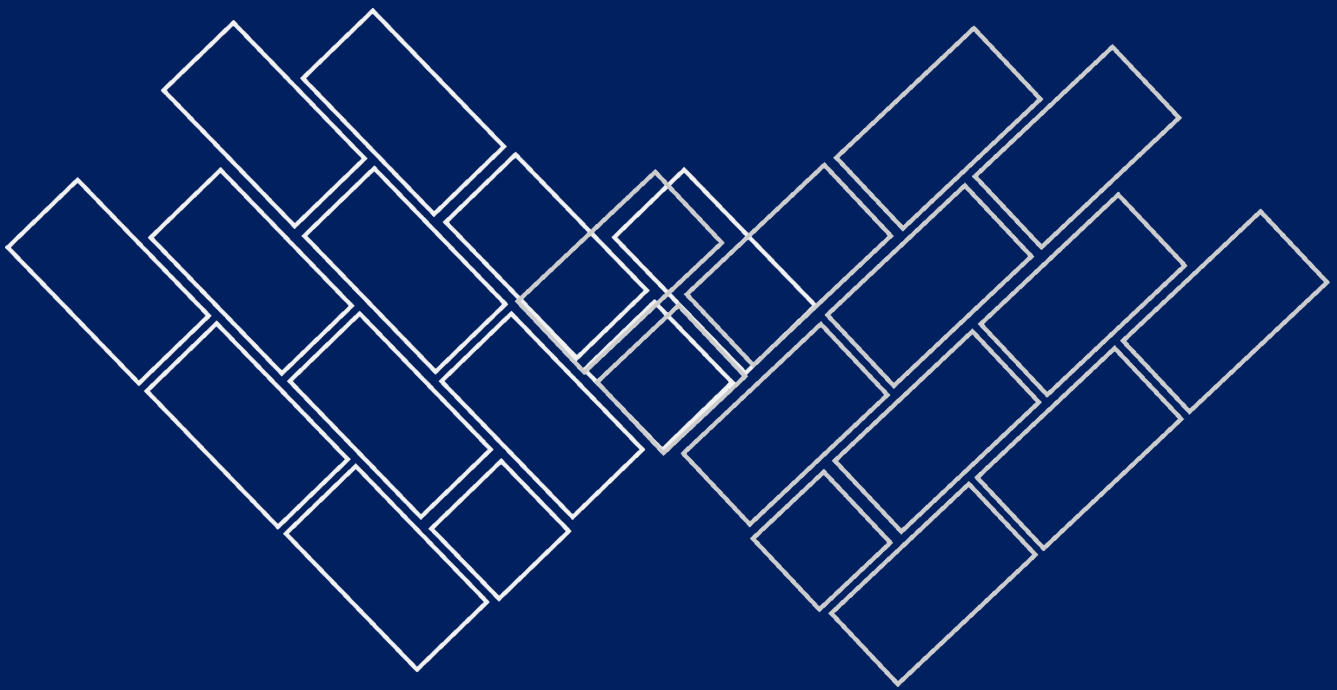


Anti-Racist Organizational Change: Resources & Tools for Nonprofits



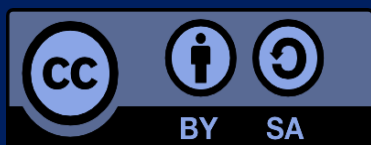
CommunityWise Resource Centre
Calgary, Alberta | Treaty 7 Territory | 2017

CommunityWise Resource Centre is located in the traditional territories of the Blackfoot and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikuni, the Kainai, the Tsuu T'ina and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. We acknowledge First Nations and traditional territories because the purpose of CommunityWise is about sharing space and because it's one way to locate ourselves in the process of healing from colonial violence. We understand that colonialism is rooted in white supremacy and we aim to make CommunityWise more accessible for Indigenous peoples.

CommunityWise is a nonprofit centre that provides affordable office and community space. We provide backbone infrastructure (for example, shared internet access and office equipment) and collaborative capacity-building and programming supports to nonprofit member organizations. We support around 80 small and grassroots organizations whose work spans a diverse spectrum of social, environmental, and cultural issues.

This resource was prepared by **Thulasy Lettner** and **Skye Louis** with support from the **Staff Collective** at CommunityWise and members of the **Anti-Racist Organizational Change Working Group** and the **Anti-Racist Organizational Change Advisory Group**. Special thanks to **Charlene Campo**, **Di Honorio**, **Erin McFarlane**, **Lori DeLuca**, **Meghan Durieux**, **Sarah Winstanley**, **Son Edworthy**, and for their contributions.

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The checklist on pages 35/36 is an exception to this license; please contact author Tina Lopes directly for permission.

Resource: Annotated Job Posting

The comments on this job posting highlight some of the ways we tried to make the hiring process more equitable.

CommunityWise Job Opportunity

Finance and Office Coordinator
(Part-time, permanent – 26 hours/week, some flexibility in schedule)

Wage: \$25/hour (+ 4% vacation). CommunityWise employees have access to a Wellness Fund

Location: This position will work on-site at CommunityWise: 223 12 Avenue SW

Application Deadline: Monday, June 12, 2017 at 4pm

Start Date: Tuesday, July 18, 2017

Interviews will take place during the weeks of June 26th and July 3rd. We will make every effort to accommodate candidates' schedules and needs in all parts of the hiring process.

Role:

Working with the CommunityWise Staff Collective, this position will coordinate the finances of the organization, in addition to coordinating office activities, and supporting the membership and the public.

CommunityWise Overview:

CommunityWise is a nonprofit centre which means that we provide affordable office and meeting spaces and other backbone infrastructure (shared internet, office equipment, mailboxes, kitchen equipment), as well as collaborative capacity-building and programming supports to nonprofit member organizations. We support around 90 small nonprofit and grassroots organizations whose work spans a diverse spectrum of social, environmental, and cultural issues. About 30 of the members are physically co-located within our space as Tenants and the other 60 are known as Associate Members who access common spaces or other resources for their initiatives and events.

Mission

Where flexibility is possible, it must be made available as an option.

This makes the position more accessible to those with irregular schedules or other unpredictable needs (such as care-giving).

It's important to be upfront and transparent about compensation, instead of leaving it to the end of the process or expecting people to negotiate their salary (this perpetuates wage inequities). State the salary (or salary range) as well as benefits clearly.

Describe your hiring process and timeline to set up clear expectations. Doing this respects the time of the applicants and forces your organization to be more publicly accountable.

To be a community hub, providing inclusive and affordable space and community development programs to support and strengthen diverse grassroots and non-profit members.

Vision

To achieve equitable social change through collaborative work.

Equity Framework and the Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC) Project

CommunityWise's current strategic focus is the creation of an Equity Framework, centered on anti-racism, to inform CommunityWise's governance, policies, and culture. Since March 2016, CommunityWise has been undertaking an extensive community engagement process that centers the voices of those most impacted by organizational racism in Calgary's non-profit sector: racialized and Indigenous individuals.

Include any information that shows that your organization's commitment to equity is more than just a statement of non-discrimination.

Staff Collective

CommunityWise staff are expected to work co-operatively with others; demonstrate flexibility in organizing work; show a high degree of initiative, discernment and resourcefulness; have effective communication skills; and demonstrate thoughtfulness in decision making. Staff must be willing to work within anti-racist and anti-oppressive frameworks and actively engage in ongoing learning about these frameworks alongside members of the Staff Collective and Board of Directors. CommunityWise maintains a flat organizational structure where all staff are paid the same hourly wage.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities:

Financial (60% of role)

- Manage accounts receivable/payable records and journal entries; manage payroll
- Lead all year-end financial processing and reporting; prepare all supporting information for annual audit and liaise with external auditors
- Prepare and submit annual Charitable and Society returns and Workers Compensation Board (WCB) reports

- Serve as Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) Casino Chair and assist with application process; complete all AGLC reporting
- Prepare bi-monthly, quarterly, and annual reports
- Supervise the management of the cash operations associated with the administration services of the office and building as decided by the Staff Collective
- Contribute to the fund development strategy and operations of the organization through research, grant writing, and grant reporting in collaboration with the Staff Collective
- Coordinate bi-monthly Finance Committee meetings
- Establish guidelines for budget and forecast preparation; coordinate the preparation of annual budget in collaboration with the Staff Collective
- Reconcile bank and investment accounts

Break down the role as clearly as possible to set clear expectations. Also, don't include "Other duties as required", because this may allow the role to expand beyond what is expected and compensated.

Operational (30% of role)

- Coordinate and support office administration services (reception, room bookings, cash operations, database input, office/building supply orders) as needed and decided by the Staff Collective
- Support a wide range of public and member inquiries into services available at the centre, referring to appropriate contacts when necessary
- Attend bi-monthly Board meetings

Leadership (10% of role)

- Participate with the Staff Collective in supporting and enhancing the ongoing strategic direction of CommunityWise
- Attend monthly Staff Collective meetings
- Foster effective teamwork between co-workers, CommunityWise members, and community participants, with strategies to animate shared space and create innovative opportunities for collaboration

Many equity-seeking groups face barriers to getting paid work experience and formal education in the areas they are skilled in. Therefore it is very important to value relevant unpaid/volunteer/community work as equivalent to paid work and degrees wherever possible.

Qualifications:

- At least three years of experience in a similar role (this includes relevant paid and unpaid/volunteer/community work)

- At least three years of experience in a similar role (this includes relevant paid and unpaid/volunteer/community work)
- Proficiency with QuickBooks, Microsoft Office, and Google Calendar
- Ability to prioritize workload and the flexibility to manage multiple tasks as required
- Excellent communication, interpersonal and organizational skills
- Willingness to work within anti-racist and anti-oppressive frameworks and actively engage in ongoing learning about these frameworks
- Non-profit experience is a MUST!

Depending on the role, knowledge of anti-racism and anti-oppression may not be a necessary qualification. However, stating that “a willingness to learn” is required reinforces that your organization takes this seriously and is always learning and growing in these areas.

How to Apply:

Please send a **resume and cover letter** to Lori DeLuca at hiring@communitywise.net by **Monday, June 12, 2017 at 4 pm.**

Only qualified candidates will be contacted for an interview.

CommunityWise is committed to inclusion and equity and strives to ensure that our Staff Collective reflects the diversity of our Membership. We are committed to removing barriers to employment that are faced by equity-seeking groups and encourage (but do not require) members of these groups to self-identify as such in their cover letters.

Equity statement: Many organizations will include a statement of non-discrimination, but this is a passive stance and one that is required by law in most cases. Instead, write a statement that reflects your organization’s commitment to equity and clearly directs equity-seeking candidates to apply.

In accordance with our Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC) project and the current compositional needs of our Staff Collective, we particularly encourage applications from individuals who self-identify as racialized or Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit).*

This was our second iteration of an equity statement, but it was still not perfect. It likely should’ve been at the top of the posting instead of the bottom and should have more clearly directed racialized and Indigenous candidates to both apply and tell us about their identity in their cover letters. This is not an easy thing to tactfully communicate, but practicing it is the only way to improve.

**The term “racialized” is used here instead of the more outdated and inaccurate terms “racial minority”, “visible minority”, “person of colour”, or “non-White”.*

Of the many positive aspects of the AROC project, I most appreciate that AROC is committed to promoting inclusion and equity not only as an outcome, but also through its process.

- AROC Advisory Member

Accountability

Adaptable Resource: Accountable Spaces Guidelines

- ★ Avoid making assumptions about other people.
- ★ Be open to critical self-reflection. If an individual tells you that something you said was harmful to them, listen.
- ★ Realize your privilege and be aware of potential power dynamics that might exist within a space.
- ★ Understand that we are all in a place of learning. If you say something problematic – apologize, listen to the voices of others, and then learn and adjust your behavior.
- ★ Share the space.
- ★ Speak for yourself. Use “I” language; don’t speak for others and don’t share someone else’s stories or experiences. Notice your own biases/judgments.
- ★ Take care of yourself. Think of someone you trust whom you can debrief with and plan to contact them. It’s okay if you need to leave the room at any time. Facilitators are available for follow-up conversation.

Activity: Individual Accountability

At the individual level, we held an exercise with the Working Group to reflect on how members were (or were not) living out the Accountable Spaces Guidelines. This reflection was based on feedback and concerns from members about their experience in the group.

Concerns:

- Giving advice instead of listening or asking for consent to give advice
- Talking too much or for too long (repeating things over and over)
- Asking personal questions
- Assuming everyone experiences racism similarly
- Expecting “perfect” politics from everyone (people feeling judged if views or language not politically correct)
- Making assumptions
- Lack of explicit discomfort or conflict; may be a sign that we are not addressing things that are happening under the surface

After reflecting individually on these concerns, group members set personal accountability goals for themselves, and a specific date for everyone to check in about their own progress.

Adaptable Resource: Working Group Code of Conduct

All members of the Working Group are expected to:

- ★ Hold each other accountable to the Accountable Spaces Guidelines, particularly in Working Group meeting settings;
- ★ Express their views thoughtfully, courteously, and respectfully, and without intimidation, discrimination or harassment in all communications either spoken or written; and,
- ★ Observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential.

Adaptable Resource: Organizational Accountability

At the organizational level, our Working Group came up with the following thoughts on how an organization can keep itself accountable to anti-racist organizational change. This is just a sample; the full list is available in the Appendix.

When trying to bring anyone to account in a complaint-based system, things like **gaslighting** occur. People become afraid to report because their complaints are hard to 'prove'. Start by eliminating existing barriers to reporting.

When onboarding people, don't just review policies. Go back and make each policy into a living document.

Create a document that binds people. Have all new agency members sign an anti-racist charter which they can be held accountable to.

Develop an outside audit process. Include criteria, benchmarks and data collection separated by race.

In program evaluations, ask: Who are we serving? What is the feedback from that group? Are we adapting to different ways of knowing and communicating?

Don't just audit policies; conduct a safer spaces audit. Have someone actually in the room auditing during interviews and performance reviews.

Organizations are typically currently held accountable to funders, government and accreditation bodies. Focus more on accountability in relationships with the participants/clients you work with.

Closing

Anti-racism work can be compared to travelling upstream. As individuals and organizations, if we aren't actively moving the other way, we are just flowing with the current. This means we are creating and reinforcing racial inequities.

By traveling against the current, we can begin to address some of these issues - even if it feels like we are just staying in the same place. With great effort, we may make forward progress against the current. It is also possible to fall back; change is always reversible.

Through our efforts, we are becoming more able to recognize and address racial inequities. We are able to tolerate higher levels of the tension and discomfort that result from doing this work. We are able to move from problem to action to learning with greater ease.

True organizational change happens over time. After 18 months, CommunityWise has learned a great deal about anti-racist change, but we still have a long way to go.

This marks the end of the first convergent phase of our Anti-Racist Organizational Change process and the beginning of the next divergent phase.

There are still many things from the Ideas Inventory that need to be put into practice to embed anti-racist change in our organization.

We are evaluating our process as it unfolds. We are working to hold ourselves accountable, particularly to the racialized and Indigenous members of our community. With funding to continue this process for two more years, we will share our learnings as we go.

AROC has been nothing short of a life-changing and experience-affirming process for me. I really cannot thank you enough and hope that this work continues in effectively changing the lives of those who become involved for the better, to affirm marginalized experiences, educate and assist in dismantling systemic racism.

- AROC Advisory Member

Key Words & Ideas

Anti-Racism

Anti-Racism is the active, on-going process of dismantling systems of racial inequity and creating new systems of racial equity. Anti-racism demands that this work be done at the individual, organizational/ institutional, and cultural levels in order to effectively address systemic racism. Anti-racism is an approach, not an end-point, and thus provides a useful frame for an organizational change process.

Anti-Racist Organizational Change

Anti-racist organizational change is about making organizational changes in a way that intentionally addresses structural racism and creates greater diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Caucusing

Anti-racism acknowledges that our experiences do not occur in a neutral context. Those who identify as racialized or Indigenous experience racism differently than those who do not.

Separating into groups based on this distinction—a process called “racial caucusing”—is a strategy that allows people to talk about shared experiences. The strategy is not designed to create division but to make the whole group more effective, as described in [this paper by Crossroads](#):

“When the two groups come back together as a team they are better able to understand, confront, and dismantle racism within the team itself and within the institutional setting.”

The AROC project did not form a white caucus, despite acknowledging the need for white people to do the emotional labour to confront their own racism and **whiteness**. It was decided that spending the project’s limited resources on

facilitation and meeting space for white people was not a priority and would actually undermine the values and goals of a process seeking to centre the experiences and needs of those most impacted by racism.

[This blog post](#) by Kad Smith at CompassPoint shares a POC view on racial caucusing in a nonprofit organization.

Sources: [Racial Identity Caucusing: A strategy for building anti-racist collectives](#) by Crossroads Ministries and [Race Caucusing in an Organizational Context: A POC's Experience](#) by Kad Smith and CompassPoint.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the wide array of differences among people and their perspectives on the world. Diversity is an important organizational goal in its own right, but it may or may not be linked to the issue of equity. A diverse workplace is not necessarily an equitable workplace. Nor does the presence of people who are diverse necessarily produce decision-making that optimizes results for the groups their diversity reflects.

Source: [Race Matters Institute](#)

Emergent Process

An emergent process is a process of change that involves non-linear, abrupt phase transitions as a system's overall structure and function is transformed into a new regime of behavior, exhibiting new properties that could not have been predicted to arise prior to the transformation.

(In other words, change transforms an entire organization into something new and different. Because the organization is complex and changes so deeply, it's difficult to predict exactly what changes will take place).

Source: [Complexity Labs](#)

Emergent work processes consist of organizational activity patterns that exhibit three characteristics in combination: no best structure or sequence; distributed across an unpredictable set of actors and roles and evolving dynamically.

(In other words, these three things happen together:

1. *There isn't just one specific order or way to do things.*
2. *We don't know exactly who will be involved and what they will be doing*
3. *Things are constantly changing as we move forward, so it is hard to predict the exact end results.)*

Source: [Ideas group, Inc. Global](#)

Equity

Equity recognizes diversity in experience, needs, etc. and creates frameworks that respond to diversity.

Source: Sahar Ibrahim & Reakash Walters, anti-racism facilitators

Equity refers to achieved results where advantage and disadvantage are not distributed on the basis of race and ethnicity. Strategies that produce equity must be targeted to address the unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers. Equity requires a set of informed policies and practices, intentionally designed to promote opportunity and rectify disparities, as well as informed people positioned to implement them effectively.

Source: [Race Matters Institute](#)

Gaslighting

Gaslighting is a reference to the 1944 film [Gaslight](#). It refers to a form of psychological abuse where someone is manipulated by another person to the point where they question whether their own experience of reality is valid.

Inclusion

Inclusion is reflected in the ability of diverse peoples to raise their perspectives authentically, and for those voices to matter and impact decisions, where the organizational culture has been enabled for that to happen. Inclusion promises a broader view of the world and a more democratic process of decision-making. Inclusion is an important organizational process goal, but it does not on its own guarantee equity in an organization's mission-critical results.

Source: [Race Matters Institute](#)

Intersectionality

Intersectionality describes how social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination overlap or intersect. “Intersectionality was not initially about diversity or sort of watered-down versions of diversity...Now intersectionality is a little bit more like, ‘It’s complicated’...or ‘We all have our individual identities and we need to recognize all of us.’ Well yeah that’s true, but intersectionality asks what [those differences mean] when we’re thinking about social justice...It’s not just a general ‘Everybody’s gotta cool identity and we should celebrate it.’ Of course that’s true. But we’re interested in power dynamics, not individual recognition.”

Source: Adapted from Wikipedia and an [interview with Kimberlé Crenshaw](#)

Organizational Change

Organizational change is about reviewing and modifying management structures and procedures. For example, making changes to policy, hiring practices and governance.

Organizational Racism

Organizational racism refers to the way normal, seemingly neutral or objective organizational policies and systems (e.g., the way we hire people, recruit board members, develop programming, etc.) can create disparities in access and outcomes for racialized and Indigenous individuals and communities. If not addressed, these policies and systems can increase disparities in power. It refers to organizational practices, which are related to but different from the racist behaviour or unconscious bias of individuals.

Popular Education

Popular Education is an approach to education where participants engage each other as co-learners to critically reflect on the issues in their community and then take action to change them.

Source: [Practicing Freedom](#)

Race

Race is a dynamic, fluid, relational category, socially constructed for political and economic interests over groups of people. This social construct loosely refers to a group of people distinguished from others often by physical characteristics such as colour of skin, shape of eyes, hair texture or facial features.

Source: Sahar Ibrahim & Reakash Walters, anti-racism facilitators

Racial Equity

Racial equity refers to achieved results where advantage and disadvantage are not distributed on the basis of race and ethnicity. Strategies that produce equity must be targeted to address the unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers. Equity requires a set of informed policies and practices, intentionally designed to promote opportunity and rectify disparities, as well as informed people positioned to implement them effectively.

Source: [Race Matters Institute](#)

Racism

A system of power that structures opportunity and assigns value based on the social construct of race where privilege is afforded to whiteness. A system that unfairly disadvantages racialized and Indigenous communities, while subsequently unfairly advantaging those embraced by whiteness.

Source: Adapted from Sahar Ibrahim & Reakash Walters, anti-racism facilitators

Racialized / Racialization

We are working with the definition of racialization provided by the Ontario Human Rights Commission:

The Commission has explained “race” as socially constructed differences among people based on characteristics such as accent or manner of speech, name, clothing, diet, beliefs and practices, leisure preferences, places of origin and so forth.

The process of social construction of race is called racialization: “the process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life.” Recognizing that race is a social construct, the Commission describes people as “racialized person” or “racialized group” instead of the more outdated and inaccurate terms “racial minority”. “visible minority”, “person of colour” or “non-White”.

Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)

Shadeism

This word shadeism (also known as colorism) describes the discrimination based on skin tone, which exists amongst members of the same community, creating a ranking of a person’s individual worth based on shade. For more about Shadeism, access the [Shadeism Film](#) on Vimeo.

Source: Nayani Thiyagarajah; [Shadeism Film](#), 2014

Structural Racism

A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead, it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

Source: The Aspen Institute Round Table on Community Change [Stri Racism Glossary](#)

Whiteness

A social construction referring to a dominant cultural space with political, social, and economic significance, with the purpose to keep others on the margins. ‘White’ people do not have to explain their culture/values/norms because they are part of the dominant culture that sets the norm. All those cast outside of whiteness are compared to this norm.

Source: Sahar Ibrahim & Reakash Walters, anti-racism facilitators

More Resources

[An Introduction to Popular Education](#) by Practicing Freedom.org

[Assessing Organizational Racism](#) tool from Western States Center

[Calgary Anti-Racism Education \(CARED\) Collective](#) web resource

[Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization](#) by Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training

[Dancing on Live Embers: Challenging Racism in Organizations](#) by Tina Lopes and Barb Thomas. Toronto: Between the Lines (2006)

[Definitions of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity](#) by the Race Matters Institute website (2015)

[‘Equity Priority Groups’](#) as discussed in the Toronto Arts Council's Equity Framework

[Hiring and Retaining Skilled Immigrants: A Cultural Competence Toolkit](#) from the BC Human Resource Management Association (2012)

[Iceberg of Oppression](#) framework of systemic oppression from Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance

[Intersectionality Meets the Mainstream](#) from Mic Media

[Moving Beyond Diversity](#) handbook from Toronto and York Region Labour Council (2014)

Onion model of organizational development concept from the [International NGO Training and Research Centre \(INTRAC\)](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission resources](#) and [definition of racialization](#) from Ontario Human Rights Commission website (2017)

[Race Caucusing in an Organizational Context: A POC's Experience](#) by Kad Smith from CompassPoint.org

[Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit](#) from Race Forward: The Centre for Racial Justice Innovation

[Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives](#) from Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training

[Shadeism Film](#) by Nayani Thiyaharajah and Brian Han (Toronto, 2010)

[Structural Racism Glossary](#) from the Aspen Institute Round Table on Community Change

[Systems Thinking and Race: Summary & Exercises](#) from Project Linked Fate (2011)

[Why Nonprofits Need to Have a Talk About Diversity](#) with Joy Bailey and Derrick Dawson. Webinar by See3 Communications and Chicago ROAR (2016)

[19 tips for making your job posting so amazing, unicorns will weep tears of joy](#), from Nonprofit AF

