

Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC) Project:

Working Group Terms of Reference (Updated June 5 2018)

AROC and the Equity Framework

In March 2016, CommunityWise received funding to undertake an **Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC)** project to strengthen our capacity and increase support for member organizations to address structural and create greater racial equity, diversity and inclusion.

The goal of the project is to create an **Equity Framework** that will inform CommunityWise's policies and serve as a resource for other nonprofits interested in anti-racist organizational change.

Why are we doing AROC?

There is a well-documented lack of diversity in Canada's non-profit sector, at both [board](#) and [staff](#) levels. CommunityWise seeks to strengthen our [commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion](#) by addressing the structural roots of this disparity within our own policies and providing support to other nonprofits interested in doing the same.

[Anti-racism](#) is our entry point, as it is difficult to effectively address all forms of discrimination at once. Thus the AROC project represents the beginning of an on-going effort to building an inclusive Equity Framework at CommunityWise.

How are we approaching AROC and who will be involved?

The AROC project is rooted in a consultative process that seeks to center the voices of those who are most impacted by institutional and organizational racism within Calgary's non-profit sector, while providing opportunities for all interested members of the community to participate and be informed. The process will be an emergent one that reflects and responds to the needs of the community.

- A broad **Working Group** will be convened to collaboratively develop a process for anti-racist organizational change that involves the staff, board and community of CommunityWise.
- Members of the Working Group who identify as [racialized](#) or Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit) may volunteer to be part of the **Advisory Group**.
- The Advisory Group will provide guidance on AROC (e.g., prioritizing opportunities for change) to the Working Group

Defining the AROC Working Group

The purpose of the Working Group is to unlearn racism while facilitating organizational change together.

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

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

This working group is focused on CommunityWise Organizational Change. Member representatives and wider community are welcome and invited to participate, but the process we are developing is specific to CommunityWise and its member organizations.

The Working Group will work collaboratively to identify challenges and opportunities, design recommendations for organizational change (e.g., policies), and assist with dissemination of deliverables.

The resources we create through this process will be relevant to other organizations and we hope Working Group participants will share the information with any other groups they are involved with.

Working Group Application Process

Send an email to equity@communitywise.net to express your interest in the Working Group.

Criteria:

1. Agree to work within the project's established [anti-racist framework](#).
2. Comply with anti-oppressive, accountable spaces guidelines and code of conduct (below)
3. Have a willingness for critical self-reflection.

Accountable Spaces Guidelines

- **Share the space.** Be mindful of your speaking time, make space for others to speak, and avoid interrupting others.
- **Understand that individuals experience racism in different ways.** Recognize that each experience and viewpoint is valid even if they differ; validate experiences rather than lecturing or giving advice. Consider that you do not need to agree with a perspective in order to understand it.
- **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 and avoid making assumptions about other people.
- **Examine your own privilege** and be aware of potential power dynamics that you might contribute to within a space.
- **Recognize 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 behaviour.
- **Be open to calling in harmful attitudes as well as open to critical self-reflection.** If an individual tells you that something you said was harmful to them, listen. Use these situations not to harass or call out, but as a learning experience.
- **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.

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.

If any Member believes that any other Member has breached this Code of Conduct, and the complaint cannot be resolved by the group, it may be reported formally in writing either to equity@communitywise.net or, if a member of the CommunityWise Staff Collective is implicated, to the CommunityWise Board of Directors at board@communitywise.net. In all cases, complaints will be resolved by taking a restorative justice approach.