REQUEST FOR CONVERSATION

Internal Racial Equity and Inclusion Work 2022

About The Denver Foundation

The Denver Foundation is a community foundation that inspires people and mobilizes resources to improve life in Metro Denver. In 2021, the Foundation and its donors awarded $115 million in grants. The Denver Foundation has three roles: stewarding an endowment to meet current and future needs for Metro Denver, working with community leaders to address the core challenges that face the community and managing more than 1,000 charitable funds on behalf of individuals, families and businesses. To learn more about The Denver Foundation, visit www.denverfoundation.org.

Background and Structure

For more than 25 years, The Denver Foundation has led efforts to expand diversity and inclusion and advance racial equity in Colorado’s nonprofit sector. Our new Strategic Framework, adopted in February 2021, affirms The Denver Foundation’s commitment to centering racial equity and prioritizing community leadership, inside and outside of the organization.

The Denver Foundation employs more than 50 staff members who work in three departments led by an executive team of a President and CEO. The Foundation is governed by a 20-member Board of Trustees and has multiple volunteer-led committees.

Over the past two years, The Denver Foundation has welcomed more than 20 new staff members who bring a range of lived experiences and varying degrees of familiarity with racial equity as a theory and practice. We seek to continue our journey of deepening The Denver Foundation’s collective understanding of what racial equity means – and to operationalize this understanding as a core competency across all of our work.
The Denver Foundation’s cross-departmental Inclusiveness and Equity Committee (IEC) supports the organization’s internal goals for advancing racial equity across all operations, programs, and business practices. The Board of Trustees hosts a Racial Equity Committee to guide its racial equity work.

**Overview of Engagement**

As a priority of our commitment to elevating racial equity as a critical competency for all members of The Denver Foundation staff and Board of Trustees, we seek to adopt an approach to leadership development that is informed by a racial equity lens.

By developing racially informed leadership across the entire staff, we will advance our goal of building an inclusive and supportive organizational culture. We will also lay the groundwork for a holistic and measurable approach to racially informed practices in our operations, both internally and externally, from our human resources and hiring practices, to our investments and finances, to our grantmaking, communications, and fundraising.

We welcome the expertise, wisdom, experience, and modalities of community experts who share our commitment to advancing racial equity within an institutional structure. We are open to ideas about how to approach this work as we seek the right partner, or partners, to meet a number of goals. These include:

- How we might assess current competencies across the organization and individually.
- How do we build skills through training, facilitation, and other supports and resources across the organization.
- How we support racial equity work in the individual departments, the staff, the Executive Team, and Board of Trustees.
- Thought partnership on the activities and proposed work of the Inclusiveness and Equity Committee and other internal structures to build racial equity work and accountability.

**Activities May Include:**

I. **Racial Equity and Leadership Development**
   - Create/Design caucuses and other internal groups to include:
     - Defining roles and responsibilities
     - Developing an internal process to identify leads
     - Developing cohort caucus lead model/framework
   - Work with the Impact Group of The Denver Foundation on how to introduce and address issues of racial equity in their interactions with donors.
• Work with the Impact Group of The Denver Foundation to understand the
different impacts on white and BIPOC staff members and create structural
supports for BIPOC staff members who may have challenging interactions about
race with donors.

II. **Racial Equity in Practice**
• Develop and facilitate 3-4 trainings to audiences as determined by assessment
• Provide support to individual staff members on issues related to their own racial
equity journeys
• In partnership with IEC and the Board Racial Equity Committee, work to develop
a workplan and other activities to further board learning and capacity building
• Develop and provide materials to support the implementation of a cohesive,
organization-wide racial equity framework
  o A codified definition of “racial equity”
  o Materials should inform activities such as hiring practices, staff
    onboarding, external communications around goals, learning, and
    evaluation, etc
• Other activities determined in partnership with Board Racial Equity Committee

III. **Evaluation of Progress**
• Conduct survey and/or individual interviews with staff members to determine
  experience, skills, attitude, and competencies, with racial equity as a framework,
  theory, and practice
• Aggregate results into a summary/report to be presented to the Internal
  Inclusiveness and Equity Committee
• Provide summaries of outcomes, observations, and learnings from trainings
• Identify opportunities to apply racially equitable practices across Foundation’s
  internal operations
• Provide year-end analysis and set of recommendations for future racial equity
  work

**Request for Conversations**

As a first step in this journey for 2022, we seek to engage in conversations with highly qualified
consultants/firms to work alongside The Denver Foundation as we go deeper into our 25-year
journey to advance racial equity.
Based on these conversations, we will invite potential partners to provide a proposed scope of services, to include a budget.

We are open to engaging a range of partners, or a single consultant/firm.

**Timeline**

Our goal is to complete conversations in February 2022, and to engage our new collaborators with the Inclusiveness and Equity Committee and, potentially, the Board of Trustees’ Racial Equity Committee, in March 2022.

**To indicate your interest in a conversation, please respond to the following questions:**

1. Tell us a bit about your expertise and background, including your overall philosophy of consulting on racial equity.

2. Describe your work on similar projects, particularly those that involve philanthropy and/or community foundations. We are particularly interested in your experience in assessment, training, facilitation, and individual coaching.

3. How would you approach working with a diverse group of people that hold a broad range of experiences and perspectives on the topic of racial equity?

4. When are you available to begin work with The Denver Foundation?

5. Please let us know of any possible conflicts of which we should be aware.

**Please submit RFC responses to Amy Hendricks,** ahendricks@denverfoundation.org, on behalf of the Inclusiveness and Equity Committee. Please use the subject: “Response to TDF RFC: [Consultant/Firm Name]”.

Responses submitted by mail should be sent to:

The Denver Foundation

Attention: Amy Hendricks

1009 Grant Street

Denver, Colorado 80203