

# Racial Equity in Public Communications

**NASAA PEER SESSION**

**“A journey is called that because you cannot know  
what you will discover on the journey,  
what you will do with what you find,  
or what you find will do to you.”**

**— *James Baldwin***

It begins by joining together, believing in the potency of inclusion, and building from a common bond.

It embraces complexity as cause for collaboration, accepting that our fates are inextricable.

It recognizes local leaders as national leaders, nurturing the wisdom and creativity within every community as essential to solving the nation's problems.

It demands honesty and forthrightness, calling out racism and oppression, both overt and systemic.

It strives for the power to realize our goals while summoning the grace to sustain them.

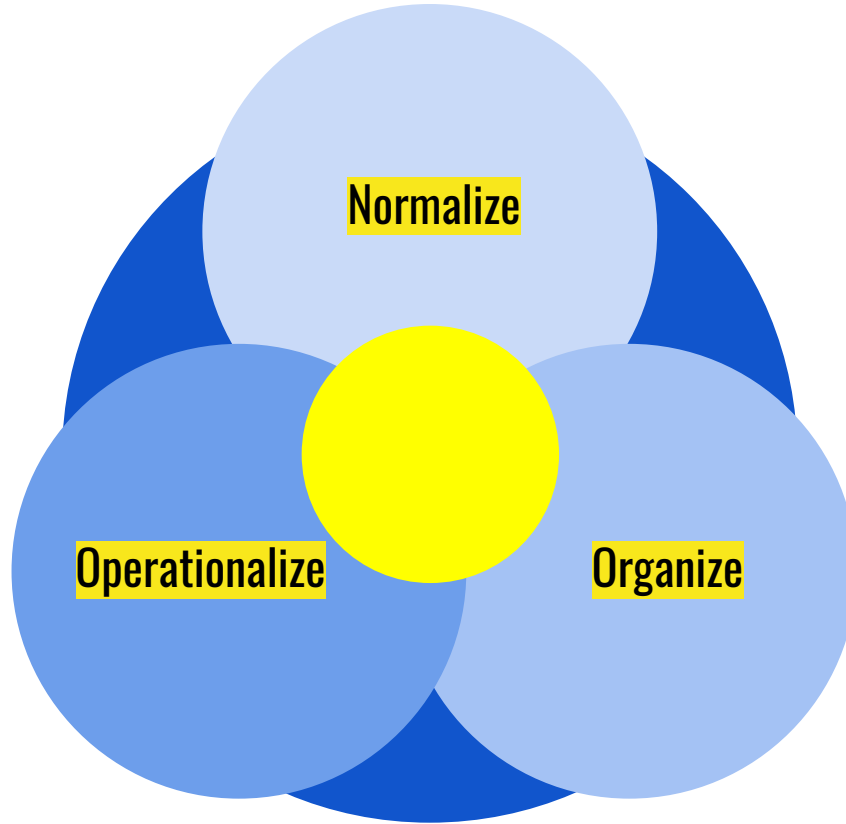
It requires that we understand the past, without being trapped in it; embrace the present, without being constrained by it; and look to the future, guided by the hopes and courage of those who have fought before and beside us.

**This is equity:** just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Unlocking the promise of the nation by unleashing the promise in us all.

SOURCE: POLICYLINK

# Why lead with race?

- Racial inequities deep and pervasive
- Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
- Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
- Specificity matters
- *Racial equity means: Closing the gaps so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all*



SOURCE: GOVERNMENT  
ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY

# Normalize: Humility & Competency

- Implicit bias. Institutional bias.
- Start somewhere. Listen. Educate yourself.
- What is your personal and organizational starting place? Do you notice the issues internally and externally?
- What is your understanding of community trauma?
- How are you being humble, and being kind?
- Can your agency acknowledge the systemic racism that exists within society and government?

# Resources

- [PBS - Race: The Power of an Illusion](#)
  - [What if I Say the Wrong Thing?: 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People](#)
  - [5 Tips for Being an Ally](#)
  - [Project Implicit](#)
  - [PolicyLink: Equity Manifesto](#)
  - [A Framework for Addressing and Preventing Community Trauma](#)
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# Organize: Access & Connecting

- How do you define community?
- Ask your community: *what do you need?*
- What diversity exists within your circle of trust, and what is missing?
- How accessible is your agency... really?
- Are you in tune to signs of tokenism and symbolic efforts?
- Are you operating with urgency?
- Do you approach partnerships authentically?



# Resources

- [Five Steps to Plain Language](#)
  - [Talking About Race](#)
  - [An Invitation to Brave Space](#)
  - [City of Seattle: Inclusive Outreach & Public Engagement Guide](#)
  - [Honor Native Land Guide](#)
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# Operationalize: Planning & Assessment

- What voices and stories are lifted up?
- What does the data say?
- How can you use your gov't structure & policy as a strength?
- How can equity infiltrate this work?
- How can you use your privilege and position to further this work?
- What is your agency's capacity, and how can it grow?

# Resources

- [Results-Based Accountability](#)
  - [National Equity Atlas](#)
  - [StoryCenter: Listen Deeply, Tell Stories](#)
  - [Racial Equity in the Panel Process](#)
  - [Indigenous Arts Protocols](#)
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**“You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it.” — *Grace Lee Boggs***