Centering Racial Equity in Your Organization or Foundation

Community Food Funders | June 24, 2020

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GROUNDSWELL
Center for Local Food & Farming
Agenda

• Introduction to Presenters

• Why Organizational Equity Development?

• Why now?

• Tools for the path

• Q & A
WHAT DOES GROUNDSWELL CENTER DO?

- Beginning Farmer Training
- Justice-Based Workshops
- Assistance & Consulting
- Incubator Farm
- Land Access

...in Finger Lakes Region
Why Racial Equity, specifically?

• Still an intersectional approach (consider class, gender, ability, etc)

• Don’t let other -isms distract you from specifically addressing the history and current disparities that affect Black and Brown people in this country
  • police killings
  • mass incarceration
  • hunger and food insecurity
  • education
  • cellular trauma
Black Bodies and the Land - Post-slavery
“Racism is Built Into the DNA of America”
- Shonda Rhimes, producer and writer

• The Three-Fifths Compromise negotiated during Constitution

• Centering racial equity starts with internal/organizational work, reflection... and self-assessment

• “Our personal is our political, and becomes our professional”
  - G. Patrice Lockert Anthony, Black Label Consulting and Coaching
Largest D.C. Farmers Market Repeatedly Denied Spots To Black Vendors, Farmers Allege

It isn’t a coincidence that the average Black farmer brings in just $2,408 in net farm income, compared to the $17,190 that the average white farmer makes.

Black farmers don’t have the same access to land, capital, and markets - and this story is just one example of that.
White Patriarchal/Parental Culture in Nonprofits & Funding Organizations

- Donors, Organizations, Board of Trustees, etc are majority white and relatively well-monied

- White people cannot begin to dismantle white supremacy without reckoning with white privilege, and the accompanying white fragility

- Shifting consciousness of white leadership, while also re-distributing power to POC (often in includes resentment through micro-aggressions)
Unless the racism is addressed and eradicated in the places you are looking to make ‘diverse’ you are simply bringing people of color into violent and unsafe spaces.
Invite black and brown people to the table

=> this is my house, and that implies presumptive power and authority for who is invited in
Tools for Centering Racial Equity

• Board Policies
• Brand awareness
• Staff/Board Development
• Relationship Building
• Systems of Accountability
Board Policies

• Equity in your strategic vision

• Establish Equity Commitments/Statements and then development of Policies

• Equity & Accountability Committee
Brand Awareness

• How your vision and mission is marketed to the public (website, media)

• what do we ACTUALLY mean when we write “marginalized communities” into our grant applications?

• How is our brand portrayed to donors vs. local BIPOC leaders?

• White-led justice orgs accessing funds that should go to black leaders
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>What it is</th>
<th>What it sounds like</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Denial of existence of oppression; denial of responsibility for it</td>
<td>Discrimination is a thing of the past. It's a level playing field. It's not my fault; I'm not responsible</td>
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<td>Minimization</td>
<td>Playing down the damage</td>
<td>Racism isn't a big problem anymore. It's not that bad</td>
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<td>Blame</td>
<td>Justifying the oppression, blaming the victims of oppression for it</td>
<td>Look at the way they act. If they weren't so angry... Women are too emotional</td>
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<td>Lack of Intent</td>
<td>Claims the damage is unintentional</td>
<td>I didn't mean it like that. It was only a joke.</td>
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<td>It's over now</td>
<td>The oppression happened in the past and is no longer an issue</td>
<td>Slavery was over a long time ago. Feminism has gone too far.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing</td>
<td>Claiming that targets of oppression have so much power that society is</td>
<td>Women really have all the power. We just want our rights too. They're taking away our jobs. White people are under attack.</td>
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<tr>
<td>victimization</td>
<td>threatened.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White culture</td>
<td>‘Token’ Organization</td>
<td>Multicultural</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Not intentionally excluding POC. Actively recruiting POC, with little success</td>
<td>Commitment to eliminate discrimination in protocols.</td>
<td>Visibly diverse staff/board</td>
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<td>Leadership positions / decision makers are white people (often male) and paid well</td>
<td>A few people of color on staff; are expected to work within a white culture environment and have limited decision power</td>
<td>Reflects contributions and interests of diverse groups in its mission, operations, and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No analysis of power structures or accountability to communities of color.</td>
<td>Decision-making power held by majority white people.</td>
<td>It actively recruits and welcomes people of color, with one or two POC in leadership positions</td>
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<td>Emphasis on “helping” those in need</td>
<td>Emphasis on people getting along</td>
<td>Belief in racial equity but still no power analysis; discomfort with conflict</td>
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<td>success measured by how much is accomplished</td>
<td>top down management; people expected to be highly motivated self-starters w/ little supervision</td>
<td>workaholism is rewarded</td>
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<td>Those who speak out are considered troublemakers</td>
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Adapted by Groundswell Center from Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center.
1. Create an anti-racist environment where staff, board members and volunteers are seen, respected, and supported to participate fully.

2. Support food justice education and racial justice awareness not only within Groundswell, but in our wider community.

3. Develop collaborative and supportive relationships with people of color and organizations led by people of color. Extend and deepen support for local farmers, gardeners and growers of color and immigrant and refugee farmers. Act to challenge racism in the food and farming community and beyond.

4. Implement a hiring protocol that creates accessible position descriptions that value lived experiences as well as traditional experiences.

continued on next slide...
5. Continuously review website, promotional materials and course descriptions for language and images that highlight racial/social justice and inclusive, appropriate language.

6. Work with staff and board members to ensure our meetings and events are accessible, including but not limited to providing childcare and transportation as needed.

7. Annually evaluate composition and organizational culture of staff, board and board committees with the Equity and Accountability Committee.

8. Goal is to eventually move from being a majority white organization to an anti-racist multicultural organization, with people of color occupying at least 50% of staff and board positions.
Equity and the Land

• Supporting Black America to re-envision its roots: ancestral farming traditions and reclaiming US black farmland

• Healing, education, reparations, and the right to health
Support Black-led Farming Orgs

• National Black Food & Justice Alliance
• Black Urban Growers Association
• Rise and Root Farm
• SoilGeneration
• Black Church Food Security Network
• Northeast Farmers of Color
• Soul Fire Farm
• The Federation Of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
• Southwest Georgia Project
• ShoppeBlack.us “your trusted source for all things black-owned globally”
Thank You!

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