

## What do we mean by Racial Equity?

We are a group of education philanthropists who are committed to elevating racial equity as a core value of our work. We know that public education plays a unique and powerful role in shaping the trajectories for communities of color -- either positively by expanding opportunities, or adversely by perpetuating racialized disparities. Given our nation's history of genocide, slavery, and inequitable life outcomes based on race, we believe it is imperative that we incorporate a racial equity lens and bring a commitment to racial justice into our work. Philanthropy is a unique and privileged structure that is well positioned to call out these inequities but has often, by not acknowledging racism, exacerbated the inequities we hope to address.

### What do we mean by racial equity? We mean the societal conditions in which:

- The distribution of resources and opportunities is neither determined nor predicted by race, racial bias or racial ideology.
- The structures, systems, practices and cultural narratives in society provide true situational fairness and equal opportunity.
- There is a democratic commitment to dismantle the false narrative of white supremacy and address the legal, political, social, cultural and historical contributors to inequity.
- Families and individuals are able to thrive and flourish in the intersections of all aspects of their identity, including race, religion, gender, orientation, ability, and socioeconomic background.
- The most vulnerable communities in society have access to mechanisms to achieve social mobility and voice in naming their reality, describing how these systems of oppression play out, and developing solutions which draw upon their assets.
- All people, cultures and identities are equally valued and recognized under the belief that strength comes through the diversity and expression of our shared humanity.

### Call to Action to our Colleagues in Education Philanthropy:

1. *Starting with the Personal:* Actively learn, hold ourselves accountable, maintain humility, and be courageous in all aspects of our work with respect and honor for the lived experience of colleagues of color.
2. *Working within Foundations:* Show evidence of this commitment in our internal operations, strategic plans and processes, and ways we engage with our staff and board.
3. *Partnering with grantees:* Co-construct more equitable decision making tables and redefining with communities what equitable distribution of power could look like, while striving to be in more honest and trusted relationships with our grantees and community partners about race and racism.
4. *Leading in Philanthropy:* Speak truth to power and amplifying voices of the communities we serve to hold philanthropic decision makers and policy makers responsible for meaningful progress on racial equity.
5. *Connecting with the World:* Create new ways to redistribute power, resources, and opportunity to help model and lead social change and racial justice in the world.

## Glossary

<b>Assets</b>	The perception of what is “good” in a person or community (compared to what is “bad” in a person or community, as would via a focus on “deficits”).
<b>Cultural narratives</b>	The stories that enable a community to structure and assign meaning to its history and existence. These include creation stories (which tell a story about the community's origins) as well as fables (which help teach moral values and ethical behavior).
<b>Democratic</b>	Supporting the principles of the empowerment of people and that the numerical majority of an organized group can make decisions binding on the whole group.
<b>Dismantle</b>	The process of decomposing a structure into its component parts.
<b>Equal opportunity</b>	The stipulation that all persons should be treated similarly unhampered by artificial barriers or prejudices or preferences, except when particular distinctions can be explicitly and reasonably justified.
<b>Expression of humanity</b>	The means of indicating that one is a person or a member of the human race.
<b>False narrative</b>	The perception of a complete verbal pattern that accounts for connected events, but arguably is not the actual “story” at work in the particular situation or context.
<b>Identities</b>	The set of ways an individual conceptualizes who he or she is, and what that means relative to others.
<b>Inequity</b>	The lack of fairness or justice, here with respect to the distribution of valued resources, rewards and/or sources of power. Note: this is different from inequality, which means the lack of equivalence with respect to distributions.
<b>Institutional Racism*</b>	Discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and inequitable opportunities and impacts, based on race, produced and perpetuated by institutions (schools, mass media, etc.). Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they act in ways that advantage and disadvantage people, based on race.
<b>Naming their reality</b>	The process by which individuals or communities develop a jointly constructed understanding of the world, that in turn forms the basis for shared assumptions about the world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them.
<b>Racial bias</b>	The form of implicit bias (which is a prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, based on race, usually in a way considered to be unfair) that refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect an individual's understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
<b>Racial ideology</b>	The set of fixed beliefs about one or more races. It is often used to promote racial superiority over others, rather than for discussing racial characteristics.

<b>Racial Justice*</b>	The proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.
<b>Situational fairness</b>	The context-based perception that there is a reasonableness and justice with regard to any given distribution of resources, rewards, and/or sources of power.
<b>Social mobility</b>	The movement of individuals, families, households, or other categories of people within or between social strata in a society. Also, a change in social status relative to others' social location within a given society.
<b>Structural Racism*</b>	The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, economic, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. A system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by preferential treatment, privilege and power for white people. All other forms of racism (e.g. institutional, interpersonal, internalized, etc.) emerge from structural racism. It is more difficult to locate in an institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually producing new, and re-producing old forms of racism.
<b>Systems of oppression</b>	Cultural values and habits that support the prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control of some persons and/or groups of persons by other persons and groups of persons.
<b>Thrive and flourish</b>	Thrive: To grow or develop well or vigorously. Flourish: To grow or develop well or vigorously.
<b>Vulnerable communities</b>	Groups of individuals, families, organizations or societies who have no or have limited ability to withstand adverse impacts from one or more social, emotional, environmental, financial, and other internal or external challenges imposed by social interactions, discriminatory practices, or institutions, and systems of cultural values.
<b>White supremacy</b>	The belief that white people are superior to those of all other races, and should therefore dominate society.

*\*These definitions draw on the work of the Aspen Institute on Community Change and the Applied Research Center at UC Berkeley.*