



# Executive Summary: Racial Equity Tool



## Prioritizing Racial Equity in Alexandria

Alexandria is a diverse community and one of the most prosperous cities in the United States – for some. Like most cities, the history of government imposed racial discrimination continues to negatively impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in Alexandria, while disproportionately advantaging white residents. Current data shows us that racial inequities persist across many areas, including educational opportunities and attainment, generational wealth, income, homeownership, and health.

The City of Alexandria stands firm in our commitment to address our history of racial exclusion and oppression. We are determined to bring about healing for residents of every race and ethnicity, achieving equitable opportunities and equal outcomes. Achieving racial equity is not easy and will require all of us to use every tool available to us.

This is why the Race and Social Equity (RASE) Office is excited to release Alexandria's Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) – a guide to help Alexandria's government staff, City Council, non-profits, businesses, and residents adopt tangible and sustainable practices that promote racial equity in everyday work. The RET is an inclusive decision-making framework that proactively considers the process to eliminating racial inequities to advance racial equity. The RET is interactive, complete with a self-assessment for users' to gauge where they are in their racial equity journey, which outlines a process to confront racial biases and assumptions and offers practical ways to promote racial inclusivity.

## How will the Racial Equity Tool help me?

Racial equity is both a **process** and an **outcome** to improve quality of conditions across racial groups. The RET is meant to help city staff and community members engage in a step-by-step journey to shift their processes and outcomes as well.

The RET helps users strengthen their processes by learning how to center the lived experience of BIPOC who are directly impacted, understand the trauma of racism that each BIPOC community experiences, and actively shift decision-making power to BIPOC who are directly impacted by the social challenges we aim to solve. The RET also helps users achieve racially equitable outcomes that enable all Alexandrians to thrive, especially BIPOC communities who have been historically excluded.



# Racial Equity Principles

Three racial equity principles underlie the RET:

1

**Principle 1: BIPOC leadership, data, scholarship, and power must be centered in all stages of racial equity work.** This includes empowering BIPOC staff and community members as leaders, respecting their experiences and decisions, and embedding their research thought leadership, data, and scholarship throughout the process. This also requires racially equitable community engagement that does not reinforce unfair power dynamics and transactional goals. Lastly, this requires a shift in power, ensuring that they are paid for their time, and acknowledged for their leadership and expertise.

2

**Principle 2: Historical research and data analysis must be disaggregated by race and must reflect the history of racism.** BIPOC communities must be named individually to acknowledge different outcomes and histories of racism. Racially equitable goals, processes, and measures will close current inequities and enable BIPOC to achieve equal outcomes with white people. All processes, decisions, and outcomes must be rooted in efforts to proportionally respond to and heal from each community's unique historical experience of racism. This is the heart of racial equity.

3

**Principle 3: BIPOC staff, organizations, and communities must be centered in creating systems of decision-making, reflection, and accountability.** Accountability means shifting power to BIPOC communities at each stage of the process. This practice will ensure that any racially inequitable outcomes in the process are addressed and remedied. Accountability also means that if BIPOC staff, organizations, and communities experience any racially inequitable outcomes throughout the process, the process will change to remedy these inequities.

# The Racial Equity Tool

**What is the Racial Equity Tool?** The Racial Equity Tool is a step-by-step guide to help you and your team apply a racial equity lens to your work. The Racial Equity Tool is divided into four key stages. For more detail on each stage and helpful planning resources (e.g., worksheets, reflection guides, evaluative rubrics, and assessments), see the [Racial Equity Toolkit](#).

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**Do your research before connecting with BIPOC communities and starting Stage 1.**

**Assess:** What are you working on? What are the root causes of racial inequities in this topic?

**Discuss:** What is the racial makeup of your internal team?

**Consider:** How does this project align with City/organizational priorities?

**Research:** What information do you have about who is impacted?

**Evaluate:** How did your team promote racial equity in this stage using the Racial Equity rubrics?



**Connect with BIPOC communities, hear their expertise, and make sure you both agree on the path forward.**

**Discuss:** How do members of the community want to engage with you and your organization?

**Co-Align:** Do we agree that this is the right topic?

**Co-Design:** Agree on the process for future stages.

**Co-Evaluate:** How did your team promote racial equity during this stage using the Racial Equity rubrics?



**Work with BIPOC communities to co-develop a racially equitable strategy.**

**Research:** What are the disaggregated data outcomes by racial and ethnic group?

**Co-Strategize:** Brainstorm strategies and existing best practices within impacted BIPOC communities and the benefits and burdens of the proposed strategies.

**Co-Evaluate:** How did your team promote racial equity during this stage using the Racial Equity rubrics?



**Work with BIPOC communities to implement the project in a way that shares power.**

**Co-Assign:** Who is responsible for all actions and deliverables?

**Co-Reflect:** How is each step within the implementation process promoting power sharing with BIPOC who are directly impacted?

**Co-Implement:** Put plan into action.

**Co-Evaluate:** How does each implementation step promote power sharing with directly impacted BIPOC?

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## Going Forward

We hope the Racial Equity Toolkit will make your organization's decision-making processes and their outcomes more racially equitable.

This resource marks an important step toward operationalizing racial equity, but achieving racial equity will require action above and beyond the RET framework. Continuous self reflection, respectful collaboration, power sharing, and authentic accountability to BIPOC are necessary steps on the path to racial equity. The Racial Equity Toolkit provides next steps to help you and your organization continue on the journey.

We hope you will take full advantage of these resources and share them widely. We look forward to seeing the way that our city transforms when we put racial equity at the center of all we do.

