

Glossary

This glossary helps us better understand and articulate ideas of equity and related terms. We make it publicly available in case others find it helpful, too. This glossary serves as one way to name the way our embodied experiences are racialized and how the world around us is racialized. This is a living document, and we include multiple definitions for a term if we found more than one definition that resonated with us.

Belonging: “People’s sense of belonging is tied to their ability to lead meaningful lives, to be connected to the place they live in and the people they live among, and to feel a part of something larger than themselves. To cultivate belonging, there must be more equitable racial and socioeconomic conditions for self-expression, mutual respect, empathy, and acceptance.”¹

Bias is “the tendency to have an opinion or view often without considering evidence or other information. Biases are often learned indirectly within one’s family or cultural context.”²

Implicit bias: “Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals’ attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals’ stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.”³

Cultural humility: “An ongoing process of self-reflection and self-critique that helps us acknowledge ways in which institutionalized power has shaped our knowledge and beliefs, as well as challenge power imbalances. ... While [evaluators who incorporate cultural humility] may be experts in research methods and data-driven learning processes, practitioners, staff, and community members are the experts in their own work, life experiences, and local context. Thus, we design studies and processes that elevate and center their expertise.”⁴ With cultural humility comes a commitment to interrogate the way racism shapes our cultural understanding.

Cultural equity: As noted by Createquity, “cultural equity” means very different things to different people.⁵ We draw from a few resources below.

¹ Vanessa Whang, *Communities in Collaboration | Comunidades en Colaboración*, and Alex Werth, “Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan” (Cultural Affairs Division, City of Oakland, CA, Spring 2018), 8.

² SURJ and POWER Northeast, “List of Definitions” (Unpacking White Domination, Allentown, Pennsylvania, 2017).

³ SURJ and POWER Northeast.

⁴ Laura Bekes et al., “Practical Tools for Designing and Implementing Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Evaluations,” *Learning for Action* (blog), December 18, 2017, http://learningforaction.com/lfa-blogpost/culturally-responsive-evaluation?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2017%20Year%20in%20Review&utm_content=2017%20Year%20in%20Review+CID_c4ee3afb7029c1e40a417bf674702f39&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=Practical%20Tools%20for%20Designing%20and%20Implementing%20Culturally%20Responsive%20and%20Inclusive%20Evaluations.

⁵ Clara Inés Schuhmacher et al., “Making Sense of Cultural Equity: When Visions of a Better Future Diverge, How Do We Choose a Path Forward?,” *Createquity*. (blog), accessed September 8, 2016, <http://createquity.com/2016/08/making-sense-of-cultural-equity/>.

“Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.”⁶

“Cultural equity explicitly addresses legacies of structural racial discrimination and remedying of institutionalized norms that have systemically disadvantaged categories of people.”⁷

“What cultural equity ultimately looks like and how it is achieved needs to be negotiated in a society that aspires to be democratic. ... [As identified through the *Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan* planning process,] cultural equity in a democratic and diverse society recognizes: that all cultures have value, that a society is made more resilient by the collective knowledge of its diverse cultures, and that all cultures should have equal access to opportunities to achieve social esteem and civic parity.”⁸

Createquity offers four ways the field thinks of cultural equity:⁹



Diversity: “The full range of differences and similarities, visible and non-visible, that make each individual unique.”¹⁰

⁶ Americans for the Arts, “Statement on Cultural Equity,” Americans for the Arts, May 23, 2016, <http://www.americansforthearts.org/about-americans-for-the-arts/statement-on-cultural-equity>.

⁷ “Building a Cultural Equity Plan,” PolicyLink, accessed December 18, 2018, <http://www.policylink.org/our-work/community/arts-culture/plan>.

⁸ Whang, Colaboración, and Werth, “Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan.”

⁹ Schuhmacher et al., “Making Sense of Cultural Equity: When Visions of a Better Future Diverge, How Do We Choose a Path Forward?” Design credit: Benzamin Yi 2016.

¹⁰ Center for Equity & Inclusion, “National Advisory Committee: REDI Integration and Identity,” n.d.

Discrimination is “the unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories. In the United States, the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants’ and employees’ sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer’s business.”¹¹

Equitable development: “the creation and maintenance of economically and socially diverse communities that are stable over the long term, through means that generate a minimum of transition costs that fall unfairly on lower income residents”¹² and historically disinvested communities.

Equitable cultural development: “(a working definition) cultural development that maintains diversity and inclusion through equitable and participatory processes that enhance, rather than erase, existing community creative economies; a form of development that preserves and enhances local character with sustainable economic and cultural benefits being equitably experienced across the local population.”¹³

Equity: “Equity is defined as “the state, quality or ideal of being just, impartial and fair.” The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. It is helpful to think of equity as not simply a desired state of affairs or a lofty value. To be achieved and sustained, equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept.”¹⁴

Equity is “just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.”¹⁵

Equity is “the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.”¹⁶

Equity vs. Equality: Equity “involves trying to understand and give people *what they need* to enjoy

¹¹ SURJ and POWER Northeast, “List of Definitions.”

¹² Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, “Dealing with Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Choices” (The Brookings Institution on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, April 2001), 4, <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2001/4/metropolitanpolicy/gentrification.pdf>.

¹³ Ashley Boles Richardson, “Equitable Cultural Development: A Best Practices Toolkit for Inclusive and Sustainable Cultural Development” (Professional Report in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning, University of Texas at Austin, 2015), 5.

¹⁴ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Terry Keleher, “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization” (The Annie E. Case Foundation, 2014), 5.

¹⁵ PolicyLink, “The Equity Manifesto” (PolicyLink, 2015), <http://www.policylink.org/resources-tools/equity-manifesto>.

¹⁶ Grantmakers in the Arts, “Racial Equity in Arts Philanthropy: Statement of Purpose,” Grantmakers in the Arts, January 20, 2016, <http://www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-philanthropy-statement-purpose>.

full, healthy lives. **Equality**, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets *the same things* in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like **equity**, **equality** aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone *starts from the same place and needs the same things.*” (emphasis added)¹⁷

Gentrification: “the process by which higher income households displace lower income residents of a neighborhood, changing the essential character and flavor of that neighborhood. Involves three key components: requires displacement of lower income residents, physical component that results in upgrading of housing stock, results in changed character.”¹⁸ Because residential patterns in the U.S. have been long been racially segregated (or racialized), in many communities, gentrification results in significant racial and cultural changes to a community.

Inclusion: “An environment that engages multiple perspectives, differing ideas, and individuals from different backgrounds to help define organizational policy and practice, and help shape organizational culture.”¹⁹

“Inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging.”²⁰

Systematic equity “is a complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits and outcomes.”²¹

Prejudice “is a pre-judgement or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. Prejudices may also be stereotypes about athletic, musical, or intellectual ability.”²²

Racial justice “goes beyond “anti-racism.” It’s not just about what we are against, but also what we are for. A “racial justice” framework can move us from a reactive posture to a more powerful, proactive and even preventative approach. ... Racial justice is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people are able to achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live.”²³ Racial justice is one of multiple models of justice that focus on how society is organized. Other models, such as restorative, reparative, or retributive justice, focus on how to address harm or wrongdoing.

¹⁷ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization,” 5.

¹⁸ Kennedy and Leonard, “Dealing with Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Choices,” 5.

¹⁹ Center for Equity & Inclusion, “National Advisory Committee: REDI Integration and Identity,” n.d.

²⁰ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization,” 5.

²¹ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

²² SURJ and POWER Northeast, “List of Definitions.”

²³ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization,” 5.

Race “is a socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features (phenotypes) such as skin color and on ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernible distinction between racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions, and culture and is used as a basis for discrimination and domination.”²⁴

Racism “is a concept widely thought of as simply personal prejudice, but in fact, it is a complex system of racial hierarchies and inequalities. At the micro level of racism, or individual level, are internalized and interpersonal racism. At the macro level of racism, we look beyond the individuals to the broader dynamics, including institutional and structural racism.”²⁵

“Racism is a complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group, whites. A simpler definition is racial prejudice + power = racism.”²⁶

Racism has enabled the accumulation of White wealth,²⁷ which highlights that capitalism is inherently racialized.

Internalized racism “describes the private racial beliefs held by and within individuals. The way we absorb social messages about race and adopt them as personal beliefs, biases, and prejudices are all within the realms of internalized racism. For people of color, internalized oppression can involve believing in negative messages about oneself or one’s racial group. For white people, internalized privilege can involve feeling a sense of superiority and entitlement, or holding negative beliefs about people of color.”²⁸

Interpersonal racism “is how our private beliefs about race become public when we interact with others. When we act upon our prejudices or unconscious bias – whether intentionally, visibly, verbally or not – we engage in interpersonal racism. Interpersonal racism also can be willful and overt, taking the form of bigotry, hate speech, or racial violence.”²⁹

Institutional racism “is racial inequality within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies, and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. A school system that concentrates people of color in the most overcrowded and under-resourced schools with the least qualified teachers compared to the educational opportunities of white students is an example of institutional racism.”³⁰

²⁴ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

²⁵ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

²⁶ Eleanor Savage, “RE-Tool: Racial Equity in the Panel Process,” 2018, 8 Source: People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond.

²⁷ Nayantara Sen, Malcolm Shanks, and Eddie Torres, “Real and Not Real: The History of Racialization in the United States,” (August 21, 2018).

²⁸ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization,” 5.

²⁹ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

³⁰ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

Structural racism “(or structural racialization) is the racial bias across institutions and society. It describes the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of factors that systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of color. Since the word “racism” often is understood as a conscious belief, “racialization” may be a better way to describe a process that does not require intentionality. Race equity expert John A. Powell writes: ‘Racialization’ connotes a process rather than a static event. It underscores the fluid and dynamic nature of race... ‘Structural racialization’ is a set of processes that may generate disparities or depress life outcomes without any racist actors.”³¹

Systemic racialization “describes a dynamic system that produces and replaces racial ideologies, identities, and inequalities. Systemic racialization is the well-institutionalized pattern of discrimination that cuts across major political, economic, and social organizations in a society. Public attention to racism is generally focused on the symptoms (such as a racist slur by an individual) rather than the system of racial inequality.”³²

Racial privilege “describes race-based advantages and preferential treatment based on skin color.”³³

Racial oppression “refers to race-based disadvantages, discrimination, and exploitation based on skin color.”³⁴

White privilege “refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it. The concept of white privilege also implies the right to assume the universality of one’s own experiences, marking others as different or exceptional while perceiving oneself as normal.”³⁵

White fragility “is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium. Racial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar.”³⁶

White supremacy “is a racist ideology based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to people of other races and that therefore white people should be dominant over other races. White supremacy is historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.”³⁷ A white supremacist is someone who advocates for the existence and perpetuation of this ideology.

³¹ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

³² The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

³³ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

³⁴ The Annie E. Case Foundation and Keleher, 5.

³⁵ SURJ and POWER Northeast, “List of Definitions.”

³⁶ SURJ and POWER Northeast.

³⁷ SURJ and POWER Northeast.

White domination: “Institutional racism is systemic white domination of people of color, embedded and operating in corporations, education systems, legal systems, political bodies, cultural life, the media, healthcare, housing, employment, and other social collectives. The word “domination” reminds us that institutional racism is a type of power that encompasses the symbolic power to classify one group of people as “normal” and other groups of people as “abnormal”; the political power to withhold basic rights from people of color and marshal the full power of the state to enforce segregation and inequality; the social power to deny people of color full inclusion or membership in associational life; and the economic power that privileges whites in terms of job placement, advancement, wealth, and property accumulation.”³⁸

³⁸ SURJ and POWER Northeast.