

# Creating an Equity Toolkit for Public Engagement

## What is an Equity Toolkit?

An Equity Toolkit is a detailed guide on how to use an Equity Impact Tool and other resources for assessing policies and programs. It is designed to serve as a comprehensive resource for staff, leaders and committee members within the organization. Its primary purpose is to enhance and support equity goals by providing a structured framework and tools to identify, evaluate, and mitigate barriers and adverse impacts experienced by underrecognized groups.

Also included in a toolkit are checklists, questionnaires, self-assessments, rubrics to measure and track processes, mechanisms to collect feedback, and where possible a tipsheet with practical tips and best practices for promoting equity at every stage of public engagement. (*Engagement* may be used interchangeably with *involvement, participation, etc.*)

## How a Toolkit can support equity efforts

**Equity Impact Assessment:** The toolkit's Equity Impact Tool will empower committee members to systematically evaluate policies and programs, by applying an equity lens, to proactively address potential issues and create more inclusive solutions.

**Public/Stakeholder Engagement:** The toolkit guides members in identifying and engaging with diverse communities effectively. This fosters a sense of ownership and inclusivity in decision-making processes.

**Communication Strategies:** By offering guidance on communication approaches, the toolkit helps to convey the committee's intentions transparently, ensuring that the public - namely those least afforded opportunities to engage - know how they can participate. Clear and inclusive communication builds trust and engagement.

## How committee members should use a Toolkit

Committee members are responsible for utilizing the toolkit when developing, reviewing, or recommending policies and programs.

- They should actively participate in public engagement activities and consider the toolkit's guidance throughout the decision-making process.
- Committee members should use the self-assessment checklist to evaluate their work and propose improvements where necessary, thus contributing to the ongoing enhancement of equity efforts.

Remember to customize this toolkit to fit the specific needs and culture of your committee. Regularly update and refine it to keep pace with evolving best practices and organizational goals.

Use the following suggested list to create your equity toolkit:

- Checklist for Self-Assessment
  - \* A checklist that staff and leaders can use to evaluate their policies and programs. This should align with the Equity Impact Tool.
  - \* Actionable steps and recommendations based on the assessment results.
- Rubric for Decision-Making
  - \* A rubric that helps users make informed decisions by considering equity factors.
  - \* It could include criteria such as impact on underrepresented groups, inclusivity of public engagement, and alignment with equity goals.
- Tip Sheets
  - \* Practical tips and best practices for promoting equity in policy and program development.
  - \* Examples of common pitfalls to avoid.
  - \* Resources and references for further learning.
- Equity Impact Tool
  - \* A detailed guide on how to use the Equity Impact Tool for assessing policies and programs.

\* The tool itself, which should include questions and prompts to evaluate potential impacts on underrecognized groups. Sample questions might include:

- \* How might this policy/program affect different demographic groups?
- \* Have you considered cultural, economic, and social differences?
- \* Are there unintended consequences for marginalized communities?

- Resources and References

\* A list of additional resources, including books, articles, websites, and training opportunities related to equity.

\* Links to relevant laws and regulations, if applicable.

- Case Studies

Examples showcasing how the toolkit has been successfully applied in different contexts within the organization.

- Feedback Mechanism

\* A way for users to provide feedback on the toolkit's usability and effectiveness, allowing for continuous improvement.

- Appendices

\* Any supplementary materials, templates, or worksheets that can aid in achieving equity goals.