

# Seattle Office for Civil Rights

RSJI Council Presentation

9/24/2019

Seattle Office for Civil Rights



City of Seattle

# Overview

1. Values, Vision, Mission
2. Internal Reflection: How are we antiracist?
3. Shift in practices and approach to work
4. Restorative Practices & Participatory Grantmaking



# SOCR Values

Authenticity in working towards racial equity and practicing and applying principles of anti-racism.

Community-led solutions and accountable community relationships

Integrity

Collaboration

Thoughtful Planning



# SOCR Vision

A city of liberated people where communities historically impacted by racism, oppression and colonization hold power and thrive.

# SOCR Mission

To end structural racism and discrimination through accountable community relationships and anti-racist organizing, policy development, and civil rights enforcement.



# Internal Shift

## *How does SOCR become an anti-racist department?*

Ensure that SOCR is a workplace where individuals can thrive, that addresses structural issues through transparent, honest communication where accountable relationships are developed with each other and those most harmed by racism.

**Actions:** healing circles, professional development, change team, robust communication strategies and meaningful performance evaluations.

# Self-reflection and healing

Like many departments, SOCR has struggled with identifying healthy ways to manage conflict and foster a workplace where all employees feel valued and have a sense of belonging.

Committing to healing, conflict resolution, and capacity-building through strategic planning, facilitated healing sessions, and staff-led workgroups.



# Allow our practices to evolve

*How does SOCR center racial equity in development and implementation of civil rights laws?*

**Actions:** Organize our work by priority areas, align our goals with values, vision and mission, center community in policy development and service delivery, ensure communities most impacted understand our civil rights laws, how to access our services, and what to expect.



# Shifting Practice #1 : alternative enforcement

SOCR's current model of case investigations does not operate to end racism or change outcomes for the people we serve.

## How do we ensure civil rights implementation is efficient and addresses harms?



# Shifting Practice #1

## alternative enforcement options

Develop a Restorative Practice Model that centers healing and resolution by providing alternative options to address and remediate discrimination.



# Shifting Practice #2

## collaborative grantmaking

How do we meaningfully center communities most impacted when making funding decisions?

- SOCR is working with HSD to distributing \$250,000 to groups who provide Indigenous community healing to people returning from incarceration.
- SOCR received \$1.08 million in the 2020 budget to invest in alternatives to the criminal legal system, as a result of organizing by community groups, including EPIC and the Budget for Justice Coalition.

# Shifting Practice #2

## collaborative grantmaking

- Funding decisions made democratically by participants with agreed upon values.
- Participants will receive \$1,000 honorarium
- Process will value & prioritize youth and individuals most impacted by mitigating barriers to participation

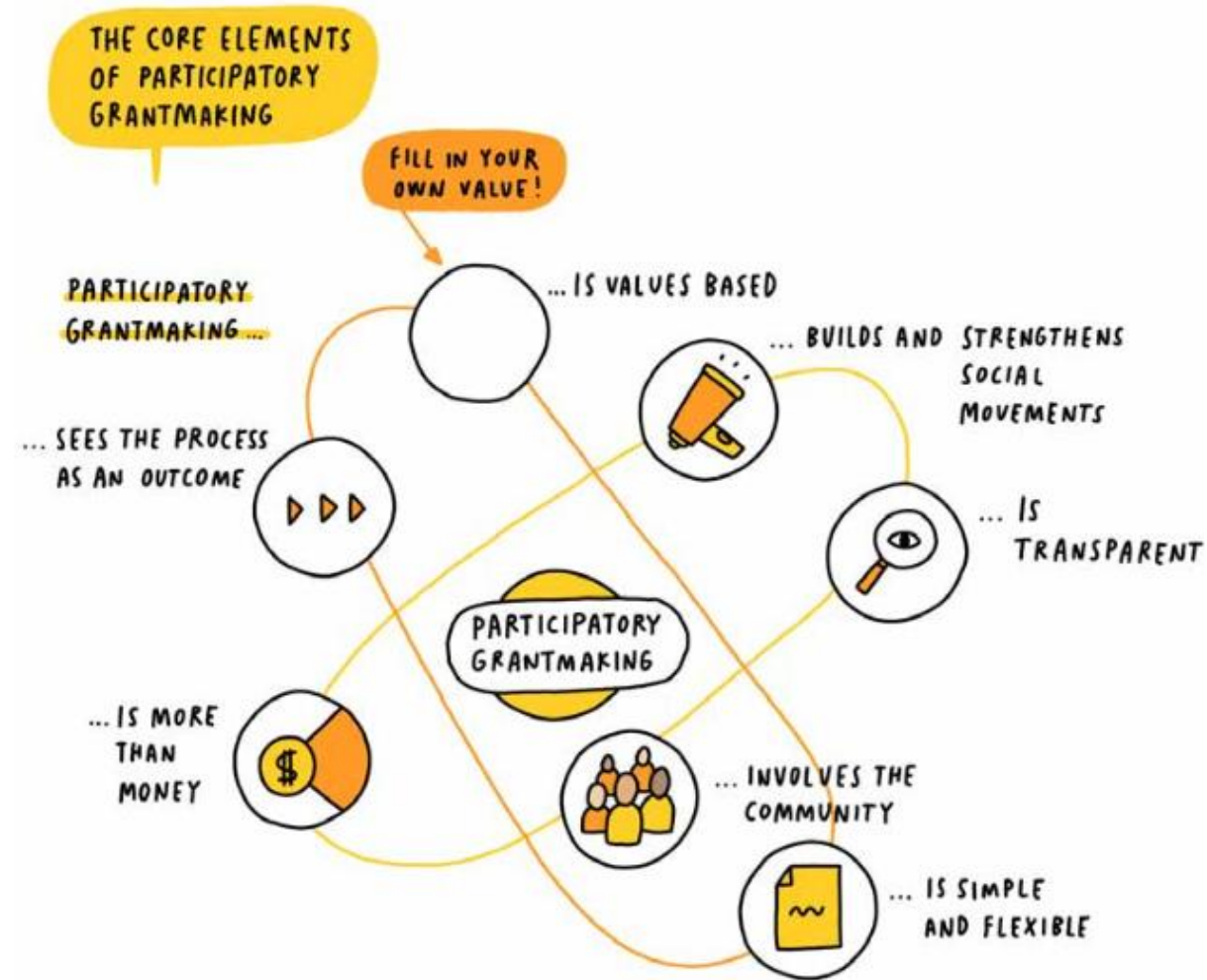


Illustration by Zsofi Lang for Grant Craft

# Thinking Ahead: SOCR Strategic Plan

*SOCR is working collectively to develop a strategic plan that will guide us and our work in the years to come.*

The plan is organized into three main strategies:

1. Interrupt Contributions to Inequity
2. Reduce Barriers and Burdens
3. Promote Collective Impact and Alignment



# Thank you.

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