

# SDCI & OPCD RSJI Report to Council

**UPDATE ON 2022 RSJI WORK & RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKITS**

April 27, 2022

**Nathan Torgelson, SDCI Director**

**Corey Buttry, SDCI Co-Lead**

**Rico Quirindongo, OPCD Acting Director**

**Nick Welch, OPCD Co-Lead**



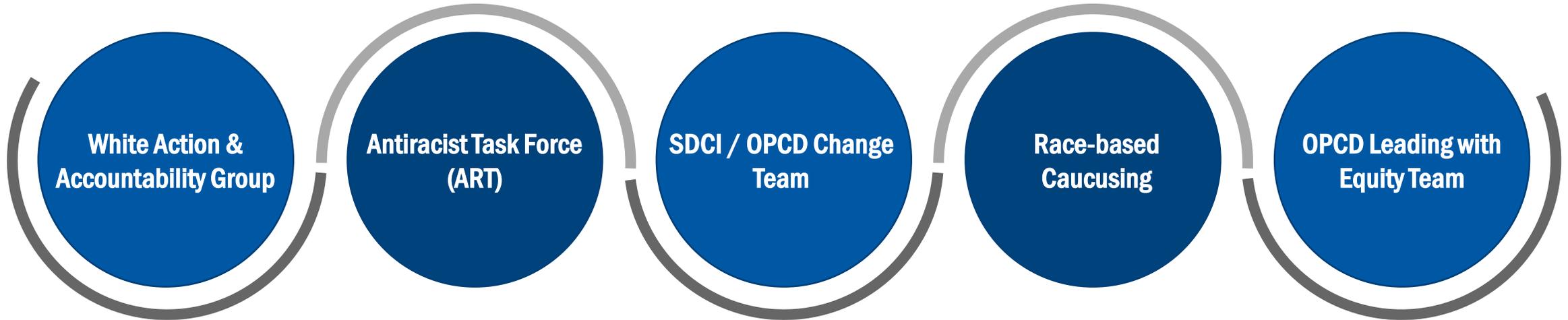
# Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the role that traditional western-centric planning practices have played in harming, displacing, and attempting to erase Native communities. We commit to identifying racist practices, to practice allyship and strive to center restorative land stewardship rather than unsustainable and extractive use of the land.

We humbly recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have reserved treaty rights to this land, including the Duwamish, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, and Stillaguamish. We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial.



# Race & Social Justice Ecosystem



**White Action & Accountability Group**

The White Action and Accountability Group is committed to learning about the history and long-term harm and impacts of White Supremacy Culture, to acting on and interrupting racism within our organization and understanding in order to dismantle barriers to racial justice in our policies and practice

**Antiracist Task Force (ART)**

The Antiracist Task Force (ART) identifies systemic race and social justice issues within SDCI, its governance apparatus, its leadership, and its practices, and correct them with alternatives that center our RSJ commitment and department values.

**SDCI / OPCD Change Team**

The Change Team is a group of employees who partner with leadership to identify and dismantle the racism that permeates every aspect of our work and our lives.

**Race-based Caucusing**

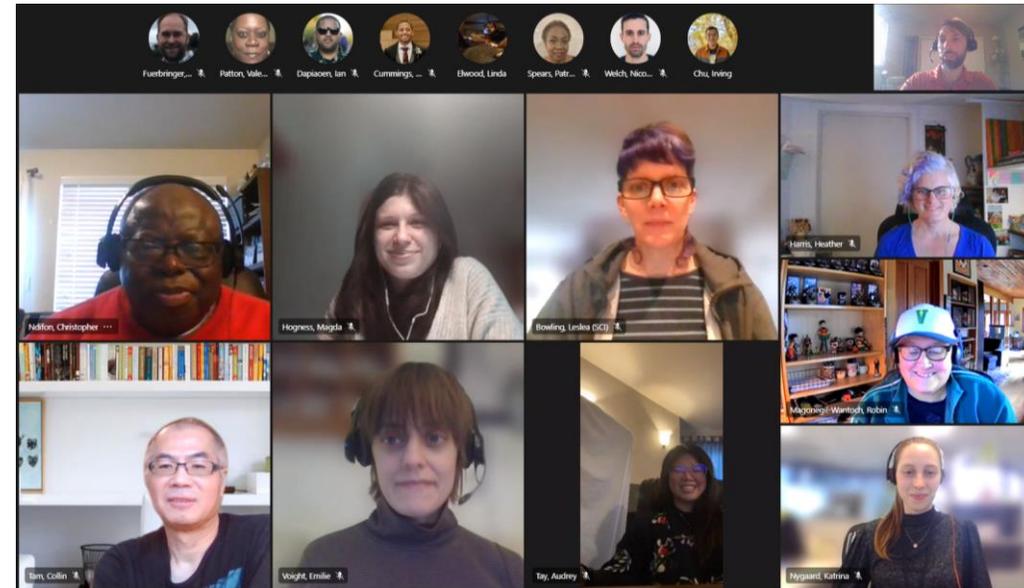
The BIPOC and White Caucuses are safe space, open forums for all people of color that work in SDCI and OPCD.

**OPCD Leading with Equity Team**

The Leading with Equity Team builds OPCD's capacity to advance and deepen our work toward achieve racial equity outcomes.

# Introduction & Overview

- 2021 accomplishments
- RSJI challenges
- Racial Equity Toolkits
- 2022 goals

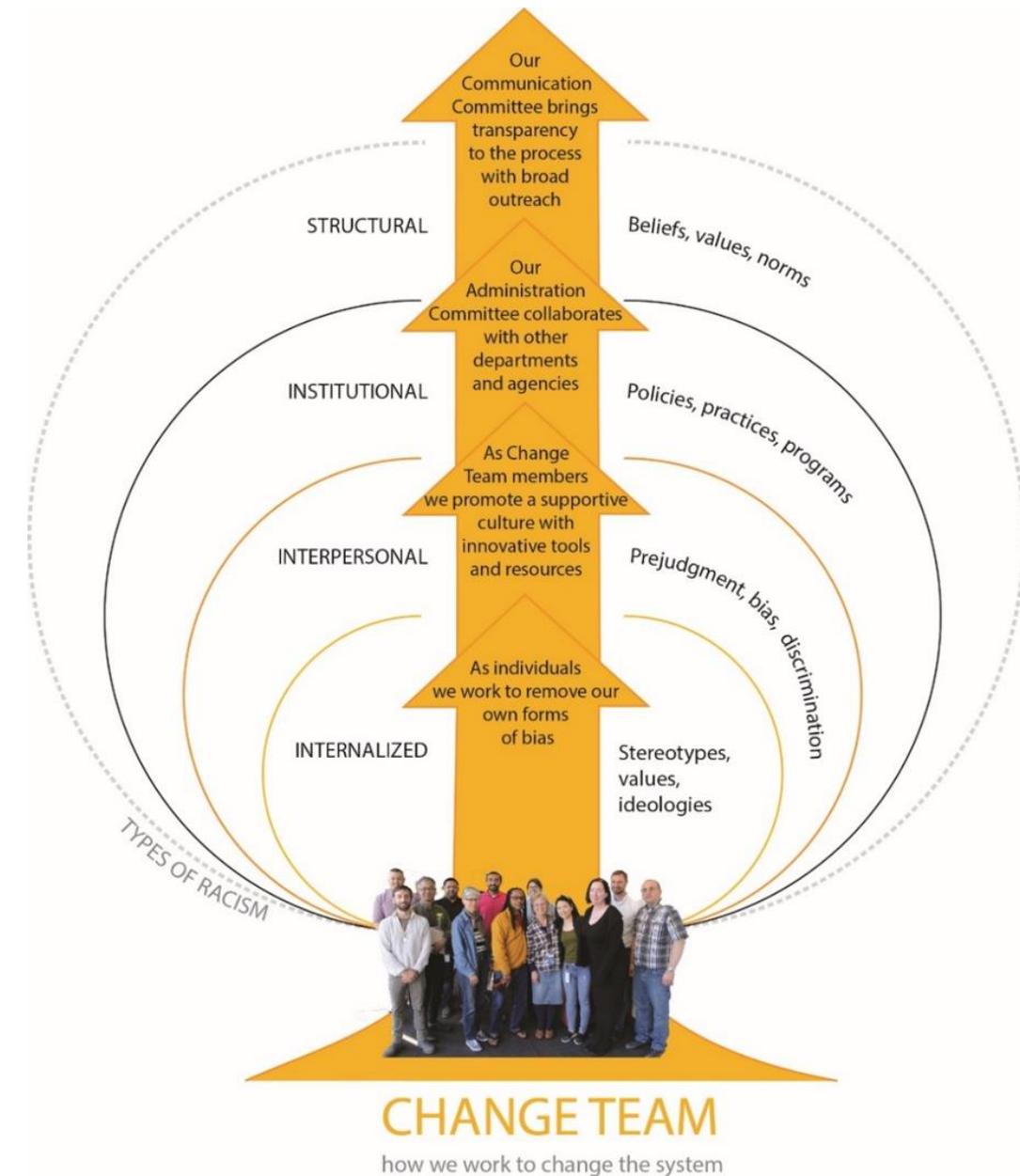


# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Change Team

### Training

- Participated in Change Team retreat to ground everyone in the goals and function of Change Team as an anti-racist institution
- Started an RSJI Change Team Reading Group – conversations that enliven and inspire our RSJ work
- Collaborated with Chinese Information and Service Center on an Anti-Bias / Anti-Hate Program training
- Continued sharing *Land Use 101: Urban Planning as Settler Colonialism* presentation



# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Change Team

### Growing participation and engagement

- Developed Community Agreements
- Advised on two RETs (Design Review Virtual Meetings and Bluebeam)
- Reviewed Annual Omnibus Ordinance and Tree Legislation Expectations with an RSJI Lens
- Formed a subcommittee to review Budget Impact Papers for RSJ potential opportunities
- Tested a Sociocracy Role Selection, involving the whole Change Team into the co-lead selection process!
- Increased CT membership
- Writing RSJ Citywide co-leads letter to the Mayor
- Participating in the RSJ Mayoral Candidate Forum, with co-lead Christopher Ndifon posing questions as a panelist
- Leading RSJI discussions with the Zoning Team
- Responded to Mentimeter response and ongoing violence against Asian Americans in Seattle and in our country.
- Participated in Equitable Development Zoning conversations
- Joined Anti-Racist Task Force Team on Return to Office (RTO) conversations to address equity issues

# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## SDCI Antiracist Task Force

- Research, analysis and reporting on equity issues surround returning to the office
- Take-home agreement for inspectors' vehicles and equitable sharing processes
- Vaccine mandate questions, tracking concerns, disseminating information
- Participation in the following groups/meetings:
  - Our Workplace, Our Future
  - Zendesk (virtual ASC)
  - SDCI Monthly Leadership
  - Space Planning
  - Continuous Improvement
- Regular monthly meetings with Nathan
- Strengthen anti-racism statement on the SDCI website
- Tear down white supremacy culture within City departments!
- How does ART want to interface with Change Team?
  - Amplify Community Agreements
  - Find ways to increase Change Team's platform
  - Representation on the Change Team

## 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# OPCD Leading with Equity Team

- Conducting an RSJ survey
  - Centering racial equity in 2022 budget
  - Stewarding RET processes
  - Supporting specific projects
  - Creating our *Community Engagement Ethos*
  - Beginning organizational culture work
  - Creating a more transparent OPCD
- workplan
  - Studying community-based participatory research

## 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# Equitable Development Initiative (EDI)

### **Interim EDI Advisory Board made permanent in 2021**

Over the last six years, the EDI Advisory Board has led the RFP process, distributing over \$40M, supporting over 80 projects (*including COVID relief*) in Capacity Building, Acquisition, and Capital grants to bring community-driven projects to light.

Awarded new and existing community Project Sponsors to support Capacity, Capital, Construction, Pre-development and Acquisition needs

### **Responding to community needs that arose with the pandemic**

The 2020 RFP supported 36 community partnerships in precuring COVID 19 Response, Disaster Gentrification and BIPOC Infrastructure

### **Administered the Strategic Investment Fund**

SIF helps groups buy land and buildings for affordable housing and other community benefits such as affordable commercial space, community centers, cultural spaces, childcare, and open space. Supporting other departments with their grants, funding, and planning, pilots and shared funding strategy (OED, OIRA, OSE, OCR, DON)

### **Continued to house and grow the Indigenous Seattle Internship Program**

This has been influential in efforts to Indigenize the Comprehensive Plan and overall planning/practice/engagement efforts of City Departments

### **Administered the Classic EDI Fund**

# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Indigenous Seattle

### Purpose

To uplift Indigenous values and practices within City planning to support grassroots decolonization and re-Indigenizing efforts

### Indigenous Seattle Internship

- Development of high-school internship pipeline
- Indigenizing the Comprehensive Plan
- Lushootseed renaming of OPCD conference rooms
- Native Neighborhood feasibility study support

### New Indigenous Planner position

- New 2022 hire in OPCD



Dakota Murray

**Indigenizing Seattle's  
Comprehensive Plan**

Inclusion of  
Indigenous presence, perspective,  
and values in the city's future.

**SDCI & OPCD**

# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

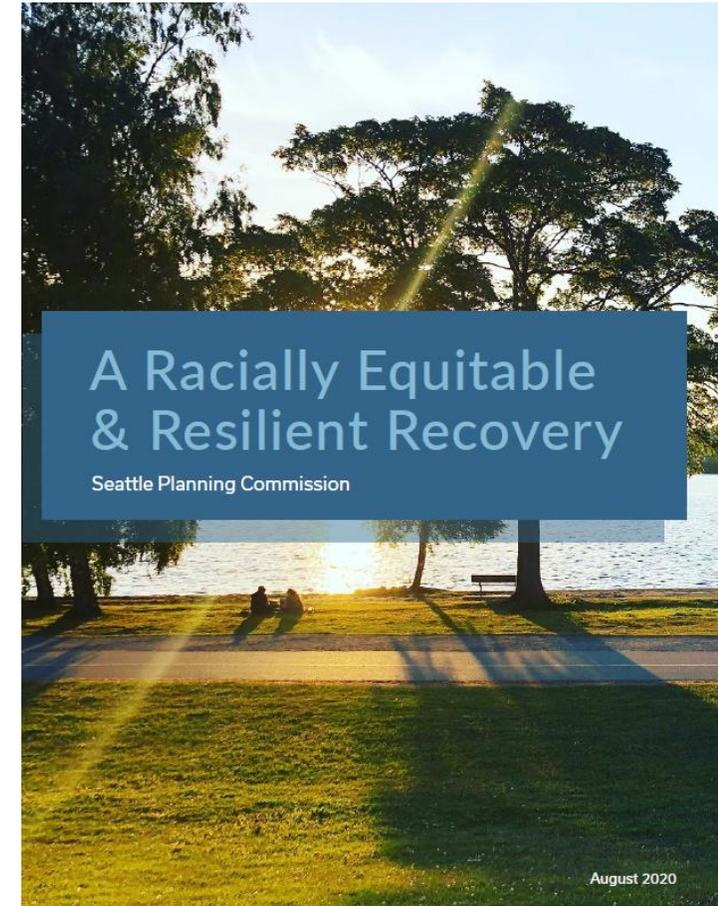
## Commissions

### Seattle Planning Commission

- Recommended overarching themes to guide the major update to the Comprehensive Plan, centering racial equity, resilience, and a sustainable quality of life for all. Advocated for additional resources for intentional and genuine inclusive community engagement.
- Committed to revised, racial equity principles (Color Brave Space norms) to guide Commission work in a half-day retreat facilitated by Heidi Sohn of Equity Matters.

### Seattle Design Commission

- Approved the creation of 1,500 square feet of cultural space in new development to be owned and operated by Cultural Space Agency PDA
- Adopted new requirements for projects requiring Commission approval requiring presentation of local neighborhood demographics to measure equitable outcomes for project designs



# 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Workforce Equity

### Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

- 2 SYEP participants in 2021: Inspections Services, Land Use Planning, Code Compliance, and HR
- 4 SYEP participants for 2022

### SDCI Job Shadow Program – Mentorship

- Job shadowing suspended in 2021 due to COVID

### Updated Hiring Process training to include anti-racism and debiasing strategies

### Performed equity analyses on:

- Department vehicles, "Return to Office", Vaccine mandates, Continuous Improvement, Space Planning, and department website

### SDCI APEX/SAM pay equity adjustments

- The payrate scale for salaried employees was adjusted effective 1/2/2021 to increase equity within all positions, making compensation equal across each salaried title.

# Summary of 2021 RSJI Challenges

## Obstacles and barriers

- Having dedicated time for this work
- Distance between people due to COVID and building trust with colleagues in a remote environment
- Moving beyond reliance on individuals and getting whole department to take responsibility for RSJI work
- Emotional labor of the work is not accounted for
- Challenge of being harmed while attempting to improve
- Continued sense of urgency makes it difficult to be inclusive, encourage democratic and thoughtful decision-making, think long-term, and consider

## consequences

- Continued imbalance in access to power

# Summary of 2021 RSJI Challenges

## Removing the barriers

- Building relational culture; creating a culture of belonging and inclusion
- Centering the most impacted
- Having flexibility in scope, schedule, and budget allow capacity to work with communities and build relationships, rather than just completing projects to meet deadlines.
- Recognizing that equity work is the work and deepening equity work as a foundational piece of the work
- Building the culture of failing forward (knowing that white or males must only show potential of leadership, while women or BIPOC must reprove themselves over and over)
- Doing fewer projects better
- More funding for engagement and needs that arise mid-project

# How the "spirit" of RSJI appeared in our workplaces last year

- Creating space for people to share their reflections, anger, fear, and joy
  - BIPOC and white caucuses
  - SDCI/OPCD Change Team Reading Group
  - Participating in the [RSJI Mayoral Candidate Forum](#) — Christopher Ndifon (SDCI) was a panelist
  - OPCD RSJ all-staff survey
- EDI convenings and funders roundtable
- RSJI integrated budget prioritization
- OPCD Accountability Framework



Change Team co-lead **Christopher Ndifon** (right) participates in RSJI Change Team Co-Leads Mayoral Candidate Forum, October 2021

# Racial Equity Toolkits

## SDCI

- Bluebeam Implementation
- Design Review Virtual Meetings
- Tree Protection

**OPCD** (ongoing and in partnership with other departments)

- Light Rail Station Area Planning / ST3
- Industrial and Maritime Strategy
- Comprehensive Plan Major Update
- Equitable Development Zoning



# OPCD Racial Equity Toolkits

## Current RETs

- Light Rail Station Area Planning / ST3
- Industrial and Maritime Strategy
- Comprehensive Plan Major Update
- Equitable Development Zoning

## Comprehensive Plan

### Examining historical and ongoing impacts of City growth framework & policies on BIPOC

- What are the racial equity benefits and impacts of the current Urban Village Growth Strategy?
- What improvements would make the Comprehensive Plan and Growth Strategy more equitable?

#### *Draft racial equity outcomes:*

- Meaningful engagement with BIPOC communities so they can see themselves in updated Plan and in the future of the city Plan
- Address housing needs of households and families of color
- More well-paid jobs for workers of color without a 4-year degree
- Increase affordable commercial space for small businesses owned by and serving BIPOC
- Mitigate displacement pressure with growth strategy and more housing choices

## Equitable Development Zoning (EDZ)

### Addressing barriers in City land use regulation to equitable development

#### *Draft racial equity outcomes:*

- BIPOC communities and organizations have greater access to land use and zoning processes
- Reduce displacement pressure facing BIPOC households & communities by supporting community goals
- EDI projects are more feasible and have a faster & simpler pathway through the permitting process
- Land use regulations begin to prioritize community-driven equitable development

# SDCI Racial Equity Toolkits

## Bluebeam Implementation

**Racial Equity Outcome:** Ensure that undue burden is not inflicted on applicants regardless of their race.

The project intends to deliver marked up PDFs generated through Bluebeam to the applicant via the Accela portal.

The project will give special consideration to one-time or infrequent users of SDCI plan review services to either ensure that the technology is not a burden or provide an alternative path for their transactions.

Public outreach and education will be necessary to ensure that applicants not currently using or familiar with ReVu are not disenfranchised.



# Leading with Equity Goals for 2022: Highlights

- Support the development of an accountability framework
- Involving more people in RSJI work
- Develop RSJI training approach for 2022
- Support hiring processes by involving LWE members in hiring panel
- Improve onboarding for new staff, interns, and commissioners
- Work with Office of the Ombud on culture shift
- Center racial equity in 2023 budget
- Develop approach to compensating stakeholders
- Track and support Racial Equity Toolkits
- Integrate principles for community-based participatory research into our work

# ART Goals for 2022: Highlights

- **Hiring transparency and equity: The Same Treatment and Opportunities for all SDCI Staff and Prospects**
- **Transparency & equity for promotion and discipline**
- **Leave and Remote Work Equity**
- **Management Accountability and Accountability Culture at SDCI: Trust and Allyship from our Leaders**
- **Make RSJ a Part of Every Project and Workplan: From Words to Action**
- **Digital Equity**
- **Replace White Supremacy Culture with Relational Culture**

# Thank you!

## SDCI/OPCD Change Team

### SDCI

- Nathan Torgelson, Director
- Jared Bigelow
- Leslea Bowling
- Corey Buttry, 2022 Co-Lead
- Irving Chu
- Linda Elwood
- Dean Greenleaf
- Carmen Groshong
- Christopher Ndifon, 2021 Co-Lead
- Qiana Norwood, 2022 Co-Lead
- Katrina Nygaard
- Danielle Priest, Executive Sponsor
- Patricia Spears, 2022 Co-Lead
- Collin Tam, 2022 Co-Lead
- Keary Uhlig
- Emilie Voight

### OPCD

- Rico Quirindongo, Director
- Ian Dapiaoen, 2022 Co-Lead
- Lauren Flemister, 2022 Executive Sponsor
- Magda Hogness, 2021 Co-Lead
- Melissa Lawrie, 2021 Executive Sponsor
- Robin Magonegil, 2022 Co-Lead
- Katie Sheehy
- Nick Welch, 2022 Co-Lead

### SOCR RSJI Liaisons

- Diana Falchuk
- Shuxuan Zhou

### Antiracist Task Force (SDCI)

- Jared Bigelow
- Eric Jenkins
- Robin Magonegil

### Leading with Equity (OPCD)

- Jennifer Breeze
- Diana Canzoneri
- Ian Dapiaoen
- Lauren Flemister
- Magda Hogness
- Melissa Lawrie
- Katie Sheehy
- Brennon Staley
- Patrice Thomas
- Andrew Tran
- Nick Welch