

SDCI & OPCD RSJI Report to Council

April 28, 2021

UPDATE ON 2021 RSJI WORK &
RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKITS

PRESENTERS

Nathan Torgelson, Director SDCI
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Introduction & Overview

- 2020 accomplishments
- Racial Equity Toolkits
- Goals for 2021

Our Mission

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.



Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

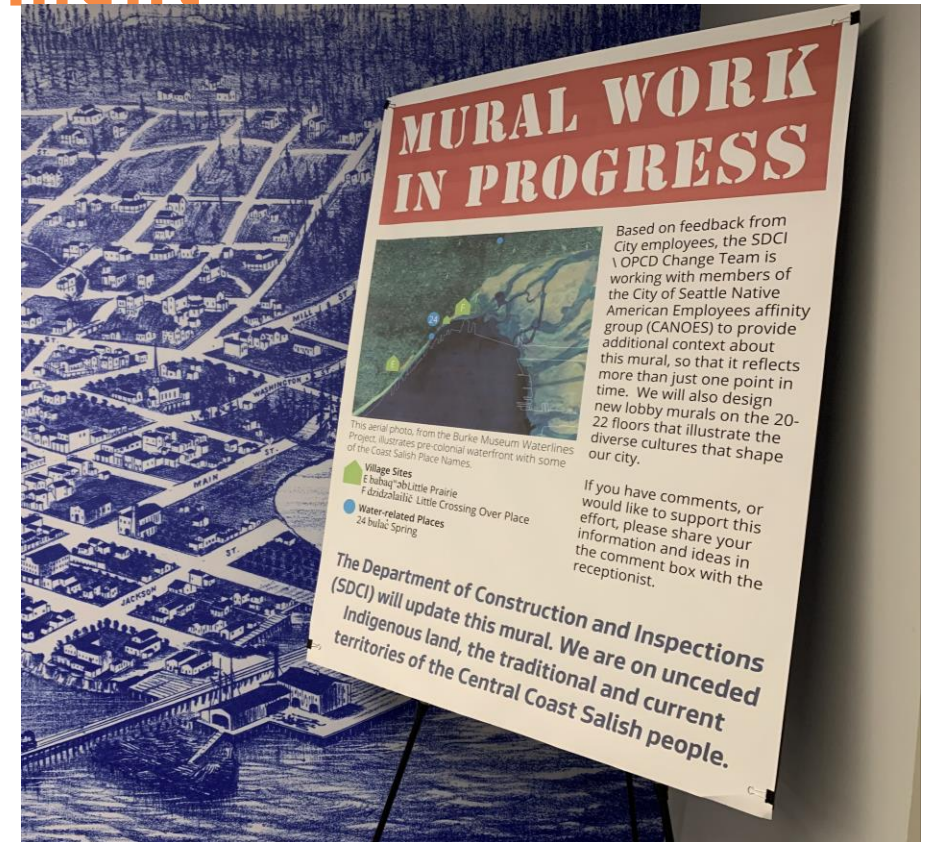
On behalf of SDCI & OPCD we'd like to actively recognize that we are on indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people.



Change Team and Lead with Equity 2020 Accomplishments

Growing Participation & Engagement

- Participating in the RSJI Summit on panel discussions
- Establishing the Change Team Charter and charter committees
- Writing RSJ Citywide co-leads letter to the Mayor
- Growing participation in other groups including the BIPOC Caucus, White Caucus, Leading with Equity Team
- Creating Sharing Seattle Stories, a website that compiles written and oral stories of leaders in Seattle with illustrations.
- Commenting on two Racial Equity Toolkits
- Developing Community Agreements (Ongoing)
- SMT 19th floor mural changes to include indigenous history and communities.



SDCI 19th floor mural with our Change Team's message for updating

2020 Accomplishments:

Equitable Development Initiative

- New Permanent Advisory Board. Over the last four years, the interim EDI Advisory Board has led RFP process, distributing over \$21M, supporting over 30 projects in Capacity Building, Acquisition, and Capital grants to bring community-driven projects to light.
- Responding to community needs that arose. Partnerships with 37 community organizations through EDI COVID-19 response 2020 RFP.
- Supporting other departments with their grants, funding, and planning (OED, OIRA, OSE, OEM)
- Developing the [OPCD Equitable Recovery Principles](#) document
- Black Brilliance Project requested OPCD to collaborate with them on participatory budgeting due to EDI process serving as an exemplary model
- Creating Equity Indicators Report
- Five Staff participating on RSJ Key Leaders training
- Responding to SDHR's survey

2020 Accomplishments: Indigenous Seattle

To educate our departments and our communities about Indigenous people, their culture, and their histories, and how Indigenous communities can influence our work in an authentic way.

Indigenous Seattle Internship

- Indigenous planning research (ongoing)
- Indigenizing the Comprehensive Plan
- Workshop on Racial Equity in Seattle 2035 Comp Plan



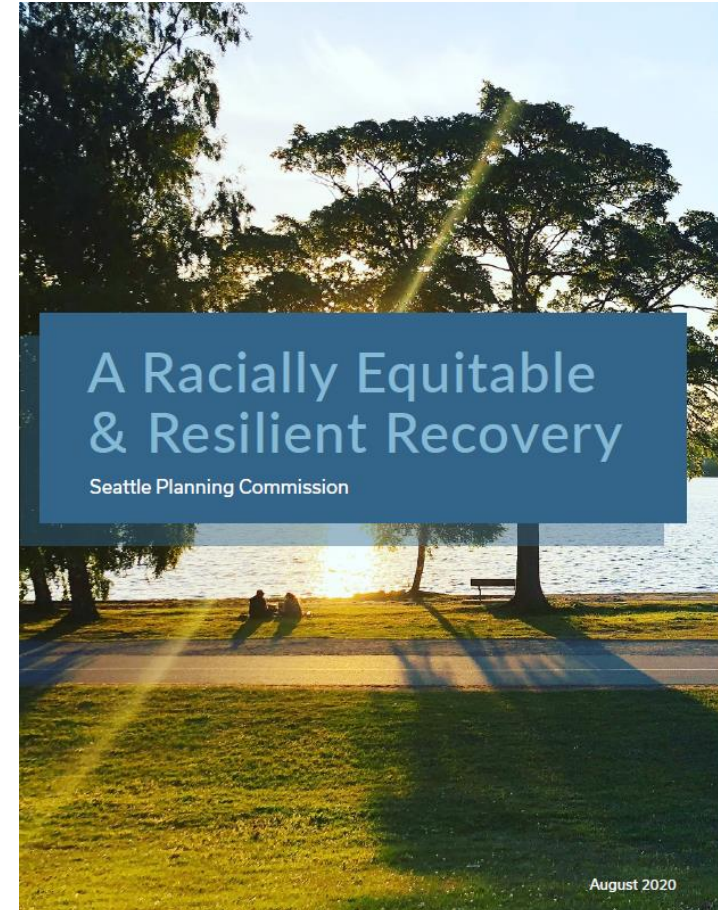
2020 Accomplishments: Commissions

Seattle Planning Commission

- Released *'A Racially Equitable and Resilient Recovery'*, a report urging the City to radically shift practices, programs and policies toward a new paradigm that prioritizes recovery resources for achieving racial equity. In the face of a global pandemic which disproportionately harms Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Seattle must plan for a "recovery" that does not simply restore and perpetuate our city's legacy of systemic racial inequity.

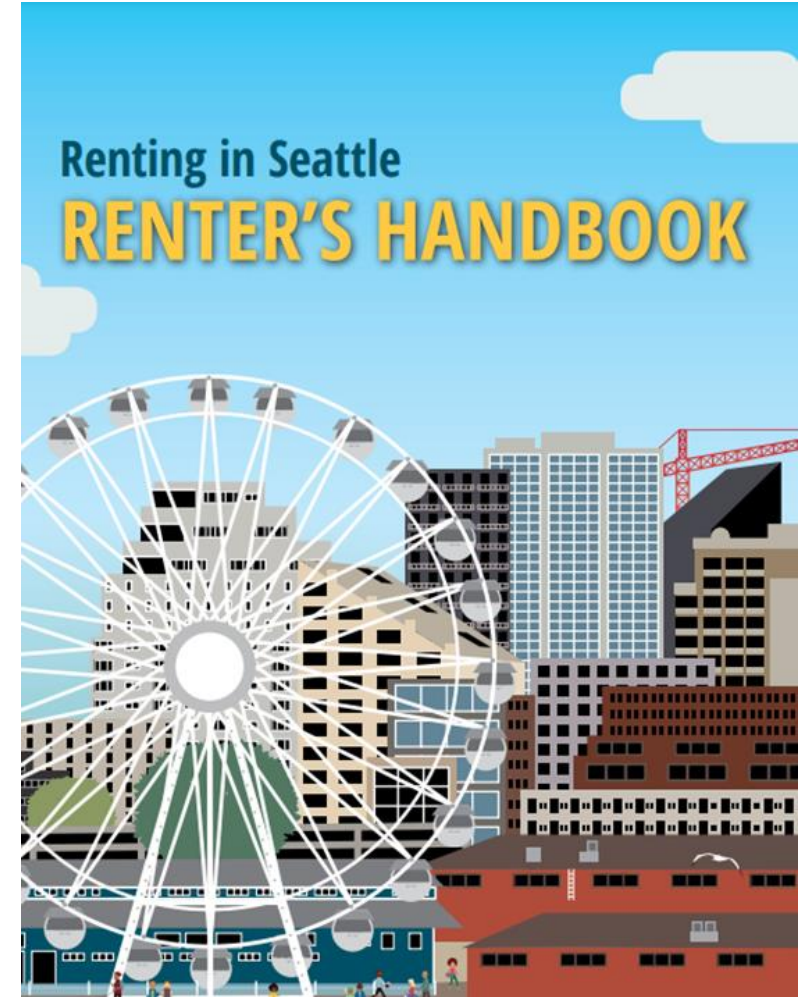
Seattle Design Commission

- Prepared a letter requesting City departments adopt specific policies to name city facilities for BIPOC people, places, and events. Sent to Mayor, City Departments, and Council.
- Drafted a letter to Sound Transit requesting more equitable outcomes on disposition of vacant or underutilized properties not suitable for redevelopment



Accomplishments: Renter's Handbook

- Provided to all renters at move-in and periodically thereafter
- Replaces dense, legalistic "Information for Tenants"
- Accessible, easy to read, plain language
- Covers renter's rights, plus tips and resources
- Translated into 13 languages
- Available as a booklet, printer-friendly version, or online at seattle.gov/rentinginseattle



2020 Accomplishments: Internal Training

- Internal: Hiring & implicit bias (ongoing & expanding)
- Racial Equity Toolkit training with Seattle Office of Civil Rights
- Implicit Bias
- Internalized Racial Inferiority
- BIPOC and White Caucuses
- *Cracking the Codes* film and facilitated conversation for all staff



2020 Accomplishments: Workforce Equity

- **Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**
 - Due to COVID could not host Youth in 2020
 - Have signed on for 2 in 2021
- **SDCI Job Shadow Program - Mentorship**
 - Job Shadow was suspended due to COVID
 - Involved in City Wide effort to establish a framework and best practices for a Mentorship program with potential for a shared digital program across the City. We understand that employee development and mobility are enhanced with mentorships especially for women of color.
- Reviewed and updated Hiring Process training to include anti-racism and debiasing strategies.
- Successfully piloted anonymized application materials for interview panels

Summary of 2020 RSJI Challenges

highlight institutional obstacles and barriers that your team was unable to navigate around.

Obstacles and barriers

- Distance between people due to COVID. Building trust with colleagues in a remote environment.
- As departments moving beyond reliance on individuals and take responsibility for RSJI work.
- Emotional labor of the work is not accounted for. Imbalance of speaking from experience vs offering support.
- Having dedicated time to organize against white supremacy
- Open forum, all staff meetings responding to dominate culture rather than centering the most impacted.
- Continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences

Summary of 2020 RSJI Challenges

highlight institutional obstacles and barriers that your team was unable to navigate around. What would need to happen for those barriers to be eliminated?

Removing the barriers

- Building relational culture; weaving our shared humanity and belonging and co-liberation and creating a culture of belonging and inclusion
- Centering the most impacted. It's about the impact not the intent. Centering black voices.
- Having flexibility in scope, schedule, and budget make it easier 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 (and how to do so knowing that white or males just have to show potential of leadership, women or BIPOC have to reprove themselves over and over)

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

How did departments create space for people to share their reflections, anger, fear, and joy?

- BIPOC and white caucuses
- SDCI/OPCD Change Team Reading Group
- RSJI summit panel discussion focused on CID
- RSJ Citywide co-leads letter to the Mayor
- List of recovery principles outlining a new level of commitment
- EDI convenings and funders roundtable
- RSJI integrated budget prioritization

Racial Equity Toolkits: Summary

SDCI

- Bluebeam Implementation
- Tree Protections Update

OPCD ongoing and in partnership with other departments

- Light Rail Expansion/ST3
- Industrial and Maritime Strategy

Groundwork for leading with equity



RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKIT:

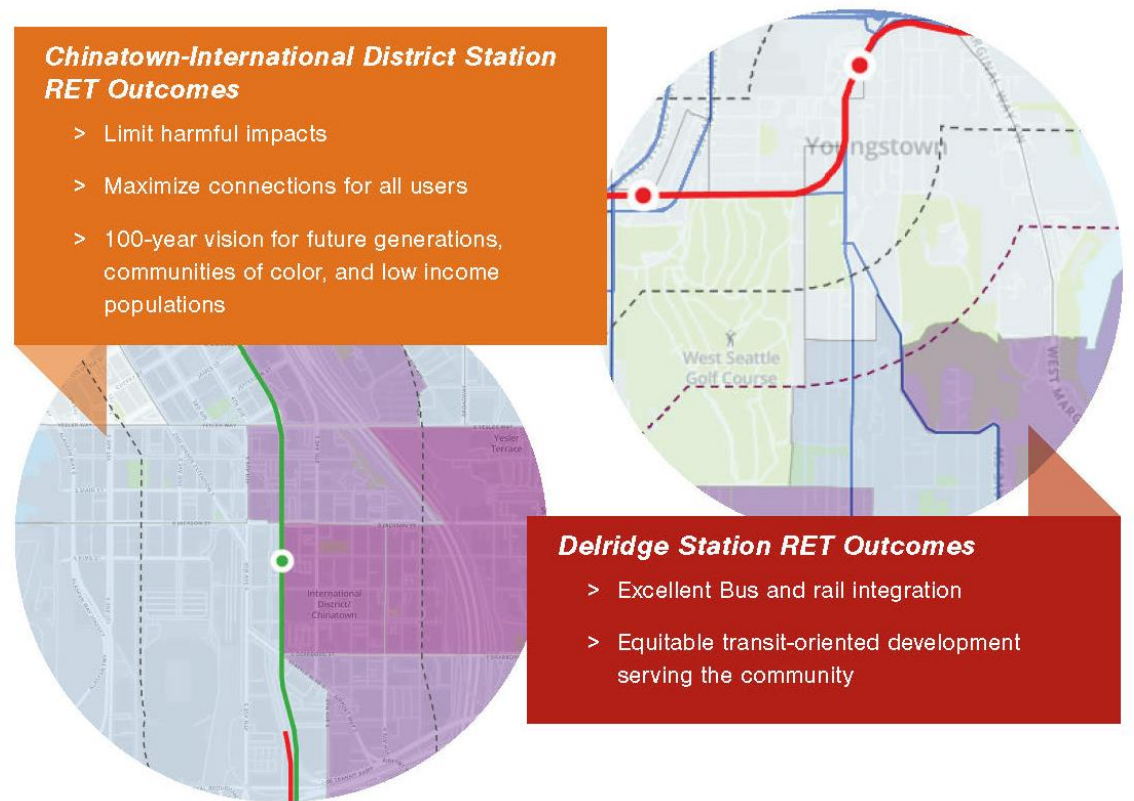
Sound Transit West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

Racial Equity Outcomes

- Enhance mobility and access for communities of color and low-income populations;
- Create opportunities for equitable development that benefit communities of color;
- Avoid disproportionate impacts on communities of color and low-income populations; and
- Meaningfully involve communities of color and low-income populations in the project.

Operationalizing the racial equity outcomes

The planning workgroup (led by OPCD), holds Quarterly RET Convenings, to share strategies for centering race, best practices, and lessons learned along the way, and identify any emergent or recurring needs for RET process improvement.

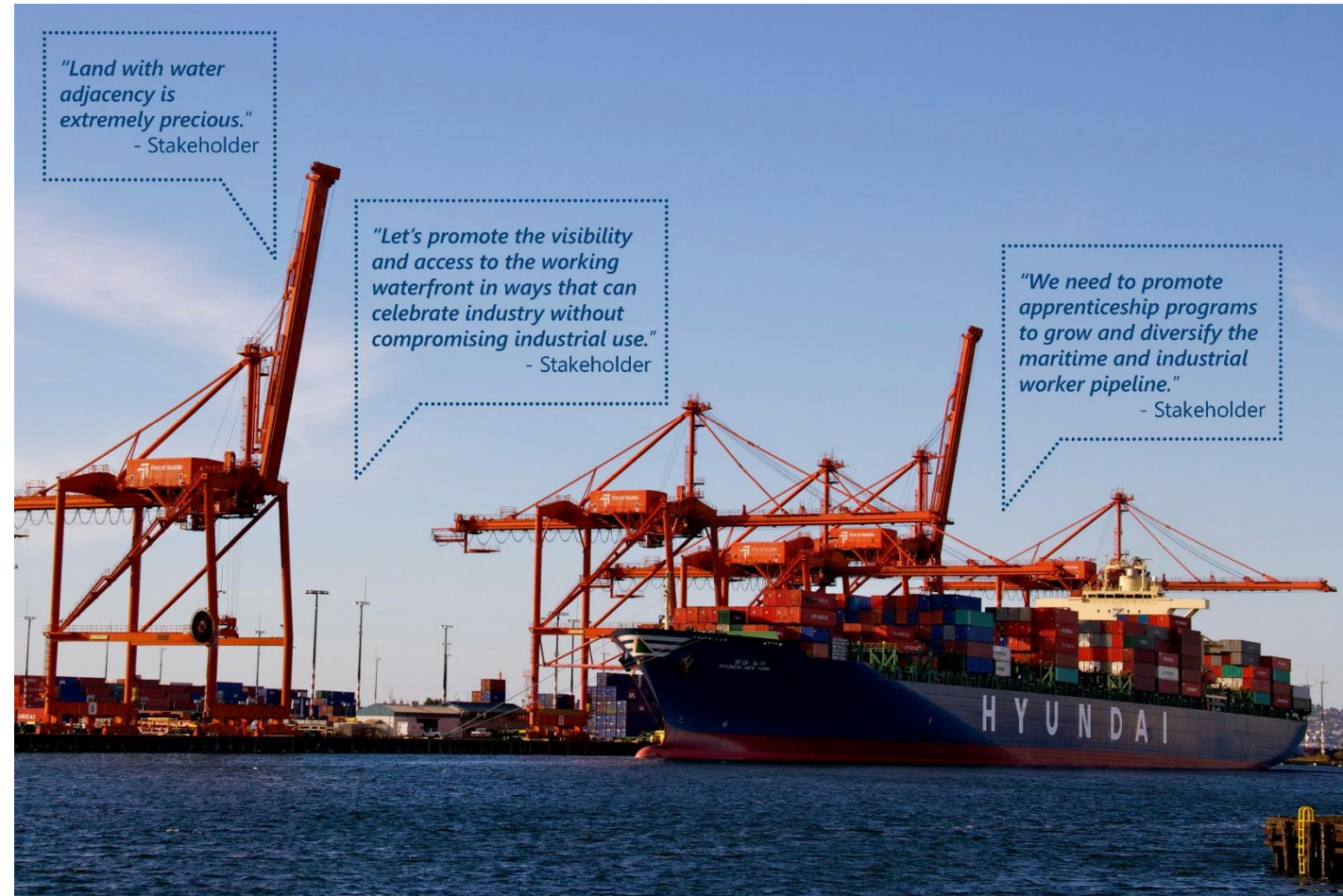


RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKIT:

Industrial and Maritime Strategy

Racial Equity Outcomes

- Improve equitable access to jobs/opportunity. The maritime and industrial sectors offer excellent opportunities for business ownership and careers in well-paying jobs without traditional 4-year degrees, but access to those opportunities have historically been exclusionary.
- Remove disparity of environmental health impacts. Proximity to the hazardous pollutants generated by industrial uses and supporting freight has created health disparities for BIPOC communities
- Assist communities to prosper in place.
- Improve safety and health for workers.



RSJI TOOLKIT: Tree Protections Update

Racial Equity Outcomes

- Ensure that urban forestry services, benefits, and stewardship opportunities are distributed equitably across communities, particularly BIPOC communities.
- Assume responsibility for mitigating disproportionate historical impacts of City government action.
- Reduce disproportionate negative impacts to BIPOC communities due to having fewer trees.
- Reduce the burdens of tree regulations implementation and enforcement on BIPOC communities and businesses.



RSJI TOOLKIT: 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.

Change Team Goals for 2021

- Leading with equity and putting it into practice!
- Working with our RSJI liaison Diana Falchuk to develop a workplan to sharpen our focus on anti-racism work and address issues brought up by BIPOC staff.
- Supporting employees of color. Become anti-racist advocates. Respond to and address all the levels of overt and covert racism as they surface.
- Growing participation, create and share message(s) with SDCI/OPCD staff outlining the roles of the Change Team and ways to get involved
- Help support future collaboration with SOCR, BIPOC group, White ally/accountability group and executive team. Clarify roles of each group and ways to create a culture of mutual support
- Developing Community Agreements (Ongoing)

Change Team Goals for 2021

- Provide guidance for internal RSJI messaging. Create template for Change Team newsletter/updates
- Work with SDCI Communications team to collaborate with other departments for City-wide RSJI Change Team communications.
- Reach out to other departments to collaborate on Sharing Seattle Stories project
- Continuing conversation on SMT 19th floor mural issue
- Create City-wide RSJI resource library
- Racial equity work is required for all SDCI & OPCD staff, and enforced through E3

Lead With Equity Goals for 2021: Highlights

- Racial equity work is mandatory for all OPCD staff
- Support our culture shift: healing from the culture of harm built by colonialism and white supremacy culture requires us to recognize our personal agency within the system of City government, learn about our roles in reinforcing harmful patterns that underpin racial inequity, and take action to build a more equitable society
- Center racial equity in 2022 budget. LWE team establishes principles and framework, supports other staff with their equity analysis in budget requests and support office-wide equity analysis
- Strengthen inclusive public engagement, using racial equity best practices, so that BIPOC communities can co-create a vision for more inclusive neighborhoods that the City helps implement
- Measure the success of specific policy and programmatic changes in OPCD by developing a baseline and setting goals that hold us accountable using quantitative and qualitative data

Thank you!

SDCI

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- Corey Buttry
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- Nicole Levy
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- Muhammed Memon
- Rhett Miller
- Christopher Ndifon, Co-Lead
- Qiana Norwood
- Katrina Nygaard
- Janet Oslund
- Amanda Pleasant-Brown
- Danielle Priest, Executive Sponsor
- Ben Scott
- Patricia Spears
- Collin Tam
- Emilie Voight

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- Ubax Gardheere, EDI Director
- Magda Hogness, Current Co-Lead
- Melissa Lawrie, Executive Sponsor
- Sauncha Romey
- Katie Sheehy
- Janet Shull
- Brennon Staley
- Patrice Thomas
- Andrew Tran
- Nicolas Welch
- Bo Zhang