

Equity Guidance



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An award-winning practice specializing in equity-based placemaking & urbanism
Healthy Communities Initiative Infrastructure & Equity Lead

Infrastructure and Community Health

Infrastructure projects play a significant role in contributing to community health. However, these initiatives are not neutral. They either increase or diminish social equity. That stated, we acknowledge differences across infrastructure project types, equity-seeking groups, and regional needs and opportunities.

We understand that the integration of an equity-based approach will be distinct to each applicant. **Consequently, this checklist is not prescriptive. It is a prompt for important front-end considerations for equitable partnerships, programming, and community engagement.** Reviewing this checklist will help you think through, and clearly articulate, how your team is integrating equitable approaches into your proposed initiative.

Partnerships

- If you are a mainstream institution partnering with a grassroots/community collaborator, have you properly acknowledged their contribution in your proposal?
- If you are a mainstream institution partnering with a grassroots/community collaborator, have you allocated the budget fairly to reflect their contributions to the project?
- If you are a mainstream institution partnering with a grassroots/community collaborator, do they have significant decision-making and creative power?
- If you are a mainstream institution partnering with a grassroots/community collaborator, have you explored how you will publicly recognize their contribution, share authorship of co-created materials, and address intellectual property?
- If you are a grassroots/community group working with a mainstream institution, have you clearly conveyed collaboration non-negotiables and the values guiding your work?

Programming

- Does your project leadership team reflect the community you are collaborating with and serving?
- When identifying the community stakeholder groups that will be benefitting from and/or be engaged in your proposed initiative, have you asked, "Who's not here?"
- Have you considered physical and social safety issues that may arise during your project? If so, have you identified interventions to contribute to everyone's safety?
- Have you applied a respectful asset-based lens to your proposed initiative, equally considering community challenges along with strengths and wisdom?
- Have you identified performance metrics/indicators that address equity and the social well-being of the community?

Community Engagement and Impact

- Have you considered the social determinants of health? If not, learn more here. Have you made an evidence-based connection between your proposed initiative and improved community health?
- If you are proposing an initiative outside of your geographic or cultural community, have you shared your initiative idea with key stakeholders for feedback and validation?
- Have you considered the social and political history of the site where your proposed initiative will take place?
- Have you considered unintended consequences such as gentrification, displacement, and safety issues that may arise for individuals from equity-seeking groups as a result of your project?
- Will your project create an opportunity for the community to develop new skills and capacities?
- If applicable, have you considered how your proposed initiative will be stewarded and maintained well into the future?