

# Building Blocks for Change:

## Accelerating Organizational Race Equity

Building Blocks for Change: Accelerating Organizational Race Equity (BB4C) is an assessment tool developed by the [Building Movement Project \(BMP\)](#) to help nonprofits better understand the foundational capacities for building more racially equitable workplaces. BMP has a long history of research across the nonprofit sector, including the [Race to Lead](#) report series on the nonprofit sector's racial leadership gap, which was the catalyst for developing the race equity assessment process.

Rather than auditing an organization's policies, processes, and procedures, Building Blocks for Change assesses staff experiences through the lens of four key capacities – Learning, Leadership, Conversation, and Voice – that are fundamental for organizations engaging in racial equity work. The assessment process aims to deepen nonprofit organizations' understanding of the changes necessary to become more inclusive and racially equitable. To that end, staff of participating nonprofits complete a survey that uncovers their experiences and perceptions of the organization in relation to the four capacities for racial equity.

Once the survey process is completed, BMP generates a customized report based on an analysis of the aggregated staff responses. The report is shaped by BMP's algorithms, which identify where the organization has developed capacity, as well as room for growth. Organizations also receive supplemental tools and materials, such as template discussion guides for organization-wide dialogue on the report and how to work together to move the organization towards being a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

### **Building Blocks for Change "does"**

Give you a **custom report** that captures your organization's race equity efforts

Reflect feedback from **staff** about their experiences

Provide **a framework** of key capacities required to maintain a racially equitable workplace

Help **guide discussions** to identify where the organization can build up its race equity work

**Suggest places** to enhance your organization's practices, as well as which areas might take longer to develop

### **Building Blocks for Change "does not"**

Give you **quantitative data** or definitive "scores" on how your organization is doing

Include the **board's** experiences or perceptions of the work

Provide **an audit** of organization-specific policies, procedures, or processes

**Replace an outside facilitator** or consultant to help you implement next steps and guide discussions

**Provide a checklist** for your organization to follow to "achieve" race equity, because race equity is an ongoing process

# Our Race Equity Framework Focuses on Four Capacities

These four key capacities are foundational for organizations to strengthen race equity practices.

## **LEARNING**

Organizations that are willing to learn and change are more able to meaningfully incorporate race equity strategies. This commitment to learning and changing sets the tone for grappling with and responding to feedback from the organization's staff and community, and establishing more effective race equity practices.

## **LEADERSHIP**

Everyone at the organization has a role to play in moving race equity forward. However, senior leaders must commit to this work and recognize how their power and privilege play out in the organization. Creating a space that's inviting of staff participation allows for the generation of ideas and solutions from people at all levels. Senior leaders must then drive the co-created solutions forward.



## **CONVERSATION**

Meaningful race equity efforts require the ability to have hard conversations. To do this well, it is important to build trusting and resilient relationships, have shared language to communicate about challenging topics, develop a process to deal productively with conflict, and create mechanisms for accountability.

## **VOICE**

Having a voice, and therefore influence, in an organization, especially for people of color, can address power imbalances and advance race equity. It can increase staff agency over their work, and encourage collective responsibility for the organization's success. This requires inviting greater participation across racial and positional differences and expanding access to information necessary for making decisions.

 **LEARNING**

 **LEADERSHIP**

 **CONVERSATION**

 **VOICE**

## Each Capacity Breaks Down Into Three Focus Areas



### **MOTIVATION**

Indicates the organization's genuine interest and openness to make changes to foster a more racially equitable workplace.



### **PRACTICE**

Speaks to how the organization has applied race equity principles in its day-to-day operations.



### **STRUCTURES**

Refers to the plans, processes, and policies that help embed race equity in a foundational and systematic way.

# Building Blocks for Change

## Assessment Process Frequently Asked Questions

### **What does Building Blocks for Change provide?**

Building Blocks for Change is an assessment based on the Building Movement Project's (BMP) holistic framework of key capacities for making nonprofits racially equitable workplaces. The assessment examines staff experiences and perceptions of the organization – rather than auditing an organization's policies, processes, and procedures – because even if policies are established, they may not be followed or have the intended impact on staff. The customized report is based on a rigorous analysis of the data from the staff surveys. The report's insights are shown through visual presentations and narratives. To help you review the report and guide you on how to share it with others in the organization, we offer additional materials such as meeting agendas and facilitation guides. Making meaning of the report and identifying next steps as an organization is an important part of the change process.

### **What is the commitment expected of organizations participating in the assessment process?**

We ask that organizations that participate in Building Blocks for Change commit to thinking about the process holistically and truly try to learn and apply the changes they need to make to be more racially equitable workplaces. This includes:

- Championing and ensuring staff take the survey
- Being open to the responses that staff provide, especially when contrary to what's expected
- Sharing the narrative report findings with staff and board at the organization
- Taking action on the findings that are revealed in the report

### **How many staff members need to take the assessment?**

The more staff that participate, the more accurate the report will be in providing a picture of how staff experience and perceive the organization. For the report to be effective, we recommend that at least 75% of staff members take the survey, with participation as close to 100% of staff as possible. If less than 5 staff members from a given demographic group (i.e., staff of color) participate, that will limit the findings that we are able to share in the report.

### **Can my organization's board participate in the assessment?**

While we encourage your organization's board to be supportive of and engage with the process overall, the survey itself (and resulting custom report) focuses on the experience and perception of an organization's staff - it is not designed for board participation. Instead, BMP advises that organizations share their custom report with both staff and board members and use the meeting agendas and other tools to engage both constituencies throughout the change process.

### **Will I see a comparison between POC and white staff?**

Showing the differences between People of Color and white responses depends on having enough people in each of these categories to be able to securely share this information without infringing on confidentiality. When an organization's number and diversity of respondents allows (i.e., there are more than 5 respondents for each group), the assessment report indicates differences in responses between staff of color and white staff, and staff compared to senior leadership.

**Will I receive the data on survey responses?**

The report provides a visual analysis based on survey responses and does not provide quantitative data. This is partly to protect against exposing staff to the potential of having their responses identified. It is also to emphasize the importance of viewing and understanding racial equity through a holistic lens and to caution against trying to “check a box” by fixating on quantitative data.

**Can I see other reports to compare with my organization’s report?**

We do not share other organizations’ reports because the reports are customized and confidential. As more organizations participate in the assessment process, BMP will assess the ability and utility of benchmarking one organization’s findings in comparison to the larger sector.

**Can we use the BB4C tool to monitor our organization's progress towards building a racially equitable workplace?**

Establishing the foundational capacities essential to building more racially equitable and inclusive workplaces is not something that can be accomplished in 12 months. The organizational changes necessary to sufficiently shift workplace practices requires a deepened understanding of staff experiences and race equity resources intended to counteract the organization's natural tendency to revert to a state of homeostasis. At this time, BMP discourages using the Building Blocks for Change assessment tool to monitor or measure progress once an organization has already completed the assessment process.

**Does BMP offer consulting services? Can BMP suggest a consultant?**

BMP is not a consulting firm, our focus is on research and learning to support – and push – change across the nonprofit sector. However, BMP does provide specific resources that might be helpful to your organization as part of the reports and recommends checking out the work of partner organizations such as [Equity in the Center](#), [Racial Equity Tools](#), [Roadmap Consulting](#), [Interaction Institute for Social Change](#), and other [deep equity practitioners](#) as a starting point for your organization to make the necessary changes that will help you be a more racially equitable workplace.

**Does your organization still have questions?**

Don't hesitate to contact us at [BB4Chelp@buildingmovement.org](mailto:BB4Chelp@buildingmovement.org). We will make every attempt to respond within one business day, but ask for your patience should it take longer.



**Building Movement Project**

*Activating Nonprofits | Fueling Change*