

# JUST ACTION

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

## PILLAR 1: ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY?

- 1. To reveal the real history.** It is important for organizations to pinpoint and tell the correct history, not just the anecdotes or perpetuated stories, in order to learn from their mistakes and missteps. Without accurate history they are more likely to repeat past mistakes.
- 2. To understand the present and how they got here.** Organizations must acknowledge history to understand who holds power or money today and how they attained it. White supremacy and racism underpin many of the conditions of the status quo. In order to affect change, organizations must understand why things are the way they are today.
- 3. To facilitate healing.** Healing begins with an acknowledgment of harm. Organizations must acknowledge history so that those who have been harmed are heard and seen in their current experience of a history of oppression and theft, and so that they may begin to heal.
- 4. To inform the work ahead.** In order to drive equity, not equality, organizations must study the history of the struggle. They must bring those new to the work in to help them understand the pillars and struggle upon which they stand. Only then, may organizations collectively fathom the journey and fight ahead.

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization has invited historically marginalized groups to share their stories with the organization in order to learn directly from them how systemic and structural racism have shaped their institution and sector and how the organization and sector continues to benefit from a white supremacist culture.				
The organization openly and explicitly acknowledges the roots of its establishment in relation to Black, Indigenous, and other people of color or racialized groups.				

# PILLAR 1: ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY CONTINTUED

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization actively and routinely communicates the ways in which they are dismantling white supremacy culture in their policies and practices and invites feedback from the community on areas of continued improvement.				
The organization publicly commits to the struggle of dismantling racism while advancing equity and integrating anti-racist frameworks.				
The organization fosters a sense of community care, repair, and redress.				
The organization has either issued a public apology for past harms or developed specific policies and programs that repair those harms.				

1. How have systemic and structural racism shaped how Money is distributed, how Narratives are shaped, and how Policy is created?

2. How has or does our organization and sector harm/harmed communities? How did/does that happen? Who is/was involved? What did/does that look like?

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## PILLAR 2: SHIFT POWER

### WHAT WE MEAN BY SHIFT POWER

Power is neither fixed nor finite; it can be shared, shifted, generated, and wielded. It can have negative and positive connotations, as well. So when we talk about shifting power here, we are referring to the intentional act(s) of intervening in the imbalances of decision making power. Power is held by those who make policy, shape narratives,

and manage the flows of money; but this power can and should be shared with and redistributed to those closest to the impact of those decisions. Think about the power dynamics in this organization and how they may be perpetuating the status quo in ways that cause harm to you and your communities.

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization shares power with groups that have been harmed or marginalized by the organization or sector when determining their mission, structure, constituency, policies, and practices.				
The organization actively engages in restorative actions for the harms they have caused to historically-marginalized groups.				
The organization allocates membership slots in their organizational governing board to groups who have historically been harmed by their sector.				
The organization allocates concrete roles to groups who have historically been harmed by their sector to review the organization's compliance with these equity standards.				

# PILLAR 2: SHIFT POWER CONTINUED

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization partners closely with partners outside of the organization and prioritizes their input and guidance related to major decisions, resource allocations and impacts of their work.				
The organization's leadership and staff proportionately reflects the communities that they serve or communities that are most impacted by the work they do.				

1. What would it look like for this organization to shift power to groups that have been historically marginalized or harmed by the way Money moves, Narratives are shaped, and Policy is created in their institution or sector?

2. What current practice or policy could this organization dismantle in order to move towards transformational work that shifts the distribution of power and resources?

3. How can this organization create a shared narrative of their impact using numbers, narratives, and reflections of those impacted by their work?

4. How are external partners engaged in decision-making?

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## PILLAR 3: EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability, in the words of therapist and anti-violence activist Danica Bornstein, is about being responsible to yourself and those around you for your choices and the consequences of those choices. Accountability is a process that begins with acknowledging the history of harmful actions (or inactions) and the consequences of them. But it does not end there. True accountability requires repairing those harms and actively changing the mindsets, values, and behaviors so that those harms are not repeated.

While accountability is a process, being held accountable is more of a practice for which new organizational and individual muscles need to be built — like training for a marathon. Organizations need to strengthen muscles around how they receive critical feedback by being intentional about how they show up, actively listen while holding tension, avoid defensiveness or shutting down, and then, most importantly, internalize and act on the feedback. Another important muscle organizations need to strengthen is creating a feedback loop to those who they are accountable to by reflecting back what they heard, what they acted on why, and what they didn't act on why. Organizations must let those they are accountable to know how and when they will follow up. This can take many forms and can include but must go beyond public report outs on funds, projects, and initiatives.

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization collaborates across multiple sectors to eliminate various forms of systemic and structural oppression.				
The organization prioritizes gathering and responding to the perspectives and stories of those whose voices have been historically excluded and impacted most prominently.				

# PILLAR 3: EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY CONTINUED

	Not sure, more information needed	No, there have been missed opportunities	Yes, I have witnessed this	Evidence or examples, if applicable
The organization has full participation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color or other racialized groups in all aspects of the organization.				
The organization demonstrates how their investments show opportunity for all and a reduction in racial disparities/disproportionality.				
The organization consistently seeks feedback on the organization’s anti-racist and equity approaches and incorporates that feedback in its implementation, policies shifts and changes in practices and culture. The agency reports out to the public their progress towards the identified need for transformation.				
Annually, the organization produces a report on progress made toward equity standards that is publicly accessible/available.				

1. How does this organization receive feedback or constructive criticism around how it moves Money, shapes Narratives, and creates Policy? How receptive or open are they to feedback? How willing are they to engage external partners?

2. Have you learned anything from participating in this assessment of the organization that could lead to immediate, short term changes in how they address racism and/or inequities?

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## REVIEW RESPONSES + NEXT STEPS

Where the organization you assessed chooses to focus its attention first after receiving this component of the assessment could be this full pillar or individual items within this pillar that are low. A large number of checks in the first two columns (“Not sure, more information needed” or “No, there have been missed opportunities”) indicates areas of growth and they will be pointed to relevant resources that can support their work in next steps..

### PILLAR 1: ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY

There are 6 items. \_\_\_ out of 6 have responses in the first two columns (Not yet thinking about this or Discussing this).

### PILLAR 2: SHIFT POWER

There are 6 items. \_\_\_ out of 6 have responses in the first two columns (Not yet thinking about this or Discussing this).

### PILLAR 3: EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

There are 6 items. \_\_\_ out of 6 have responses in the first two columns (Not yet thinking about this or Discussing this).

SCORE IN ANY DOMAIN	NEXT STEPS
Potentially Causing Harm (Red Zone)	If there are five or more items in the first two columns in any of the three pillars, they are in the Red zone where the organization is potentially causing harm. Resources will be recommended to support harm reduction.
Harm Reduction (Yellow Zone)	If there are three to four items in the first two columns in any of the three pillars, they are in the Yellow zone meaning where the organization is engaged in harm reduction. Resources will be recommended to support transformational work.
Transformational Work (Green Zone)	If there are one to two items in the first two columns in any of the three domains, they are in the green zone meaning organization is engaging in transformational work. Resources will be recommended to continue doing transformational work