

Equity Assessment: Neighborhood Sustainability Grant program

Instructions

This Equity Assessment will help you think through what impacts your program has related to equity and climate justice. It will allow you to assess where your program is now and identify ways to improve your program. This exercise will take about 1 hour to complete.

There are 5 categories, each having multiple questions. Answer the questions using the table provided below. Feel free to delete examples and/or add additional rows as necessary. Be as specific as possible using the framework and ensure your answers are addressing *equity* and *climate justice*.

Please reference the glossary to help define italicized words embedded in the following questions. If you are stuck on a question, reference the example lists at the end of the document.

Agenda Outline

- Review last meeting equity assessment discussion: Tia (5 min)
- Review NSG program materials/attachments: Tia (15 min)
 - Guidelines
 - Scoring rubric
- Equity Assessment of Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Program: Jenna (75 min)
 - Review the equity assessment (5 min)
 - Provide process overview and instructions for completing the assessment of NSG (5 min)
 - Overview
 - Opportunities to edit to fit your needs
 - Process
 - Go through each section/question one by one
 - 5 sections
 - 12-15 minutes/section
 - Detailed format of process
 - Introduce section (2 min)
 - read questions
 - provide example
 - ask for questions
 - Time to complete section individually (4-5 min)
 - Jenna and Tia are available to answer questions (raise hand)
 - Share out responses (5 min)
 - Document any responses or ideas we did not get to discuss (1 min)
 - Marisa to add a bullet list with follow-up thoughts/ideas for the working group to consider/pursue
 - Next steps
 - Working group to pick back up
 - Review assessment results & follow up on items we did not finish & develop recommendations for the NSG program

1. Outreach & Communication

Are you reaching your *intended audience*?

| Who is the intended audience? (be specific!) | Are you currently reaching them? Please list data to support this. | What relevant outreach/advertising methods are you using? | How can you reach them more effectively? |
|--|---|---|---|
| People with low-income | Some. Applicants who received funding have all had an annual household income of less than \$50,000, but only a small percentage of every low-income, flood-impacted resident has applied/been awarded. | Targeted outreach to neighborhoods with lower average income | Explore other outreach methods: mailers, door-knocking, repeat doorhangers, target other lower income areas |
| Renters | Few. Only 13% of applicants selected to receive funding were renters | Targeted outreach to neighborhoods with lower average income; | Target outreach to landlords? |
| People of color | Few. Of applicants who answered optional demographic data: Race: 25% identified as People of Color and 75% identified as white. Ethnicity: 18% identified as Hispanic and 82% identified as not Hispanic. | Methods: Materials in Spanish | Work with organizations who already work in these communities and are trusted to get the word out. |

2. Relationships & Stakeholders

How does the service *engage and empower people commonly discriminated against* in a meaningful, authentic, and culturally appropriate manner?

| People who are commonly discriminated against | How is the service engaging and empowering people who are commonly discriminated against? | What else can you do to engage and empower? |
|---|---|---|
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|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Low Income | Upfront grant funding to prevent having upfront money to cover costs of improvements, application scoring criteria to prioritize applicants with low incomes | More extensive outreach to neighborhoods with lower average income |
| Spanish-speaking community members | Offering outreach materials, grant application, and resources in Spanish | Offer workshops in Spanish |

What steps are you taking to ensure the proposed service fosters the building of trust and long-term, positive, and mutually beneficial relationships?

Types of Relationships:

- **Bonding:** relationships among people in the same community
- **Bridging:** relationships among people in different communities
- **Linking:** relationships between people and institutions (e.g. local government)

| Description of the relationship Include the type of the relationship and who is involved | How does the service impact these relationships? | What can you do to improve the service's impact on these relationships? |
|---|--|---|
| Bonding relationships between neighbors in X neighborhood | Does not currently impact these relationships meaningfully | Could host a floodproofing workshop to foster conversations among neighbors |
| | | |

Which *community stakeholders* are meaningfully involved and *engaged* in:

| Service phase | Who is involved? How? | Who ELSE COULD be involved? How? |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Planning | Equity Advisory Group: gave input on the grant program, application questions, and scoring criteria | People who have been impacted by flooding |
| Implementation | | |
| Feedback | | |

3. Benefits

Who is receiving the benefits of this service?

| What are the benefits? | Who is currently receiving this benefit? | Who is NOT currently receiving this benefit? | How can you ensure this benefit is equitably distributed? |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Improved flood preparedness | X% of low-income residents who experience flooding | Residents of X neighborhood. | Target outreach to neighborhoods that need it most |
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4. Barriers & Unintended Harm

What barriers might prevent access to the service?

| Barrier | What are you currently doing to reduce the barrier? | What can you do to further reduce the barrier? |
|---|--|---|
| Lower-income renters might not be able to make home improvements with flood grant assistance. | Create terms that allow for renters to apply for grants with permission from their landlord. | Reach out to work directly with landlords to reduce the burden on the renter. |
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How might the proposed service generate unintentional harm directly or indirectly to people based on race, ethnicity, gender, wealth, age, ability, etc.?

| Potential Harm | Who does this impact? | What can you do to reduce this potential harm or unintended impact? |
|--|---|---|
| Upgrades to homes in a neighborhood that could increase property values/rent and displace community members. | Renters and lower-income community members, people of color | Create an agreement with landlords to not increase rent |
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5. Accountability

What accountability mechanisms does the service have to help ensure that *people who are commonly discriminated against* are included and benefitting in the following areas? (Reference your responses in the previous categories)

| Service area | What accountability mechanisms are currently in place? | How can you improve or implement accountability mechanisms in the context of equity? |
|---|---|---|
| Outreach & Communication | none | Use data of languages spoken in target areas to verify if the 2 languages the program is currently offered in is sufficient |
| Relationships & Stakeholders <i>Are you using community input to improve the service?</i> | Monthly meetings with community partners. | Include JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) section on agendas to specifically garner feedback in this area. |
| Benefits <i>Are you tracking who is receiving the benefits?</i> <i>Are you being transparent with the funding and outcomes of the service?</i> | Optional demographic questions on grant application | Add outcome data to website |
| Barriers & Unintended Impacts | Feedback survey framed for barriers and unintended impacts. | |

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Glossary

- **Equity:** Meeting communities where they are and allocating resources and opportunities, regarding racial and social justice, appropriately to create equal outcomes for all community members.”
 - Recognizes each person has different circumstances and needs, meaning different groups of people need different resources and opportunities allocated to them to thrive.
- **Climate justice:** an approach to climate action that focuses on the unequal impacts of climate change on marginalized or otherwise vulnerable populations
- **Intended audience:** the group of people for which a service or product is made. This group is the “targeted audience” or a group of people to whom you want to provide a product or service.
- **People who are commonly discriminated against:** Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation, or income level.
 - (input examples from equity advisory group application?)
- **Community stakeholders:** Individuals or organizations with an interest in a project, or who will be affected by a project. Stakeholders are not necessarily involved with the project economically.
- **Community Engagement:** Is a strategic process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, or affiliation to identify and address issues affecting their well-being.
 - Places a premium on fostering and enhancing trust as a critical element in long-term, sustainable, and effective governance
- **Empowerment:** The process of gaining freedom and power to do what you want or to control what happens to you.

Examples

These are not complete lists. They provide examples and ideas for how to answer the questions posed in this assessment. Remember to consider the unique needs of your community and the unique position of the program you are assessing.

- People who are commonly discriminated against, people who face barriers, and/or underrepresented:
 - Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). Whenever possible, consider including specific populations that live in your community.
 - Women and nonbinary people
 - People in the LGBTQIA+ community
 - Older people
 - Young people

- People with disabilities, differently abled, people who use a wheelchair, people who are blind, colorblind, deaf, hard of hearing.
- People experiencing homelessness, people living unhoused/unsheltered
- People with low-income, people experiencing poverty, under-resourced
- People without legal status
- People because of their nationalities, cultures, or religions
- People whose first language is not English, non-English speakers
- People with low literacy
- People with mental conditions
- People with health or medical conditions
- People who face food insecurity
- People who experience limited educational opportunities
- People who experience colorblindness
- People who experience sensory overload
- Methods of engaging and empowering community members:
 - Advisory groups or steering committees (especially if it is paid)
 - Opportunities for involvement (such as volunteering)
 - Art
 - Sharing stories of shared experiences
 - Community grants
- Benefits:
 - Increases home comfort
 - Saves money in the long/short term or reduce costs
 - Opportunity to meet neighbors and/or build community
 - Improves disaster preparedness
 - Improves health during a disaster/emergency
 - Increases access to healthy food/food
 - Increases physical safety
 - Improves mental health
 - Increases home value
- Barriers:
 - Initial/upfront costs to participate
 - Lack of transportation options to this offering
 - Location is inaccessible or has limited access
 - Not offered in spoken/written language
 - Time: amount of time needed to participate, or the actual time of offering(s) – day of week, weekend, evening,
 - Lack of childcare during the time needed to participate
 - Unfamiliar/intimidated by the application or forms process
 - Requirements that can't be met (age, status, license,)
 - Age-limitations
 - Low literacy
 - Educational Requirements
 - Unclear, inaccessible, poor communication regarding the purpose/outcome of event/reason of the event

- Person does not utilize main method of communication used to share about event: web, email, social, tabling, news media, radio
- Weather – Heat, Cold
- Medical/Mental Health
- Technology difficulties for virtual opportunities
- Unintended harm
 - Increase in rental cost/neighborhood cost/ cost of living
 - Loss of privacy
 - Loss of security/comfort
 - Group Gaps (A gap that is formed by trying to connect with a group and end up creating an unintended divide).
 - Loss of trust or relationships
 - Emotional burden