



Marin Community Foundation Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commitment

Part 1: The Racial Equity Focus

To understand MCF you must start with its mission:

Encourage and apply philanthropic contributions to help improve the human condition, embrace diversity, promote a humane and democratic society, and enhance the community's quality of life, now and for future generations.

Accomplishing this mission requires the organization to confront systemic, complex issues that have been dividing the country for centuries: racism, sexism, ageism, classism, homophobia, and xenophobia and more. In short, an inequitable society that enables some to easily succeed at the expense of others.

The MCF mission calls on us to tackle these inequities with the vision that every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is one way to help achieve this. MCF's DEI plan will ultimately be far-reaching and broad in its scope. However at the outset, it is imperative that we focus on the development of policies and procedures that address the area of greatest inequity this country, and our county, faces: race - specifically racism towards Black, Latino, Asian, Indigenous and other people of color. By placing racial equity at the center of our DEI initiative, we believe we will create a framework that will allow us to successfully expand to other areas of inequity in the future.

Throughout this country's history, the hallmarks of American democracy – opportunity, freedom, and prosperity – have been largely reserved for white people through the intentional exclusion and oppression of people of color. The deep racial and ethnic inequities that exist today are a direct result of structural racism: the historical and contemporary policies, practices, and norms that create and maintain white supremacy.

In spite of its reputation as a mainstay of progressive thinking and its standing as one of the healthiest, wealthiest, and best educated counties in California, recently published documentation shows that on key community metrics Marin is rated the most racially inequitable county in the state.

Race is one of the most reliable predictors of life outcomes across several areas, including life expectancy, academic achievement, income, wealth, physical and mental

health, and maternal mortality. As shown in recent analyses, if socioeconomic difference explained these inequities, then controlling for socioeconomic status would eliminate them. But it does not. This means that supporting social change requires intentionally and proactively thinking about race and racial equity.

At MCF, we are committed to building a race equity culture internally that will guide our work externally. To succeed, we must simultaneously think long term and act today. We must learn from, and involve, people who represent different races and different identities.

Internally, this means supporting bold and courageous ideas to enact transformative change. It means ensuring our staff, leadership, boards and committees are racially diverse, cultivating cultural awareness to invite and hear multiple perspectives; fostering a welcoming and supportive atmosphere; and confirming that our partners, including vendors and consultants, reflect the beneficiaries we seek to serve.

Externally, we will reach out to an increasingly racially diverse community when we engage prospective clients, advocate for inclusion in public education efforts, counter racial discrimination in our community through careful examination of our grantmaking practices, and invite many voices to the table so we can collaborate to respond effectively to community needs.

In the Foundation's discretionary grantmaking, particularly via the Buck Family Fund, we will build on the long-standing guiding principle of "equity of opportunity." In our advisory role, while continuing to offer personalized service that honors donor intent, we will support our clients in learning about opportunities that focus on race equity, social justice and full inclusion.

We'll look to establish a common vocabulary, protocols and measurement tools for evaluating policies, processes, programs, and practices for racial equity, and ultimately make recommendations which aim to create more equitable outcomes. We will hold ourselves accountable in achieving our goals.

When we act in these ways, we enhance our work, spur innovation, expand our understanding of community issues, encourage team building, benefit from different perspectives, and provide leadership in our community. It also helps us gain skills and levels of understanding that can impact our lives outside of MCF.

Our commitment to change goes beyond merely recognizing the change around us, to actively being part of it. Doing this—as an institution and in the workplace we strive to create—is fundamental to our success. Our DEI commitment is one critical and powerful tool that we will leverage to achieve our mission.