

Definitions

Anti-racism: “An action-oriented strategy for institutional, systemic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression” that perpetuate unequal social outcomes that are detrimental to the social, political, and economic health of municipalities and communities. (*Critical Perspectives in Anti Racism. George j. Sefa Dei 1996*)

De-colonization: A social and political process aimed at resisting and undoing the multi-faceted impacts of colonization and re-establishing strong contemporary Indigenous Peoples, Nations and institutions based on traditional values, philosophies and knowledge systems (*National Inquiry into MMIWG, 2019*).

Diversity: Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. The definition also includes diversity of thought: ideas, perspectives, and values. It is recognized that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Equity: “Equity is treating everyone fairly by acknowledging their unique situation and addressing systemic barriers. The aim of equity is to ensure that everyone has access to equal results and benefits. Considering a situation from the perspective of those who risk exclusion is a key step in promoting equity.” (*City of Ottawa, Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook.*)

Equity can be achieved when fairness is increased and improved within organizations’ and governmental systems’ processes, procedures and allotment of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an ongoing understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Equity-deserving groups: The term “equity-deserving groups,” is used instead of “equity-seeking groups”. As explained by Professor Tettey “... those on the margins of our community, [...], deserve equity as a right. They should not be given the burden of seeking it and they should not be made to feel that they get it as a privilege from the generosity of those who have the power to give it, and hence the power to take it back” (University of Toronto, 2019)

Equity deserving groups may include, but are not limited to:

- Persons with disabilities;
- Indigenous peoples;
- Racialized groups;
- LGBTQI2S+ communities;

- Immigrants, refugees, newcomers, and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- Low income persons/households;
- Youth;
- Seniors;
- Persons living with mental illness;
- Victims of violence; and
- Persons with low literacy.

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or implicit bias helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

Privilege: The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context. (*City of Ottawa, Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook*)

Racism: Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

Systemic Barriers: "Obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from full participation and benefits in social, economic and political life. They may be hidden or unintentional but built into the way society works. Our assumptions and stereotypes, along with policies, practices and procedures, reinforce them." (*City of Ottawa, Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook*)