



We Value: **Diversity** **Equity** **Inclusion** **Respect** **Social Justice**

# The Regional Diversity Roundtable

## Centering Diversity for Workplace Equity: Inclusion a Key to Resilient Systems Post Conference Reference Sheet - June 2021

The following document provides an overview regarding systems resilience, and various means of further understanding and working beyond adversity. It is our hope that during the conference we all were challenged to critically examine workplace inequities, question the norms, provide strategies, and inspire all to take action for the creation of inclusive systems. In our continued effort to institutionalize diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) we have put together this follow-up reference sheet for further learning.

These resources expand on what the three presenters discussed with a focus on the overarching themes of the conference. They provide further explanations regarding how to instill a stronger and more resilient system within our own respective organizations. Through this sheet, we hope to provide you with a means of creating a more resilient environment, however it should be stated that not all methods will work equally for all environments.

### Fostering an Inclusive Workplace

An inclusive workplace fosters a sense of community in the workforce, and creates a safer environment for marginalized workers. To create an inclusive workplace, there are several recommendations. A couple of examples are listed below:

#### a. **Honouring religious diversity and holidays:**

Various traditional Christian holidays are celebrated and allocated/approved for time off in the workplace as regular practice and supported by the systems, it would make sense to offer accommodations in an open and transparent manner to practitioners of diverse faith traditions. The same approval, access, benefits to other religious festivities



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should be the norm. Beyond time off, religious inclusion in the workplace is also beneficial (smudging, kwanza, menorah, meditation, etc.) to supporting inclusion objectives.

### b. **Fostering a culture of communication:**

Creating a culture where open communication is not only valued, but established as normal can help mitigate social issues marginalized people face in the workplace. As many marginalized individuals do not feel safe or comfortable addressing systems and processes of inequalities within their own workplace, we must understand these workers are in environments where they feel either targetted or silenced. Efforts of inclusive culture in the workplace needs ongoing and purposeful interventions.

### **Inclusion for Systems Change, Support, and Outcomes**

#### → **Adopting an anti-oppressive framework:**



- ◆ The Anti-oppressive framework asks us to dive deeper in examining power dynamics and structures, and openly challenge the concept of “rightness” of the dominant group. The dominant class is often seen to represent the norm within society. Those who fall outside of the dominant class become invisible as their perspectives and ways of being and living are dismissed or not even considered. They may find themselves misunderstood, unrepresented, isolated, completely silenced, or unsafe. (Dalrymple & Burke, 1995).



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## → Being aware of biases:

- ◆ Bias is unconsciously reproducing inequities and injustices like the “isms”. As the terms imply, sometimes we are aware of our biases and sometimes we aren't. Biases are largely learned thoughts, feelings, and actions from society about one thing, a person or group of people that lead societal acceptance of inequity, inequality, hate, and injustices

## → How can inclusion change systems?

- ◆ Offer diverse population equitable importance in a workplace
- ◆ No to tokenism
- ◆ Ensure senior management is reflective of the demographic
- ◆ Recognition of privilege and its impact on decision making and growth opportunities
- ◆ Conscious interruptions of inequities

## How does advocacy for these groups benefit everyone?

- Unifies environments (communities, workplaces etc.) - culture of accountability - calling out vs calling in, policies
- Creates unexpected allies
- Supports reflection and recognition of power, privilege, and oppression within communities and society at large

## System Resilience

Systems reliance is the ability of a system to go through some form of adversity successfully. There are various ways one can tangibly measure a system's resilience, but primarily measurements are divided into three categories: stability, ability to adapt,



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as well as readiness. The list below describes examples of measurement followed by potential application in regards to the aforementioned categories.

## Potential ways to Measure System Resilience

### → Measurement of Stability

- ◆ Amounts of points leading to failure, and significance of the failure
  - What external and internal factors does the system depend upon? (legal, manpower, resources, etc.)?
  - Do single points of failure come with obvious warning signs, and who specifically is harmed by the single point?
- ◆ Resistance Ability
  - Does the system have a history of being unaffected by certain types of stresses?
  - Are there specific conditions that the system has traditionally been more vulnerable to?
- ◆ Balance
  - Is the system skewed to a particular strength or avoid a particular weakness?
  - Does the system handle or deal well with a variety of challenges?

### → Measurement of Adaptiveness of systems

- ◆ Restrictive Responses due to Limited Resources
  - How can the task at hand be accomplished through various other methods, with various other resources?
- ◆ Ability to Collaborate



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Is management aware of various skills and teams they can put together, how can this happen efficiently and effectively?  
Do personnel have the time and resources to effectively collaborate?

- ❖ Connectivity/Ability to Exchange Resources
  - ◆ When, and how are resources exchanged?
  - ◆ Are there known and maintained pathways for connectivity?

- ◆ Learning Capacity
  - Is there an overarching culture of learning?
  - Are there adaptive training programs in place?

## → Measurement of Readiness

- ◆ Situational Awareness
  - Is information or resources delivered in a time sensitive and clear way?
  - How comprehensive is information recorded about the system?  
How well known are the gaps in information?
- ◆ Simplicity
  - How is system understanding transferred?
  - To what level is a general understanding of the system communicated and maintained
- ◆ Preparedness
  - Are there any response plans installed? Formal or informal.



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- How accessible and maintained are these plans?
- Are they readily implementable?
  
- ◆ **Autonomy**
  - Is the hierarchy of the structure well-known?
  - Can autonomy be delegated on a situational platform, can it be bypassed?
  
- ◆ **Enabling traits**
  - Are there strong leaders within the system?
  - Are leaders agreed upon and chosen in a method deemed fair for the whole organization

Using these tips, organizations can maintain or return to a baseline level of addressing system resilience. The three categories: stability, ability to adapt, and readiness have various subsections that support the building of a more resilient framework, applicable to any organization.

### References to learn more!

Systems Resilience: [Resilience Attributes of Social-Ecological Systems: Framing Metrics for Management](#).

Kerner DA, Thomas JS. Resilience Attributes of Social-Ecological Systems: Framing Metrics for Management. *Resources*. 2014; 3(4):672-702. [Resilience Attributes of Social-Ecological Systems: Framing Metrics for Management](#)

Dalrymple & Burke, (1995) Marigold Capital  
<https://marigold-capital.com/marigold-capital-anti-oppression-framework/>