

# 2019-2020 Race and Social Justice Initiative Report

Office of Labor Standards





# Race & Social Justice

Overview  
COVID-19 Response  
Change Team

Budget Transparency & Participation  
COEF & Enforcement Partnership  
Racial Equity Toolkits (RETs)



**Seattle**  
Office of Labor Standards

## Workplace Equity

Community | Business | Race & Social Justice

Our mission is to advance labor standards through thoughtful community and business engagement, strategic enforcement and innovative policy development, with a commitment to race and social justice.

(206) 256-5297

[laborstandards@seattle.gov](mailto:laborstandards@seattle.gov)

[seattle.gov/laborstandards](http://seattle.gov/laborstandards)



# Centering Race Equity in COVID-19 Response

- Meeting emerging needs through policy changes and additions
- Increase access to labor standards information
- Mitigating burden on community-based organizations
- Meaningful enforcement efforts
- Partnerships and equitable access to COVID-19 resources



# Change Team

---

**Our mission** is to eradicate institutionalized implicit and explicit racism within the Office of Labor Standards.

## 2019 Highlights

- Trainings
- Internal Advancement for Admin and BIPOC staff
- Racial Equity Toolkits

## 2020 highlights

- We are still here!
- “Reimagining” Change Team’s role at OLS
- Budget Transparency

# Budget Transparency & Participation

---

1

In August 2020 Change Team requested that we work to build a more transparent and inclusive budgeting process.

3

Built a proposed plan for more frequent information sharing and processes for staff to forward budget proposals.

Creation of background (“primers”) on budget processes and proposals.

Rolled out the plan to Change Team and all-staff prior to implementation.

2

Director and Finance Director researched best practices and lessons learned from other departments to consider and evaluate in OLS processes.

4

Management Team committed to piloting these new processes in 2021, with the intention to evaluate success and adjust if needed.

# COEF & Enforcement Partnership

## Goals

Accountable, trusted partnerships

Elimination of barriers to reporting violations

Accurate, helpful information to and from OLS and community

2015 – 2019 Challenges	2020 Solutions and Current Practice
When COEF partners referred a worker to OLS, worker needed to do another intake with OLS investigator.	Developed a Community Intake Referral form that COEF partners can use and send to OLS when referring a worker.
OLS website information on investigation process was full of legal language and hard to understand.	Created a 2-page graphic handout on OLS Investigation with COEF partners.
An uneven understanding of OLS Investigation process amongst COEF partners and difficulty keeping up with changing practices at OLS.	Every quarter COEF partners receive a 1on1 Training from E-team members on enforcement priorities, investigation process, labor laws and industry violation trends.





# Racial Equity Toolkits

---

Accessibility Guide

Community Outreach & Education Fund  
Request for Proposals

Business Outreach & Education Fund  
Request for Proposals

Demographic Data Collection

In Remembrance:  
Block Print by our colleague and friend  
**Sarah Leyrer**



# Accessibility Guide Toolkit

---

## Goal Statement

To ensure that all Seattle workers and employers can easily access and understand outward facing OLS materials by creating a set of principles and tools to guide OLS staff in creating materials, presentations, and trainings.

## Engagement

- All OLS staff members, comprised of diverse intersectional identities and lived experiences
- Distributed an anonymous survey and provided for 1x1 interview to allow for honest and critical feedback, particularly from BIPOC, immigrant and refugee, and ESL staff.

## Issues Identified

- Need for a training and implementation plan to ensure use of the guide
- Community feedback should be tracked and made available for future reference

# Recommendations

---

## Create a training and implementation plan

All staff have received training and the guide is used office-wide for outward facing materials. New staff are introduced to the guide as part of the formal onboarding process.

## Track community feedback

A linked spreadsheet was added to the guide to document community feedback and resulting updates.

## Share with other departments

The guide was shared with all COS language access liaisons to promote the use of plain language in English materials, a key component of quality translations.

# Demographic Data Toolkit

---

## Goal Statement

Through thoughtful demographic data collection and analysis about the communities that we serve, we can better assess and identify gaps in our efforts to improve the lives of BIPOC workers.

## Engagement

- Sought feedback on the new survey from Community Outreach and Education Fund partners
- Consulted with other city departments who collect similar survey; including: SDOT, City Demographer and DARE participants.

## Issues Identified & Addressed:

- Survey length was lengthy, which reduced response
- The potential for an incomplete or low response rate left gaps in data
- Challenges with prejudices or discomfort within different communities about answering question of a culturally or politically sensitive nature.
- Concern that that the survey and translations may not adequately preface or explain the reason, context, or nature of the question being asked.

# Recommendations

## Improve Response Rate

Higher touch efforts  
to increase use

## Reducing Respondent Burden

Shortened survey and average  
time taken to complete survey.

## Improve Survey Design

Included visual aide and catchy  
email subject line.  
Reorganized order of the  
questions.

## Accessibility

Simplified language  
Translations

## External Resources

Using external databases to  
have global sense of  
demographics



# COEF RFP Toolkit

---

## Goal Statement

To ensure that the Community Outreach and Education Fund Request for Proposal (RFP) guidelines and process are easy to understand and accessible for community organizations, in particular those led by, staff by, and/or serving BIPOC community members.

## Engagement

- 16 community organizations in 1on1 conversations
- Conducted a survey at the conclusion of RFP application process for feedback

## Issues Identified

- Repetitive and convoluted language
- A complicated application process that favored seasoned grant writing skills
- Inequitable opportunity for applicants with stronger oral communication and English language skills

# Recommendations

---

## Declutter and simplify Language

Examined RFP language and eliminated redundancies, legal jargon and complex sentences which significantly reduced its length.

## Create accessible application process that does not favor seasoned grant writing skills

Replaced broad 20-page narrative request with simple language application templates.

## Accommodate oral communication and in-language skills

Provided opportunity for applicants to apply with an oral presentation that provided simultaneous interpretation.



# BOEF RFP Toolkit

---

## Goal Statement

To use the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) process to equitably streamline the Business Outreach and Education Fund (BOEF) Request for Proposals (RFP)

### Narrowing the RFP scope:

- Simplify scope of work outcomes with an RSJI lens (i.e., what work do we want vendors to perform);
- Performance measures (Qualitative & Quantitative);
- Examine using professional service providers to promote voluntary compliance; and consider multiple RFPs with different scopes (e.g., a contract only for technical assistance, or a contract only for door-to-door outreach)

### Engagement

- Engaged 12 existing and former BOEF partners and ethnic Chambers through discussion and written survey

## Issues Identified

- BIPOC organizations had fewer resources to complete the BOEF RFP application; including smaller staffing, language barriers and less knowledge of grant written processes.
- Simplify the RFP application and make the process more equitable to everyone.

# Recommendations

---

**Simplify the RFP application,  
scope and process**

**Include professional service  
provision in the scope of  
work, like accounting,  
payroll, and legal services**

**Consider multiple RFPs with  
different scopes**



# Preview of 2021

---



RSJI Discussion Group



Continuation of Data  
Demographic Toolkit



Staff Trainings



Immigrant Rights  
Toolkit



Settlement Check  
Distribution Toolkit

Thank you!

