



KUOW'S RACIAL EQUITY JOURNEY

SUMMER 2020



“Good people are not those who lack flaws, the brave are not those who feel no fear, and the generous are not those who never feel selfish. Extraordinary people are not extraordinary because they are invulnerable to unconscious biases. They are extraordinary because they choose to do something about it.”

Shankar Vedantam, Host, Hidden Brain



CORE BELIEF

A BETTER FUTURE BEGINS WITH AN INFORMED PUBLIC.

MISSION

TO CREATE AND SERVE A MORE INFORMED PUBLIC.

VISION

BROADEN CONVERSATIONS. DEEPEN UNDERSTANDINGS.

KUOW VALUES

EARN TRUST

BE CURIOUS

HAVE COURAGE

VALUE DIVERSITY

ACT IN SERVICE

DEMAND INTEGRITY

ALWAYS GROW

COLLABORATE

"BE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE. SEEK A MULTITUDE OF PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES. PRACTICE FAIRNESS. IT IS IMPERATIVE TO OUR JOURNALISM, THE DECISIONS WE MAKE AND THE CULTURE WE CREATE."



STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

The seeds of our racial equity efforts were sown in our five year strategic business plan (published summer 2016).



Establish **vastly improved methods for attracting and hiring diverse staff members** by evaluating leading diversity practices from throughout the country and across industries.



As a public institution, **we must serve the entire community**, not just a subset.



... **attracting a diverse audience will require a diversity of voices** ... KUOW needs to reflect the diverse community in which we live.



The 'story of us' has to be the story of *all* of us to achieve relevance, resonance, and **reach into populations heretofore un-served**.

“KUOW has embraced the reality that Racial Equity in the workplace goes WAY beyond ‘a plan’. It is a comprehensive process that requires transformation in ways of thinking, ways of doing, and accountability.”

Caryn Mathes, KUOW President and General Manager

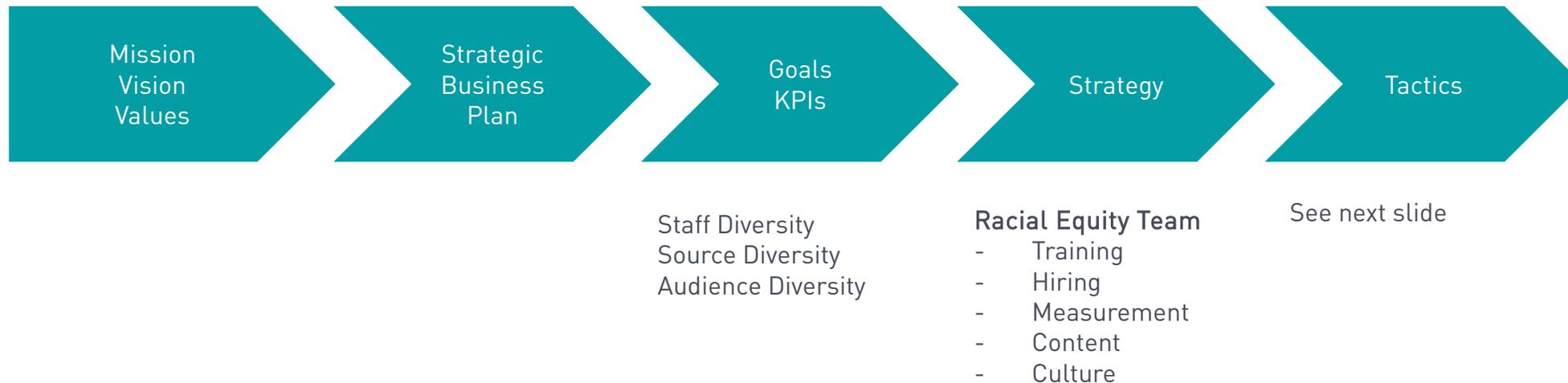


OUR GOAL

We aim to dismantle dominant culture that normalizes systemic racism and transform KUOW into a multi-cultural organization that is anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equitable, safe, welcoming and supportive to all.

ESTABLISHING A RACIAL EQUITY TEAM

KUOW's **Racial Equity Team** is an advisory body to the Office of the President and General Manager. The Team assists the President/GM in identifying the current state of KUOW's racial equity, diversity and inclusiveness practices through research and bench marking, and gives recommendations to KUOW's Executive Leadership.



KEY RACIAL EQUITY INITIATIVES



TRAINING

Promote learning and skill development for racial equity.



HIRING

Recruit, nurture, and retain a diverse workforce at all levels.



MEASUREMENT

Assess quantitative progress towards racial equity and diversity.



CONTENT

Raise awareness of perceived trends and blind spots in KUOW sources and voices.



CULTURE

Cultivate a work culture that values equity and diversity. Develop processes for KUOW staff to surface concerns and opportunities.



TRAINING

Promote learning and skill development for racial equity.

OUTCOMES

- The leadership of the Racial Equity Team (RET) identifies best practices, attends conferences, etc. and brings this knowledge back to KUOW leadership. The Racial Equity Team is facilitated by an outside consultant who is on our payroll.
- Our racial equity consultant assisted in the development of a Racial Equity Toolkit to operationalize racially-equitable decision making processes throughout the station.
- All staff and board members complete our *Leading with a Racial Equity Lens for Organizational Transformation* training, with more continuous trainings offered throughout the year including sessions on implicit bias, managing for a diverse workplace and more.
- We've instituted a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) speaker and training series for the general staff, along with specific speakers for the news department.



HIRING

Recruit, nurture, and retain a diverse workforce at all levels.

OUTCOMES

- In 24 months we've improved overall staff diversity by 77% and Content staff diversity by 67% over baseline.
- We've developed a hiring managers' toolkit which standardizes our recruitment-to-hiring process – beginning with screening our job descriptions and job postings for language bias and exclusionary requirements, and standardizing interviewing protocols to eliminate bias. We also updated our careers page to add a statement on our commitment to racial equity.
- KUOW participates in the Virtual Career Fairs and the Public Radio Village national recruitment platforms. In addition, we are building our own diversity networks and mailing lists for recruitment. Hiring managers are encouraged to also utilize professional networks for recruitment referrals.
- We've made funds available to utilize paid posting sites to improve reach into diverse populations.



MEASUREMENT

Assess quantitative progress towards racial equity and diversity.

OUTCOMES

- We've added diversity of news sources as a goal on our strategic dashboard. As of FY20, sourcing diversity in our newsroom approached 40%.
- We're launching a yearly Transforming Organization Culture Assessment (TOCA) to establish a baseline and monitor trends in staff perception of our workplace culture.
- The President and General Manager has staff diversity, Gallup survey results, TinyPulse survey results and TOCA results as personal performance goals.
- Every month, the leadership team must report on their progress toward racial equity
- We launched an effort to analyze all our internal documents and public-facing collateral to ensure alignment with our racial equity goals.



CONTENT

Raise awareness of perceived trends and blind spots in KUOW sources and voices.

OUTCOMES

- We track diversity of sourcing (who we interview) to reflect our commitment to put racial equity and diversity at the forefront of everything we do. We set annual goals for percentage of sources that are people of color for every project. Discrete tracking of different production units heightens accountability.
- Our News Director piloted a Fellowship in KUOW's newsroom to recruit and train diverse next-gen journalists.
- We developed a Narrative Screening document with foundational questions to help us decenter whiteness in our coverage and contribute to shifting the narrative around race and racism.
- Our events and community engagement teams have set benchmarks for diverse panels and a compensation structure for contributors, with the goal that people of color are authentically supported and amplified in our events and community activities.
- KUOW has regularly hosted Next Generation Radio training projects and has recruited and hired graduates of the program.
- We partnered with independent BIPOC journalists to enhance our perspectives of the Black Lives Matter protests.
- Newsroom leadership has begun a review of our Ethics Policy to take a critical look at our policies around “objectivity” and “fairness.”



CULTURE

Cultivate a work culture that values equity and diversity. Develop processes for KUOW staff to surface concerns and opportunities.

OUTCOMES

- The “Culture Subcommittee” of KUOW’s Racial Equity Team (RET) has been instrumental in helping management institute things like a Wellness Room/Prayer Room for staff. They have also instituted station-wide activity days, such as a special gathering for LatinX Heritage Month.
- The RET leadership has also pressed on LGBTQ+ issues such as prioritizing building a gender-neutral, single occupancy restroom on station premises. KUOW leadership has committed to this restroom as the next-in-line capital project once we accumulate funds.
- We do demographic breakouts of our bi-annual Gallup Survey results to assess if racial groups are experiencing KUOW’s workplace culture differently.
- We are adding racial equity-focused questions to TinyPulse, a tool we use to send frequent micro-surveys to staff.
- The RET has piloted a “buddy program” as part of onboarding new employees, especially those from traditionally marginalized communities to help them acclimate to Seattle and “find community” and connectedness for themselves.
- Senior Leadership and Board Members have done research on how to attend to the trauma of Black journalists engaged in personally painful coverage and have shared resources as needed.
- A staff member started an Anti-Racist Book Club open to all staff members, with a Slack channel to share recommended resources.



BEYOND THE STATION WALLS

- Our racial equity lens extends to vendor and contractor selection.
- KUOW has worked to recruit a diverse board committed to equity and inclusion. Our governing board is 50 percent women, and 42 percent are persons of color.
- KUOW's community engagement team is proactive in collaborating with organizations that center racial equity in their mission.
- We're making ourselves available for discussions with groups or individuals who have called out perceived racial bias in our coverage.



OUR ULTIMATE ASPIRATION: SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE

Racial equity work is essential to our mission and achieving the goals we set in our strategic business plan, including “challenging ... audiences towards insightful and critical thinking about the world and keeping citizens informed, engaged and connected.”

Our goal is to use our platform to contribute to shifting the narrative around race and racism, and we will be hosting trainings with staff in support of this ultimate aspiration.



NEXT STEPS

Get in touch with KUOW to learn more about our racial equity work and share resources.

FIETA ROBINSON

CHAIR KUOW RACIAL EQUITY TEAM

FDROBINSON@KUOW.ORG