Reviewing Information-Gathering Topics

*This worksheet was created by The Denver Foundation's Inclusiveness Project
(www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org) to support organizations doing inclusiveness work.*

Users are encouraged to customize the worksheet to meet the needs of their respective organizations.

The information-gathering topics/questions on the following pages may be presented in a variety of formats (e.g., surveys, interviews, and focus groups). The structure of the topics/questions may need to be slightly altered for any particular format. All questions should be narrowed and adapted for your organization's purposes and specific needs.

Instructions
- Review the following information-gathering topics and questions.
- Based on your ranking in **Selecting Facts About Your Organization** of topics/categories as "high priority" or "low priority," refer to the topics and associated questions in this exercise that correspond to your organization's high priorities.
- Choose the questions in each high priority topic that will be useful for your organization.

In **Putting It All Together** you will match topics of interest to particular formats (e.g., surveys, interviews, or focus groups), to stakeholder groups (e.g., clients, staff, donors, etc.), and to people who will be responsible for implementing each information-gathering activity.

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Mission and Organizational Values is of (check one):

Topic 1: Mission and Organizational Values
___ **low priority**
___ **high priority**

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
How, if at all, does the organization's mission statement address inclusiveness?

How does the mission of the organization impact communities of color?

How do communities of color respond to the mission of the organization?

How, if at all, does the organization's values statement address inclusiveness?
In what ways are the values that have been adopted by the organization consistent
with the values that are practiced in relation to inclusiveness?

How might the mission statement be changed to improve inclusiveness?

How can the organizational values be expanded or modified to improve
inclusiveness? What would the new values be?

**As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts
About Your Organization, the category board of directors is of (check one):**

Topic 2: Board of Directors
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:

What is the organization's process for recruiting people of color to serve as directors? Is the process formal or informal? How effective is the process?

Does the organization have a written affirmative action plan or equal employment opportunity policy? If yes, what effect does the plan have on recruiting board members?

How is the current level of diversity on the board different from or similar to its level of diversity in past years? Is the board more or less diverse than in the past? When and why did changes occur?

What is the board's opinion about requiring directors to support the organization financially? Has this opinion, or could this opinion, influence the organization's ability to recruit and retain people of color as directors?

What do people of color report about their experience serving as members of the board of directors? What has been their comfort level in serving the organization in this capacity?

How does the tenure of people of color compare with the tenure of white people serving on the board of directors?

To what extent does the board of directors consider issues relating to race and ethnicity when it sets policies and makes decisions for the organization?

What formal and informal mechanisms are in place to guarantee that the operating policies of the organization are sensitive to issues regarding race and ethnicity?

Does the organization have any advisory committees to provide feedback and guidance about programs, services, or initiatives to reach people of color? If yes, describe the impact that the advisory committees have on inclusiveness practices.

Has the board recently undergone inclusiveness and/or diversity training or education? If yes, describe the effect training had on inclusiveness practices?

What could the board of directors do differently to become more inclusive?

What could the board of directors do differently to address the needs of communities of color?

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Personnel is of (check one):

Topic 3: Personnel
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
Does the organization have a formal or informal process for recruiting people of color for the staff? If yes, is it effective? Please explain.

Are explicit or strategic efforts made to hire staff who possess knowledge of and experience with diverse communities/issues? Please describe.

Describe how well the organization has been able to retain staff members of color, considering successes and challenges related to retention. Are there differences in the organization's past success in retaining white staff members versus staff members of color?

How frequently does the staff openly discuss benefits and barriers to working across cultures?

To what extent does the organization provide training to help staff work with people from different backgrounds? Please describe.

What improvements could be made, if any, in staffing and/or staff training to help the organization work with different communities of color?

What is the organization's history in recruiting and promoting people of color and white people with similar professional backgrounds and skills equally?

To what extent does the human resources department take an active role in recruiting people of color? Please describe.

Does the organization make inclusiveness trainers/consultants available to help staff understand and operate more effectively within a diverse cultural context? If yes, please describe.

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Organizational Culture is of (check one):

Topic 4: Organizational Culture
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
How and to what extent does the organization welcome and accept all employees regardless of race or ethnicity?

How does the organization ensure that all staff members are given equal opportunity to voice their concerns and comments about the work environment without repercussions?

How does the organization welcome discussion pertaining to race and ethnicity in the workplace and/or in the organization's work?

How does the organization respond to concerns and comments about the work environment in a respectful and timely manner?

To what extent are ethnic/racial jokes in the workplace tolerated?

To what extent does the organization demonstrate flexibility with staff who have limited English language skills?

How does the workplace environment reflect appreciation for diverse racial/ethnic groups?

What are three things that you value and would <u>not</u> change about the organizational culture?

What three things would you change about the organizational culture? Why?

To what extent are people of diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds comfortable working at the organization?

Are there any unspoken rules or assumptions that may affect the work environment related to race and ethnicity?

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Volunteers and Helpers is of (check one):

Topic 5: Volunteers and Helpers
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
Are efforts made to have volunteers and helpers reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the community the organization serves? Please describe.

Are training programs offered for volunteers and helpers to help them work more effectively with communities of color? If yes, please describe.

How are clients, especially clients of color, encouraged to volunteer for the organization?

Does the organization actively recruit community members of color to serve on program-related committees? If yes, please describe.

To what extent do volunteers and helpers of color feel valued within the organization?

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Programs and Constituents is of (check one):

Topic 6: Programs and Constituents
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
How is the community reflected in the clients who regularly use the services of the organization?

What kinds of efforts are made to have clients reflect the racial/ethnic diversity of the broader community surrounding the organization or which the organization serves? Please describe.

In what ways does the organization have knowledge about the social service, educational, health, or other relevant needs within communities of color in your service area?

In what ways does the organization generally have knowledge about the common beliefs, customs, norms, and/or values of communities of color in your service area? Please describe.

Does the organization specifically consider race/ethnicity and/or culture in designing and implementing programs? Please describe.

Describe how the organization determines whether or not potential constituents within the community are being served or reached. Are these methods effective?

List the programs/services the organization provides that meet the community's needs and interests. How do you know they meet the community's needs and interests? Do these programs/services meet the needs of some sections of the community better than other sections?

In what ways does the organization's location and facilities tend to encourage or discourage use of services and facilities by people of color? Please explain.

Does the organization make services available in geographic locations that are convenient and accessible to communities of color? Please describe.

Is there anything that the organization does to hinder providing services to people of color? Please explain.

Does the organization review practices, procedures, and services to determine their relevance to communities of color? How often? Please describe.

Is information on the ethnicity or culture of clients recorded in the organization's information management system? Please describe.

To what extent does the organization have the capacity to serve non-English-speaking constituents? What languages do staff members and volunteers speak fluently?

Does the organization translate materials into languages that reflect diverse communities in your service area? Please describe, including the languages used.

How well does the organization serve people of color? Please explain.

What specific program policies changes would improve services provided to communities of color?

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Marketing and Community Relations is of (check one):

Topic 7: Marketing and Community Relations
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
How does the organization gather information from communities of color regarding the organization, its services, and the needs of these communities? How effective and comprehensive are these methods for soliciting information?

Does the organization solicit input from individuals or organizations that can provide information regarding culturally related issues? Please describe.

Does the organization reach out to any of the following types of groups?
- Religious groups with ties to communities of color
- Ethnic media sources
- Organizations that serve people of color
- Cultural or Native American tribal organizations
- Businesses serving communities of color
- Fraternal organizations in communities of color
- Other _____
If YES to any of the above, please describe.

Does the organization participate in cultural, political, religious, or other events or festivals sponsored by or designed for communities of color? Please describe.

Are people of color depicted in organizational materials? If yes, please describe.

How is the organization viewed by communities of color?

What is the organization's community reputation in regards to inclusiveness and/or communities of color? To what extent is this reputation based on the organization's communications, activities, and/or policies?

What barriers or problems prevent the organization from successfully communicating and working with communities of color?

What could be done through community and public relations, outreach, and/or communications/marketing to improve the organization's ability to work with communities of color?

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Fundraising and Membership is of (check one):

Topic 8: Fundraising and Membership
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
Describe the racial/ethnic breakdown of the organization's donor base.

What is the prevailing attitude internally regarding the role of people of color in providing financial support to the organization?

To what extent do fundraising materials and marketing strategies reflect the needs and interests of all racial/ethnic groups? Please explain.

What is the level of participation and representation of people of color at fundraising events? Please explain.

To what extent and in what capacity are people of color involved with designing fundraising events? Please explain.

As of _____ (today's date) and based on your work in Selecting Facts About Your Organization, the category Vendors and Contractors is of (check one):

Topic 9: Vendors and Contractors
___ low priority
___ high priority

If a high priority, choose questions (from the following) to include in your information gathering:
Describe the racial/ethnic breakdown of the organization's vendors and contractors.

How does the organization solicit bids from vendors/contractors? Please describe.

Name of Organization _____

Date Worksheet Completed _____