



2023 EQUITY IN BUDGETING PLAYBOOK

**PREPARED BY THE CHANGE TEAM'S
BUDGET & EQUITY COMMITTEE**

OVERVIEW OF PLAYBOOK

The Port of Seattle's **Equity in Budgeting Playbook (EBP)** is designed to integrate explicit considerations of racial equity into decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and ultimately, Departmental budgets. Using this tool will help you develop strategies and actions that reduce inequities, with a particular focus on racial inequities, and improve success for everyone.

The EBP is both a product and a process. It includes a set of questions to guide Port Departments in assessing how budget requests benefit and/or burden internal and external communities, especially communities of color and low-income communities. Use of the EBP aligns with the Port's Century Agenda Goal 5, the Executive Director Priorities, our R.A.I.S.E values, and the recommendations of the 2021 Equity Assessment.

In 2021, the Port's first [Budgeting with Equity Tool](#) was incorporated into the 2022 departmental budgeting process. This playbook is building off that original tool and will be used to inform 2023 budgets.

We Lead with Racial Equity

The Port defines **equity** as the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of communities historically oppressed. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness with the procedures and processes of institutions or systems and a fair, intentional distribution of resources.

Racial equity is when race is no longer a predictor of life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved. We lead our equity work with a focus on racial equity because racial oppression is so foundational to our country's origins — from mass exploitation of Native American populations to the enslavement of Black Americans — and it forms the language, logic, and structure for all types of discrimination. Additionally, leading with racial equity allows us to have a specific, strategic focus that we can use to develop structural approaches for all forms of oppression.

While we lead this work with a focus on racial equity, we know that racism is not the only inequity we need to address. We value an intersectional approach to our efforts to advance equity. **Intersectionality** is a framework for understanding how aspects of a person's or group's social identities combine to create varying degrees of advantage and disadvantage. The Port's [Women of Color Assessment](#) is an example of an intersectional approach to advancing equity, understanding the experiences, disadvantages, and barriers that are created at the intersection of race and gender.

How Does Equity Relate to Budgeting?

Our budget is both a fiscal and moral document. It reflects our priorities and values — both to the communities we serve and to ourselves.

The mission of the Port of Seattle is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce, and job creation in an equitable, accountable, and

environmentally responsible manner. The Port's values are respect, anti-racism and equity, integrity, stewardship, and excellence (aka R.A.I.S.E.). And, the Port has a Century Agenda goal, among other goals, of becoming a "model of equity, diversity, and inclusion." **Our budget should reflect all of this.**

Additionally, we know bias and oppression are embedded in our society, systems, and our organization. If we fail to acknowledge this and thus fail to account for it, we perpetuate it, even if it is unintentional. To advance equity, we must consistently and consciously embed an equity lens into our processes and work. As a result, equity must be centered in our budgeting process and creation.

BEST PRACTICES FOR EQUITY IN BUDGETING

Apply an intersectional, racial equity lens: Racial inequities are not random, natural, or inevitable. It is essential to use a racial equity lens when changing programs, plans, and policies that may perpetuate inequities, and when developing new programs, plans, and policies. "An equity lens" simply refers to the process conducted, and the questions asked, to help us consider and account for the impact of the decisions we make, especially the impact on marginalized communities. By using an intersectional, racial equity lens, we will gain awareness on how budgetary decisions may unfairly burden or benefit different communities, particularly communities of color. This also means that we consider how budgetary decisions may unfairly benefit communities at the intersection of race (e.g., women of color; LGBTQIA+ people of color; represented workers of color; etc.). The EBP is an equity lens that will help departments reflect on issues of equity through a process of answering specific, targeted questions.

Be data driven: What data is driving your department's budget decisions? What does this data tell us about how communities of color are faring, and how will we measure progress in these communities? If you are making decisions that may affect specific King County communities, use the [Equity Index](#) to help inform your decisions. If you are making decisions that affect Port employees, refer to the [Equity Assessment](#) and [Women of Color Assessment](#) to guide you. Additionally, consider your WMBE and Diversity in Contracting goals. What resources do you need to meet those goals? How can you reflect that commitment in your budget?

Be accountable: Every department has an important role in reducing inequities; from fairness in hiring and promotions, providing equitable services for communities throughout our region, facilitating community participation and engagement, or creating greater opportunities in contracting. Additionally, starting in 2023, every department is required to set annual equity goals (Equity Assessment Recommendation #31). Your budget is a statement of your values and priorities. Through it, make a departmental commitment to advance equity within our organization and in our region, and connect it to your department's equity goals.

Strengthen equitable community engagement efforts: To achieve meaningful and equitable results, departments need to work in partnership with the communities who are impacted by their work. These communities can be internal (i.e., Port staff) or external. It is essential to budget time and resources to partner with, or at the very least, incorporate the voice of, those most impacted by your departments work.

EQUITY IN BUDGETING INSTRUCTIONS

As your department is creating its budget for 2023, please answer the following questions. You don't have to record or submit your answers but use the answers to these questions to help in your budget creation process.

1. **Are there opportunities to seek feedback from your team in the development of your budget?**
2. **For departments interfacing with the community, are there opportunities to seek community feedback in the development of your budget? And, what would allow you to better engage with the community (i.e., funding, training, help, outreach, time)?**

You are required to submit responses to these questions in the Budget Review presentation as a part of your 2023 budget. Your answers should be thorough and should show clear evidence that these questions (and your answers to them) influenced the creation of your budget.

1. **How have you applied equity, diversity, and inclusion principles to your budgeting process?**
2. **Are there specific areas or programs your department has added to or redirected funding from existing baseline budget that would advance equity considerations? If yes, describe the specific area(s) and how much funding was redirected.**
3. **What steps have you taken to ensure that the proposed budget decision does not cause disproportionate harm to any groups in our community, or perpetuate existing racial inequities?**
4. **What has your engagement with the staff in your team told you about the factors that advance equity in your budget?**
5. **For departments interfacing with the community, describe how you have engaged with the underserved communities and/or communities of color in creating your budget?**

EXAMPLE RESPONSES

1. How have you applied equity, diversity, and inclusion principles to your budgeting process?

For capital and cleanup projects, we include public outreach and community engagement in our budgets and included a scope and budget for both internal and external public relations activities. This includes meetings, pamphlets, flyers, translation services, surveys, or other methods as appropriate and as approved by the project team (project management, external relations, etc). The Habitat Program budget includes funds for DIRT Corps to fund green job development in near-Port communities

2. Are there specific areas or programs your department has added to or redirected funding from existing baseline budget that would advance equity considerations? If yes, describe the specific area(s) and how much funding was redirected.

The Accessibility Customer Service Elevation Program (\$50,000) will fund key initiatives and programs such as the accessibility focused flyers & maps (Braille), Sunflower Lanyard promotion and improving the wheelchair experience at SEA. The growth in the use of Language Line necessitates a budget increase to maintain service. Formalizing the Quality Assurance program will enable the airport to examine specific experiences, such as reserving a wheelchair, and measure progress for improvement. The J.D. Power Operational Excellence program (\$40,000) brings a consumer-oriented lens to the airport experience; a wide range of customer feedback.

3. What steps have you taken to ensure that the proposed budget decision does not cause disproportionate harm to any groups in our community, or perpetuate existing racial inequities?

We consider the fundamental questions of who may be burdened and who may benefit in addition to involving community input, when possible, in shaping decisions. To ensure benefits are returned to impacted, underserved near-port communities, we established the Duwamish River Community Hub to support Green Jobs, Workforce and Small Business Development and Youth Empowerment.

4. What has your engagement with the staff in your team told you about the factors that advance equity in your budget?

Example 1: We are striving to infuse Equitable Engagement practices as the norm and this takes more time and dedicated focus to plan and execute than we traditionally have. In addition, collaboration includes a wider range of team members across the port. Relationships and a partnership mentality are keys in forging new ground – the South King County Community Investment Fund is one example of two departments, OEDI and External Relations, co-leading a program based on Equity principles serving near-Airport communities.

Example 2: PCS Represented and Non-Represented staff have requested the following:

1. Represented staff would like the ability to attend equity and development opportunities like the non-represented staff.
2. Non-represented staff would like training and certifications to expand their ability to respond to all requests and increase personal development and growth.

Staff have also identified challenges that impact PCS's ability to engage in more WMBE/SBE contracting opportunities including: budgeting and contract restraints and expenses, contract capacity, and time constraints.

5. For departments interfacing with the community, describe how you have engaged with the underserved communities and/or communities of color in creating your budget?

The Port's Duwamish Valley Community Equity Program is based on a shared-decision making model with the near-Port neighborhoods of South Park and Georgetown. Community representatives are deeply involved in designing a three-year budget and strategic plan to support the program. They've been engaged in learning about the Port's budgeting process with Port staff and are advocating for their priorities with Port leadership including ELT members and Commissioners.

TERMINOLOGY

Equity in Budgeting Playbook: is a tool designed to integrate explicit considerations of racial equity into decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and ultimately, Departmental budgets. Using this tool will help you develop strategies and actions that reduce inequities, with a particular focus on racial inequities, and improve success for everyone.

Anti-Racism: the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Communities of Color: refers broadly to group of people who hold racial identities that are not White. It can also be used to refer to a geographically distinct area where the population of color, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that area, is higher than the population of color in the surrounding areas. Communities of color can also be referred to as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

Diversity in Contracting: In January 2018, the Port of Seattle Commission passed the Diversity in Contracting Policy Directive ([Resolution 3737](#)) with the purpose of increasing the participation of women and minority business enterprises (WMBE) in the Port's contracting for public works, consulting services, supplies, material, equipment, and other services. This directive works to identify affirmative efforts to afford WMBE enterprises the opportunity to meaningfully participate in Port of Seattle contracts.

Equality: means the same amount of power, opportunities, and resources are distributed to everyone with the assumption that everyone starts in the same place and has the same needs.

Equity: means the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of historically oppressed communities. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness with the procedures and processes of institutions or systems and a fair, intentional distribution of resources. It is important to note that equity is about addressing patterns of disparities among groups of people, not necessarily the experiences of single individuals.

Equity Index: is a tool created by the Port of Seattle that displays a visual representation and ranking of environmental pollutants and social inequities for each census block group in King County. The equity index is made up of 21 indicators within 4 main categories, including: economic opportunity, livability, accessibility, and environmental. The rankings in the index are relative to each other across King County. If an area has a high ranking, it is high in comparison to the rest of King County. When looking at King County as a whole, those are the average ranking across the county.

Equity Lens: a critical thinking approach to undoing institutional and structural racism, which evaluates burdens, benefits, and outcomes to under-served communities.

Intersectionality: means the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. The term was originally coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw.

Low-income Communities: refers to census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent or a median family income 80 percent or less than the area it is benchmarked against. Low-income communities are considered marginalized/underserved communities, and the Port's Equity Index is a useful resource in identifying these communities.

Marginalized/Underserved Communities: means people that historically and currently do not have equitable resources, access to infrastructure, healthy environments, housing choice, etc. Due to historical inequitable policies and practices, disparities may be recognized in both access to services and outcomes.

Racial Equity Lens/Framework: means an analytical tool, or series of questions, that helps a team or group understand the impacts of their decisions as it relates to racial equity, implicit and explicit bias, and individual, institutional, and structural racism.

Women or Minority-Owned Business (WMBE): means a business that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by women and/or minority (including, but not limited to African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, and Latino) group members.