SOUND GENERATIONS
Cultural Responsiveness/Racial Equity Assessment and Work Plan

JANUARY 2019

Developed by: The Equity and Inclusion Workgroup 2017-2018

El-Chairman, Markus Macéo
Executive Leadership Liaison, Brittany Blue
SG Executive Board Liaison, Janet Ceballos

El-Workgroup Members:
Claudine Wallace, Dale Hoover, Dave Tatro, Deidre Daymon,
Kaleb Greissl, Nikki Bagli, Suma Mondal

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Adopted by: Markus A. M. El-Chairman Date: 1/15/19
Adopted by: Brittany Blue Executive Leader Date: 1/15/19
Adopted by: ___________ Board of Director Date: 1/15/19
Approved by: ___________ CEO Date: 1/15/19
February 1st, 2019

Dear Sound Generations staff,

For the past 14 months, a dedicated team of staff have volunteered their time to undertake an extensive assessment and recommendation process that will produce a work plan. This plan will entrench the Equity and Inclusion mission and work throughout Sound Generations. When I joined the organization in April of 2018, this process was well underway. As the CEO, I felt it was important to familiarize myself with the process so I could confidently endorse the proposed ideas for action, and any formal policies recommended by the workgroup. For this reason, I have been communicating regularly with the workgroup, providing feedback at different junctures, and incorporated Equity and Inclusion into the organization’s strategic plan.

Most recently, as the workgroup has moved from the assessment phase to the implementation phase, I have worked closely with them to ensure that our staff and community are presented a comprehensive, actionable plan that embeds Equity and Inclusion work into the fabric of Sound Generations. I am pleased to endorse the summary provided in the following documents, the proposed ideas for action, and the formal processes and policies proposed by the workgroup. In the near future, the workgroup will transition to a permanent Equity and Inclusion Committee, with whom I will continue to work closely to sustain continuous improvements with regard to this important work.

Sincerely,

Jim Wigfall
CEO
Sound Generations
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EI-COMMITTEE VALUES STATEMENT

➢ We treat each other with kindness, respect, consideration, thoughtfulness and dignity.

➢ We will not tolerate behavior that makes any person feel unsafe, including any discrimination against race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, gender expression or any oppression. We will gently and respectfully interrupt any form of discrimination. We will listen, grow, change and stay committed to one another and the process of learning.

➢ We will make mistakes, but we stay committed to not making the same mistakes over. We will be accountable for our actions, saying we are sorry when it is needed, and finding the tools to be good supports and allies to each other. We will communicate the work we are doing to be good allies when needed.

➢ We will take time with one another and listen to understand. We will support the voices and leadership of others.

➢ We remain committed to the ongoing work and self-awareness necessary to advocate for equity, social justice, and the right for all people to have an opportunity to thrive. We realize this work never really ends and we are all always learning.

➢ We will bring solutions to the table, not just problems. We will be part of the solutions.

➢ We will treat each team member as an individual with their own valuable skill set. We will honor individual and new ways of doing things. We will support learning of new skills and new leadership development. We will not participate in degradation based on rank, role or affiliations.

➢ We will model honesty, integrity and commitment to the work we do at Sound Generations and each other; including staff and clients.

➢ Active listening and personal accountability resolves conflict. We will make sure that everyone has a voice by stepping back (making room for others by talking less) and stepping forward (finding our voices).

➢ We will remember and seek out the goodness and humanity in others. We will use the “human goodness” model—everyone is good, it’s our behaviors that are not always good.

➢ We actively work to resolve conflict peaceably. We will practice tools for resolving conflict. This will be a part of our professional responsibilities and our work together.

➢ We proactively strive to create a supportive and collaborative work environment that encourages teamwork. We will not humiliate anyone. We will do safe, healthy venting, ask for what we need from one another in a healthy way, listen and stay committed to work out conflict with each other.
Executive Summary

At the start of December 2017, fourteen employees spanning across several Sound Generations (SG) departments joined together to become members of the Equity and Inclusion (EI) Workgroup. The work group was led and facilitated by our EI-Chairperson, Markus Macêo. The work group was charged with meeting twice a month over a six month period to complete an organization-wide Cultural Responsiveness Self-Assessment. Macêo introduced the work group to the “Protocol” for Culturally Responsive Organizations, an assessment tool created by Dr. Ann Curry-Stevens who is the founder of the Center for Advancing Racial Equity (CARE) which was founded in 2012.

The Protocol was designed to help organizations gather a holistic snapshot of their policies and practices as it relates to cultural responsiveness and racial equity. The tool is evidence-based and grounded in the belief that no single organization, department, program, or strategy will remedy a community’s inequities. Cultural Responsiveness is described as “the capacity for us to respond to issues within the diverse communities in which we serve.” It requires knowledge and capacity at four different levels of service intervention: individual, professional, organizational and systemic.

The self-assessment offered us a broad view on how to assess cultural responsiveness in a social service provision. It covered 9 domains of organizational governance and operations, 99 standards to establish ideals for our work and provided a set of 109 pieces of evidence that can support our organization’s ability to well-serve communities of color. There are three important factors to consider regarding our self-assessment process and future internal self-assessments:

1. The assessment is designed to be flexible and adaptable and will unfold differently as new EI-Workgroup’s revisit the process and conduct future assessments.

2. The assessment isn’t about being right or wrong, it’s about gathering facts, evidence and useful insights to aid us in driving our organizational change efforts.

3. The assessment aided us in developing a shared understanding, identifying process improvement areas and supported the construction of a common language that is easily understood, connects us to the work we do and is rooted in our unique assets, commitments and mission.
Work group members spent 25 percent of their time collecting information relating to domain questions, provided updates specific to those questions and engaged in facilitated group-processing and trust-building activities. The remaining 75 percent of their time was spent answering domain questions, debating ratings, recording recommendations (ideas for action) and delegating homework. Baseline data and information was gathered and used to self-identify areas for organizational change and improvements, including specific ideas for action that will lead to improved outcomes for the clients they serve. The key learnings should spur dialogue across all departments and should lead to a greater understanding of our commitment to address issues of cultural responsiveness and racial equity. Moreover, their discoveries are aimed to increase information-sharing and further support the need for building a shared-accountability system across all SG departments through continuous improvement-planning and management.

The assessment wasn’t intended to provide a historic organizational overview or to reach (or assume) consensus on all issues, but rather, it was intended to capture a snapshot based on the current perceptions and experiences of the diverse stakeholders at SG. One of the primary goals of the work group has been to implement a cross-cutting equity lens that includes culturally responsive action-planning, decision-making and resource-allocation at all levels of the organization. Department and Executive planning-teams shall use this report within their own respective context and experience to conduct EI-related planning moving forward.

The EI-Workgroup has modeled this process by using the self-assessment scores, “recommended” ideas for action (IFA), EI-goal strategies and a Shared Goals and Action Plan (SGAP) to document their process and to develop a model work plan. Concluding the assessment process, the EI-Workgroup will transition into an EI-Committee that will be responsible for holding this work plan, which encompasses our organization-wide EI-goals. SG Departments, Programs and Centers shall work together to integrate the SGAP into their annual-planning and goal-setting activities. The SGAP is designed to allow departments to incorporate (1-2) EI-related goals into their planning process. Manager’s shall track and modify EI-goals based on their efficacy, effectiveness and sustainability features. Along with Markus Macèo, this committee will be responsible for providing E&I accountability to the organization. A schedule for sharing E&I goals will be provided to Departments and Centers and an E&I goals display wall will be created at each SG site to support staff in within their process.

All EI-goals are linked to SG’s mission and have been incorporated within the organization’s strategic plan. This level of action-planning is central to our commitment to operationalizing culturally responsive improvement practices. This work plan provides the foundational framework for self-assessing, action-planning and monitoring progress across departments. The EI-Workgroup has provided the summary scores for each domain, outlined strengths and weaknesses, included a summative reflection for each domain and have added two 2019 SMART Goals for the purposes of review and implementation.
Brief Scoring and Domain Summary Overview

Scoring Summary:

The Equity and Inclusion Workgroup answered a total of ninety-nine domain specific assessment questions. The Protocol Assessment tool used a six-point rating scale, work group members worked collectively to rate each domain question on a scale of 0-5. The ratings scale for each domain question were as follows:

0. Not yet thinking about this
1. Thinking about this
2. We are assessing this feature in our work
3. We have an initial improvement effort underway
4. Benefits are in evidence from implementing this approach/element
5. This is entrenched across the organization.

Scores we’re tallied in each domain and converted to a percentage value. We used the chart below (Fig.1) to identify our strengths and weaknesses across the nine domains.

Domain Review Summary:

Provides: a Domain Overview, Baseline Scores, Strengths and Weaknesses, Domain Reflections, Ideas for Action (IFA’s) and Suggested Departments. Drawing from the IFA’s, Managers will work with teams to address domain challenges specific to their department. We’ve provided IFA’s for each domain that departments, programs and sites can use as part of your annual goal-setting each year. Although, we’ve provided IFA’s, Managers can develop their own action items as long as they align with one of the four Equity and Inclusion Goals Strategies included in this work plan.
### Sound Generations Scoring Summary

In the chart below, enter your raw scores in each domain. Then take out your calculator and convert each number to a percentage value. Each figure will need to be converted according to the instructions in the brackets.

| Domain #1: Commitment, governance and leadership | 32 out of 60. Equals 53% (divide by 0.6) |
| Domain #2: Racial Equity Policies and Implementation Practices | 19 out of 60. Equals 32% (divide by 0.6) |
| Domain #3: Organizational Climate, Culture and Communications | 27 out of 50. Equals 54% (divide by 0.5) |
| Domain #4: Service Based Equity | 58 out of 150. Equals 39% (divide by 1.5) |
| Domain #5: Service User Voice and Influence | 13 out of 35. Equals 37% (divide by 0.35) |
| Domain #6: Workforce Composition and Quality | 17 out of 40. Equals 57% (divide by 0.3) |
| Domain #7: Community Collaboration | 02 out of 30. Equals 07% (divide by 0.3) |
| Domain #8: Resource Allocation and Contracting Practices | 01 out of 40. Equals 02% (divide by 0.4) |
| Domain #9: Data, Metrics and Quality Improvement | 28 out of 80. Equals 35% (divide by 0.8) |

Now plot the percentage figures in the chart below, and link each point on the chart together. This is your “footprint” for cultural responsiveness.

You’ve done it! You have completed your assessment of your organization’s cultural responsiveness. That was a lot of details, gathered by your work group. We hope that despite the heavy lifting you needed to do to complete the tool, you have learned a lot and opened up important conversations and wondering about how to improve your organization.
DOMAIN REVIEW SUMMARY

1. Organizational Commitment, Leadership & Governance

Organizations that effectively lead with and integrate racial equity are able to influence the organization most significantly. The ways that organizations influence the entire organization are through publicly expressed commitments, which influence both the culture and the performance of the organization. When this leadership influence is backed up by cohesive governance structures to ensure that the commitment to racial equity is enacted throughout the organization, it is most fully able to create an equitable organization. The levers available to governing bodies include policies and procedures, role definition, accountability practices, and governing and management structures. Organizational leaders are also able to ensure that resources are allocated to ensuring that cultural responsiveness is maximized, and that priorities for action can be sufficiently resourced. Community leaders are engaged in planning, review, assessment and improvement through a Community Advisory Board or an alternate body.

Domain-1 Points:
32 out of 60 = (53%)

Strengths:

- Job descriptions include responsibilities for community engagement and progress toward social equity
- The organization is a member of various coalitions/advocacy groups working for institutional reforms and social justice
- The organization has a public declaration of commitment to equity work included in the standard email signature format

Weaknesses:

- The organization does not have a coherent narrative with regard to equity work past and present, and the Equity and Inclusion Committee has not existed consistently
- There is no formal structure for the community to assess the organization’s progress toward equity goals
- The organization has not consistently used an equity lens in the decision-making process
**Reflection:**

While assessing this domain, the group discovered that while the organization does have a commitment to equity embedded in job descriptions and the interview process, there is little in the way of formal policy explaining how that should be communicated, or the rationale behind it. Additionally, while there is an oral memory of past equity initiatives, there is not a cohesive narrative explaining the equity goals and the steps the organization has taken or will take to achieve them. Despite this, the group was able to come to a consensus that there is evidence of commitment to equity and inclusion at the leadership and governance level, including diversity of people in executive/officer roles. However, that commitment needs to be solidified, codified, and enhanced to include community input.

**Ideas for Action:**

- Add demographic information to the Board application for new Sound Generations Board Members
- Add Equity and Inclusion component to the Sound Generations communications plan

**Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-1:**

- Executive Leadership Team
- Sound Generations Board of Directors

2. Racial Equity Policies and Implementation Practices

The goals of racial equity policies are threefold: to ensure that progress is not lost when leadership changes; to make a clear and direct commitment of intention to advance racial equity; and to establish lines of accountability for the effectiveness of the policy. In the area of systems change work that is typically incorporated within health and human services, there are a set of reform elements around vision and policy, data systems, training, human resource improvements, budgeting, service-based practice competencies, community engagement and accountability structures.

**Domain-2 Points:**

19 out of 60 = (32%)
Strengths:

- Sound Generations has established an Equity and Inclusion Award to reward staff who show commitment to the organization’s equity mission
- The leadership at both the executive staff and board level have endorsed the equity initiative

Weaknesses:

- The equity work has not been codified in policy(s) which are easily transmitted in the case of leadership transitions
- The organization has not created a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of any policies/initiatives including progress reports, goals, and communication plans
- Managers and Executive staff are not supported in implementing racial equity plans

Reflection:

In discussing this domain, it became apparent that much of the commitment to equity and inclusion has been located within a relatively small circle of dedicated staff who have produced initiatives and agendas. Leadership has endorsed these agendas, but formal policies have not been forthcoming. Additionally, there are some messages which the organization communicates in our print materials that are not iterated in official policy documents, and come from the department level rather than the organizational level.

Ideas for Action:

- Develop a policy that clearly identifies the rationale for cultural responsiveness and for racial equity, asserting the benefits to the service users, community and organization. The policy should identify the importance of leading with racial equity, the role of partnerships, the importance of resource allocation, accountability mechanisms and definitions.
- Define the roles of the E&I Board and Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Create an annual E&I report
- Arrange E&I advocacy partnership efforts to provide more access, implement best practices with regard to universal precautions
Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-2:

- E&I Committee
- Sound Generations Board of Directors

3. Organizational Climate, Culture and Communications

While climate is a challenging element to modify, it can be directed by a set of policies, vision, and practices that promote inclusion and acceptance of communities of color. Organizations that understand cultural perceptions of services, respect and quality have the greatest likelihood of being responsive to the communities they serve. Cross-cultural communication policies and training within the organization will enhance interactions and build trust with served communities while improving effective relationships and collaboration with community members.

Domain-3 Points

27 out of 50 = (54%)

Strengths:

- Staff acknowledge that certain populations are underserved, and actively work to address inequity within programs
- Where barriers to access are a result of culture, staff work to remove those barriers. Examples include multi-language brochures and print materials
- Direct service staff build relationships and use their skills to meet the needs of people of all backgrounds

Weaknesses:

- Reviewing print materials does not have a formal policy or process, and they are vetted at the department level only
- The organization does not have a community advisory board or a policy endorsed by the community concerning the organizational culture
- No mechanism exists for direct service staff to communicate concerns, expertise, or community feedback to leadership to inform policies and/or initiatives
**Reflection:**

While assessing this domain, it became apparent that, at the department level, there is evidence that barriers to service are known and addressed. However, this effort is not codified or institutionalized at the organizational level, and there is no formal process through which initiatives to address disparities in access to service can be assessed by the target community(s). It was also clear that most, not all, of Sound Generations’ programs want to do more to address barriers, but often lack the knowledge and resources to do so. Community Dining’s approach of partnering with smaller grass-roots groups to provide services to their communities was cited as a possible model for other programs.

**Ideas for Action:**

- Include direct service workers as part of strategic planning and incorporate client feedback
- Programs will work with the E&I Committee to review all signage for cultural context and relevance across the communities we serve
- Create a map of communities we’re serving and share-out internally/externally
- Formalize a uniform questions process that cross cuts the organization

**Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-3:**

- E&I Committee
- All Sound Generations’ Programs

**4. Service Based Equity:**

The most direct experience that service users have with the organization is when they receive services. It is here that they might experience barriers to getting services, and the degree to which their needs are held central in service provision, and the degree to which quality outcomes occur. It is also the place where workers exert direct influence over experiences such as respect, inclusion, responsiveness and trustworthiness. Two key elements of services deserve our attention because of the significance of the barriers they create: language accessibility and integration of cultural perspectives and practices. Organizations should provide language assistance through competent interpreters at no cost to the service user. Resources and materials should be translated into relevant languages to improve awareness of available services.

Staff workers are more effective when interacting with service users with the respect that evolves from a deeper understanding of the community being served. Training programs that include the history, cultural beliefs and values, discrimination experiences, policy barriers, and assessment of biases will positively impact accessibility of services for all users.
Domain-4 Points:
58 out of 150 = (39%)

Strengths:

- Examples exist at the department level of collaboration with community advocacy organizations to create or adapt Sound Generations’ programming based on the needs of the community being served.

- Direct service staff employ universal precautions by taking a person-centered approach to service, avoiding assumptions about capacity to understand, and asking clients to reflect back their interpretation of the information given.

- The organization makes services available to non-English speakers via a highly regarded translation service at no cost to the client.

Weaknesses:

- Documenting, classifying, and institutionalizing accommodations made at the department level to increase accessibility.

- Translation services and other accommodations are not clearly communicated, or clients are not made aware that the accommodations are no-cost.

- Surveys and client satisfaction questionnaires do not solicit feedback with regard to accessibility or cultural responsiveness of services.

Reflection:

The group discussed surveys in detail while assessing this domain. There was agreement that the current survey models are inconsistent, and do not explicitly ask questions related to equity of service or cultural responsiveness. Additionally, surveys are not standardized, and as they are funder-driven, they typically are not reported at an organizational level, or made available to any group to assess the organization’s effectiveness. The group also discussed the translation services available which, while robust, are not always clearly communicated to clients, who may choose not to engage with Sound Generations for fear of incurring a cost for service. In terms of community collaboration, the group agreed that Sound Generations’ programs make efforts to build programming to fit the needs of the target communities we serve. If more appropriate, have a demonstrated willingness to partner with grass roots community organizations who are better equipped to develop programming.
Ideas for Action:

- Ensure that the E&I Board Committee has access to review all relevant data, reports, surveys, etc. that will inform their recommendations to Sound Generations Board
- Evaluate practices across departments and standardize best practice
- Integrate best practice into the performance management tool
- Track translation services on client surveys from all programs
- Add question about cultural appropriateness of services to client satisfaction survey for all departments/centers
- E&I Committee works with programs to ensure they have culturally relevant materials
- IT shall work with programs to add and collect primary language data field
- Add E&I information to the performance management tool
- Provide performance review trainings for managers
- Utilize survey results and share them organization wide
- Add “Free Translation” to all print media where appropriate

Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-4:

- Sound Generations Board of Directors
- All Sound Generations Programs, including center-sites.
- Human Resources
- E&I Committee
- IT

5. Service User Voice and Influence

Service users influence policy, practice, environment and service delivery through their user voice. While client satisfaction surveys or interviews have provided client perceptions of quality and culturally sensitive service, we can do more to assure that the services received are culturally responsive. Service users involved in an annual Protocol Assessment and development of an Improvement Plan have the potential to influence the organization at multiple levels with culturally based values and perspectives.
When perceptions of quality and culturally responsive service are gathered through client satisfaction surveys and shortcomings are addressed in the subsequent Improvement Plan the organization is exemplifying true commitment to be culturally responsive. Development of a complaint process that is culturally responsive and effective will include a plan for disaggregating satisfaction data results (by community, language, refugee status or other important cultural grouping) and reporting out to the community will foster in racial equity.

**Domain-5 Points:**

13 out of 35 = (37%)

**Strengths:**

- Clients are provided with written procedures for lodging complaints at the time they begin receiving services
- Policies and procedures for client complaints include protections from retaliation

**Weaknesses:**

- Client survey questions do not ask about cultural responsiveness
- Clients and service users are not given a voice in governance, and are not given the opportunity to comment on equity initiatives
- Because the organization does not have an annual equity plan, there is no holistic summary of equity-based complaints from service users nor remedial action taken by the organization to address the complaints

**Reflection:**

While evaluating the organization regarding this domain, the common theme of non-standard survey practices again emerged. Because surveys are primarily funder driven, the content reflects information reportable to the funder, which often does not include cultural responsiveness questions. Additionally, survey data are not typically disaggregated by race, language, or immigrant status to evaluate disparities in service user experience. However, there was a consensus that most if not all programs consider service-user disparities in their operations, and there exists an opportunity to standardize best practices at the organizational level. Further, resources exist to standardize survey questions in order to elicit information which would allow the organization to identify and address service disparities.
**Ideas for Action:**

- Update grievance policy
- The E&I Committee will include a section in its work plan that reviews complaints made by consumers and defines actions to address structural elements of these complaints
- Ensure HR recruitment plan aligns with racial equity goals and generate report results
- External 3rd party support for grievance process
- Regularly update E&I question bank to reflect cultural responsive interview questions
- Insert culturally responsive language & positive statements into E&I section of job descriptions
- Use language/translation data to increase the number of media related materials
- HR shall analyze language/translation data. Data will be used to guide hiring and appropriate compensation for bi/multi-lingual staff who provide such services

**Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-5**

- All Sound Generations Programs, including center-sites.
- Human Resources
- E&I Committee

**6. Workforce Composition Quality**

Service users are most comfortable when organizations reflect the demography of the communities being served in racial, ethnic, and cultural dimensions and in proportionality. Tokenism will never achieve the impact of having a workforce that represents proportionally all of the communities being served. Compliance/collaboration and quality of service improves when the service provider shares the same language as the service user. Providing opportunities to hire, promote and integrate workers who share the racial, ethnic, cultural, and language as the community being served demonstrates cultural responsiveness.

**Domain-6 Points**

17 out of 40 = (57%)
**Strengths:**

- Hiring practices emphasize equity and inclusion as a part of the organizational culture, and the interview process asks supervisors and hiring managers to ask questions related to their commitment to equity and inclusion.

- Policies at the department/program level commit to hiring staff representatives of the population of the community(s) served.

- Human resources staff maintains an annual report of workforce racial composition relative to the community at large (King County), however this report does not disaggregate based on rank or department/unit.

**Weaknesses:**

- Human resources staff do not currently maintain a plan to improve the alignment of the workforce with the community.

- The organization does not hold trainings relevant to better serving the communities served. This would include trainings to increase understanding of particular challenges, policy issues, and histories relevant to those communities.

**Reflection:**

Domain six revealed that Sound Generations consistently includes language emphasizing a commitment to ending institutionalized racism and furthering equity on job applications and other recruitment materials. However, the group agreed that how the commitment is expressed in the interview process is not consistent, i.e. some interviewees are asked only one equity related question, and the answer does not necessarily inform managers’ evaluation of the interview.

Furthermore, many members of the group agreed that the restorative justice model previously used to resolve employee disputes outside of the formal human resources process was well-received by staff, and, in the absence of that process, staff may hesitate to voice equity-based complaints for fear of reprisal. Finally, all members of the group reported that they did not know the current state of equity-based complaints among staff because there is not currently an aggregate report of those complaints.
Ideas for Action:

- Develop workforce demographics by department and report the results
- Strive for proportionate workforce representation, within King County
- Develop a workforce diversification plan based on demographic analysis
- Create an organization-wide E&I training plan to be reviewed annually by the E&I Committee. The plan should reflect issues identified across the organization and adjusted accordingly.
- Revisit the interview process and E&I question bank with the goal of hiring staff and volunteers with dedication to cultural responsiveness

Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-6:

- E&I Committee
- Human Resources

7. Community Collaboration

Community collaborations are essential resources for organizations in the progression towards becoming culturally responsive organizations. For it is within the community collaboration that cultural values, needs, strengths, history are shared. This is also where the potential impacts on service are explored. Community elders who advise on the design of a building that would encourage use by their respective community members will positively impact the delivery of culturally specific programming by a mainstream organization. Collaborations that are true partnerships require the organization to value and promote community voice in assessment, planning, program delivery, and evaluation.

Domain-7 Points:

2 out of 30 = (7%)
**Strengths:**

- The organization is strong in community collaborations at the program level, and has both written and received letters of support with regard to community-based organizations such as Hunger Intervention Program and Horn of Africa.

**Weaknesses:**

- The organization does not have a series of annual reports to demonstrate goals or improvement with regard to community collaboration
- Hiring committees for senior leadership positions do not include representatives from the community
- The organization does not document culturally responsive practices, including acknowledgement of policy priorities of communities of color or vulnerable populations and concrete goals for acting on them.

**Reflection:**

Domain seven was one of Sound Generations’ weaker domains. It was near the end of the assessment process, the group was able to identify lack of community collaboration as a persistent theme. While programs make efforts to serve clients and alleviate barriers, there are no formal processes for community input into decision making, including advocacy on behalf of community-based organizations’ policy priorities, community participation in major organizational hiring decisions, and open listening sessions for community members to share their concerns.

**Ideas for Action:**

- Include section on community input and how it was applied in the annual E&I report (include survey responses too)
- Every few years, host a series of listening sessions with local communities being served or potentially served by the organization, regarding desired improvements to services
- Explore ways to enhance community involvement to identify candidates for the hiring process
- Solicit feedback from organizations serving communities of color to assess how we’re doing and ways we can improve
- Recognize community partners in E&I Annual Report
Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-7:

- E&I Committee
- All Sound Generations Programs
- Human Resources

8. Resource Allocation and Contracting Practices

Resource allocation and contracting practices can be used to achieve heightened performance in equity arenas and also concrete methods for financial accountability—or “budgeting for equity.” The trend toward “performance based budgeting” reflects the same elements of ensuring that budgets reflect the strategic priorities of an organization. Similarly “minority contracting”, prevalent since 1972, ensures that governments stretch beyond their “business as usual” contracting practices and reach historically disadvantaged businesses and that public dollars are used strategically to support such sectors, of which “minority-owned businesses” is one (joining women and emerging small businesses).

Domain-8 Points:

1 out of 40 = (2%)

Strengths:

- Our vendor vetting process includes accepting three bids, one of which must be a minority business owner
- We have many partnerships with community based organizations, which can be easily integrated in our annual report

Weaknesses:

- Our annual budget does not focus on reducing disparities
- We do not have a budget for E&I programming

Reflection:

The area of resources and contracting was our weakest and offers us one of the greatest opportunities to create change. While we emphasize our commitment to E&I publicly, during times of financial decision making, including during this assessment process, E&I programming is among the first to be eliminated.
We have a small operating budget for E&I that does not allow for a dedicated staff person/s. Likewise, the E&I workgroup and committee members are not compensated for their time. Our budgeting process also has not focused on reducing disparities among service users. While we do have an equitable process for collecting bids from potential contractors, we do not have a process for examining how E&I is integrated into all levels of our business functions. Not only would creating such a process improve cultural responsiveness in our organization, but it would give us the opportunity to be E&I leaders within our professional network.

**Ideas for Action:**

- Add a component to the annual budget that allows programs to identify necessary funding to reduce disparities among service users
- Develop a process for programs to share about partnerships
- Emphasize and document protocol for being culturally responsive in hiring contractors/sub-contractors
- E&I Committee shall develop the key elements of cultural responsiveness and racial equity to be integrated into contracts, with performance expectations specified in the contract
- The E&I Committee shall create an assessment process for interpreting the ability of a contractor/sub-contractor to serve communities of color

**Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-8:**

- E&I Committee
- Human Resources

**9. Data, Metrics and Quality Improvement**

Organizations need to assess their compliance with the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations on an annual basis as well as gauge progress on their Improvement Plan, developed during the previous year in collaboration with the Executive Leadership Team. Collection of demographic data on clients are important for understanding population shifts among service users signaling potential changes in needs or services (including competent language assistance). Regular and consistent demographic data collection of staff, leadership, and boards are also important for ensuring equitable representation within the organization at multiple levels.
Stakeholder satisfaction surveys will assist in determining the organization’s effectiveness in serving the communities they wish to reach. Transparency through public reporting of compliance with the Protocol and progress on the annual Improvement Plan will signal the Organization’s commitment to the communities they serve.

**Domain-9 Points**

28 out of 80 = (35%)

**Strengths:**

- All SG departments and centers collect client demographic information
- Demographics on work force are collected each year

**Weaknesses:**

- There is no organization wide policy on collecting or analyzing demographic information that utilizes an E&I lens
- There is no organization wide policy for capturing the results of the demographics collected and responding to increase equity
- There is no organization wide effort to increase diversity of staff and cultural responsiveness of organization

**Reflection:**

All departments and centers collect demographic information from clients. Because what is asked for is largely determined by funders, there is no organization wide infrastructure around what demographics are collected, how the demographic questions are framed and how the data is integrated into future planning. Staff demographics are also collected and shared with staff on an annual basis but a formal plan for increasing the diversity of staff and creating a culturally responsive environment are not in place.

**Ideas for Action:**

- The E&I Committee shall develop and recommend the type of demographic information to collect based on best practices.
- All programs shall collect and share demographic information throughout the organization
Suggested Department(s) to focus on Domain-9:

- E&I Committee
- All Sound Generations Programs and Center Sites
- Human Resources
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Sound Generations Organizational Equity and Inclusion Goal:

To expand the knowledge and awareness of Equity and Inclusion.

**El-Goal -Strategy-1:**

Build a common language and a long-term commitment throughout the organization through continuous Learning through trainings, workshops, and dialogs on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.

**S:** The El-workgroup will research and select 3-external equity trainers to conduct 1 race and social justice based training per quarter for **FY19**.

**M:** Trainings will be conducted quarterly no later than: Qtr-1: March 31st, Qtr-2: June 30th, September 30th.

**A:** The El-Workgroup meets bi-monthly and will have ample time to discuss, research, and contract with external trainers on or before each quarterly deadline.

**R:** This goal is realistic because the funding is available and a there’s a pool of equity trainers to choose from.

**T:** The goal is time bound as the El-Workgroup will establish quarterly deadlines training dates that will be communicated organization-wide

**El-Goal Strategy-2:**

Encouraging systemic change at the institutional level by communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews of organizational policies and impacts of implementation.

**S:** Develop model Equity and Inclusion based Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) to be approved by the CEO, adopted by the Executive Board, implemented through HR policy, and practiced by all departments, and center-sites.

**M:** Model CIP shall be approved, adopted and implemented by 01/31/2019.

**A:** The model CIP will be presented to all managers during PLT meeting and shall be agreed upon to be approved by the CEO, adopted by the Executive Board, implemented through HR policy and implemented organization-wide.

**R:** The goal is realistic because all parties support the change. The change action is viable as it aims to standardize practice through continuous improvement and through the use of an equity lens at all levels of the organization.

**T:** CIP shall be adopted and reflected within HR policy on or before 01/31/2019.
IDEAS FOR ACTION (IFA’s)

Domain-1: Commitment, governance and leadership:

➢ Add demographic information to the application for new Sound Generations Board Members.

➢ Add Equity and Inclusion information to Sound Generations communications plan.

Domain-2: Racial Equity Policies and Implementation and Practices:

➢ Develop a policy that clearly identifies the rationale for cultural responsiveness and for racial equity, asserting the benefits to the service users, the community, the organization, and to wider society that can emerge. The policy will identify the importance of leading with race, the role of partnerships, the importance of resource allocation, accountability mechanisms and definitions.

➢ Define the role of the El-Board Committee

➢ Create an annual El report

➢ Arrange E&I advocacy partnership efforts to provide more access and implement best practice.

Domain-3: Organizational Climate, Culture and Communications:

➢ Include direct service workers as part of strategic planning and incorporate client feedback

➢ Programs will work with the E&I Committee to review all signage for cultural context and relevance across the communities we serve

➢ Create a map of communities we’re serving and share-out internally/externally

➢ Formalize a uniform questions process that cross cuts the organization

Domain-4: Service Based Equity:

➢ Ensure that the El-Board Committee has access to review all relevant data, reports, and surveys that will inform their recommendations to Sound Generations Board

➢ Evaluate service delivery across departments and standardize best practice

➢ Integrate a service delivery question into the performance management tool.
➤ Track Translation Services on client survey from programs

➤ Add culturally responsive services as part of the client satisfaction survey for all departments/centers

➤ E&I Committee works with programs to ensure they have culturally relevant materials

➤ IT shall work with programs to add and collect primary language data field

➤ Add EI information to performance management tool

➤ Provide performance review training for managers

➤ Utilize survey results and share-out

➤ Add “Free Translation” on all print media where applicable

**Domain-5: Service User Voice and Influence:**

➤ Update grievance policy

➤ The Equity and Inclusion Committee will include a section that reviews the complaints made by consumers and defines actions to address structural elements of these complaints.

➤ Create formal communication strategy for the organization

➤ Ensure HR recruitment plan aligns with racial equity goals and generate report results

➤ External 3rd party support for grievance process

➤ Regularly update E&I question bank to reflect cultural responsive interview questions

➤ Insert culturally responsive language & positive statements into E&I section of job descriptions

➤ Use language/translation data to increase the number of media related materials

➤ HR shall analyze language/translation data. Data will be used to guide hiring and appropriate compensation for bi/multi-lingual staff who provide such services

**Domain-6: Workforce Compensation and Quality:**

➤ Develop workforce demographics by department and report the results

➤ Strive for proportionate workforce representation, within King County

➤ Develop a workforce diversification plan based on demographic analysis
Domain-7: Community Collaboration:

- Include section on community input and how it was applied in the annual E&I report (include survey responses)
- Every few years, host a series of listening sessions with local communities being served or potentially served by the organization, regarding desired improvements to services
- Explore ways to enhance community involvement to identify candidates for the hiring process
- Solicit feedback from organizations serving communities of color to assess how we’re doing and ways we can improve
- Recognize community partners in Equity and Inclusion annual report

Domain-8: Resource Allocation and Contracting Practices:

- Add a component to the annual budget that allows programs to identify necessary funding to reduce disparities among service users
- Develop a process for programs to share about partnerships
- Emphasize and document protocol for being culturally responsive in hiring contractors/sub-contractors
- The E&I Committee shall develop the key elements of cultural responsiveness and racial equity to be integrated into contracts, with performance expectations specified in the contract
- The E&I Committee shall create an assessment process for interpreting the ability of a contractor/sub-contractor to serve communities of color
Domain-9: Data, Metrics and Quality Improvement:

➢ The E&I Committee shall develop and recommend the type of demographic information to collect based on best practices

➢ All programs shall collect and share demographic information throughout the organization
EL-GOAL STRATEGIES:

1. Building a common language and a long-term commitment throughout the organization through continuous learning through trainings.

2. Improving accountability to the community by periodically evaluating our effectiveness through focus groups, surveys, and deepening workshops and dialogue on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.

3. Creating a more welcoming environment by using proactive approaches to problem-solving around accessibility, and creating positively vulnerable spaces that allow for more honest and timely responses to issues within our organization.

4. Encouraging systemic change at the institutional level by communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews of organizational policies and impacts of implementation.

EL-WORKGROUP CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT SCAP-PLANNING:

ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL:

To expand the knowledge and awareness of equity and inclusion.
1a. Continuous Learning through trainings, workshops, and dialogue on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.

2b. Periodic Evaluation of our effectiveness and feedback from individuals and organizations.

3c. Proactive Approaches to problem solving and creating accessible and welcoming environments.

4d. Communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews of organizational policies and impacts of implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>(Department or Specific Support) Activities</th>
<th>(Broad Organizational) Activities</th>
<th>(Organization-Wide) El Goal Strategy</th>
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<td>continuous learning through trainings, workshops, and dialogue on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.</td>
<td>periodic evaluation of our effectiveness and feedback from individuals and organizations.</td>
<td>communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews of organizational policies and impacts of implementation.</td>
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<td>Department/Program</td>
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**Dept/Program Mission**

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<tr>
<th>EI-Strategies</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Data Collection Source</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
<th>Summary of Data Collected</th>
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<td>1. Continuous Learning through trainings, workshops, and dialogue on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.</td>
<td>Tasks for Activity-1:</td>
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**EI-Committee’s Mission:**

The mission of Sound Generations directs us to build a team of staff, board members and volunteers who are culturally responsive and committed to equity and inclusion. We provide our teams with tools to positively address institutionalized racism and harmful responses to injustice within our organization.

**Activities**

1. Continuous learning through trainings, workshops, and dialogue on issues involving institutional racism and oppression.
2. Periodic evaluation of our effectiveness through focus groups, self-reflection, and engagement with individuals and other organizations.
3. Proactive approaches to problem-solving around accessibility and creating positively vulnerable spaces that allow for more honest and direct conversations.
4. Communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews and expectations in contracts and policies.

**Summary of Data Collected**

- Impacts of implementation of organizational policies and expectations in contracts and expectations in contracts and policies.
- Demonstrating equity and inclusion.

**Use of Results**

-Periodic evaluation of our effectiveness through focus groups, self-reflection, and engagement with individuals and other organizations.
- Proactive approaches to problem-solving around accessibility and creating positively vulnerable spaces that allow for more honest and direct conversations.
- Communicating and demonstrating equity and inclusion expectations in contracts and through cross-departmental reviews and expectations in contracts and policies.