

Partnership Proposal for the Dobbs Ferry Human Rights and
Diversity Committee



Metropolitan Center for Research on
Equity and the Transformation of Schools

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New York University's (NYU) Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools ([Metro Center](#)) in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development provides a variety of services. These include an array of facilitated dialogues to support embedding a commitment to racial equity in policy and practice and ongoing support with strategic planning. This proposal outlines a sample of these services, which are tailored and responsive to the needs of the Dobbs Ferry Human Rights and Diversity Committee.

Who We Are

[Metro Center](#) believes that change in equitable practices is not just possible, it is probable. The question we confront is not *why* does equity matter but *why* doesn't it matter, *more*? To transform systems we must peer deeply into the conditions upon which structures were created, and interlocked by policies, beliefs, and behaviors related to power, privilege, and identity. For change to *really* occur, we have to shift conditions that continue to maintain structural inequities. This work matters deeply.

Changes cannot occur though without shifting mindsets, policies, practice, and relationships and we know from past practices that changes in policies don't guarantee mindsets will shift. So, to do this work, we put into motion a research-based framework around what impacts dispositions to changes. Our framework is informed by equity, and is based in socially-just, culturally relevant, and anti-oppressive practices. Metro Center's Center for Strategic Solutions (CSS) has developed national expertise in supporting folx to consider the impact of race, power, and privilege on the work they do. By offering support that delves into the deep historical entanglements of racial inequity, CSS centers the dialogue in developing a shared understanding of the systems that impact our cross racial, cross-ethnic, and cross-cultural understandings. Support is designed to offer multiple points of entry for participants of all backgrounds.

Foundations in Research

An equitable and just society loves and invites its members to be their authentic selves and openly reflects how disparities and historical inequities contradict the principles of racial justice. Our team promotes this by building the capacity of stakeholders to challenge assumptions and embedded bias, building relationships that create pathways toward equity. Our focus is to draw from the local context, provide tailored technical assistance and/or professional development to advance stakeholder capacities by:

1. Building intentional relationships;
2. Leveraging the assets of communities; and
3. Developing critical consciousness to confront and challenge the existing social order of the intersections between race, gender, sexuality, power and privilege in society.

Organizations and Stakeholders We Have Served/Do Serve

- K12 districts, in New York and nationally
- K12 public, private, parochial, and charter schools
- Early childhood programs and pre-Ks
- Colleges and Universities
- Teacher preparation programs

- City and government agencies
- Non-profit organizations
- Libraries, historical societies, and museums
- Community-based organizations
- Food justice organizations
- Advocacy organizations
- National organizing collaboratives
- Assessment organizations

Topics of Engagement

- Race, power, and privilege in the workplace
- Developing and operationalizing an anti-racist mission and vision
- Implicit bias in the context of systemic inequity
- Workplace climate assessments
- Leadership development training and coaching
- Executive coaching
- Company retreats and community-building forums
- Developing critical consciousness
- Coaching for Board members and senior leadership
- Facilitating community conversations
- Restorative practices and racial justice
- Developing an equity policy
- Healing centered, humanizing practices

Dobbs Ferry Human Rights and Diversity Committee Framework

What is most unique about the CSS service delivery model is that it is tailored to the specific needs of our individual partners. While CSS focuses explicitly on race, the Center's work is not exclusively about addressing racial inequity. CSS believes that for all stakeholders to be best served, included, and honored by their office, school, organization or community, an intersectional approach to addressing disparities related to race, ethnicity, language, culture, gender, sexual orientation, dis/ability, religion, and socioeconomic status is required.

Based on the initial conversation with members of the committee, potential options for partnership include: (1) capacity-building for members of the committee including Village Trustees and the Mayor, and (2) strategic support and consultation for sub-committees. The goals of this partnership might include:

- ❑ building shared individual and collective understanding of language and action to operationalize racial equity in the village through a clear manifestation of centering human rights of the most marginalized community residents,
- ❑ consultation around strategic planning for individual and collective reflection, intentional anti-bias, anti-racist policy and practice shifts in a number of areas.

Sessions with members of the committee will be focused on building and leveraging self-awareness, fostering community around the work of promoting equity as a collective, and identifying impacts in the role of committee members to this work. Common outcomes from this type of commitment include shifting protocols for decision-making including

regular reflection on gatekeeper positionality, greater alignment to committee mission and specific commitments to promoting equity and racial justice, increased attention to community dynamics influenced by the sociopolitical climate, and deepening connections to the most marginalized populations. Level-setting engagements around language, opportunities to develop critical self-awareness and support in intentionally situating this work in the current socio-political context, is primary, with recommended follow up consultations to deepen actionable steps and support strategic planning in turn. Part of what will naturally emerge is clarity around the purpose, form, function, and values of this committee, its members, and their relationships with Village leadership. To this end, NYU Metro Center would request that at a minimum, the Village Mayor and half of the Village Trustees attend capacity-building sessions, with a preference that all Village Trustees attend.

Additionally, NYU Metro Center proposes to offer learning series opportunities to all Village employees broken down into the structure below. Ideally, the learning journey is established to build foundational knowledge, leverage that knowledge through individual and collective self-reflection, and transfer that self-reflection into collective action. The Human Rights and Diversity Committee requested a scope that addresses these learning goals:

1. Establish a **foundational understanding** of human rights, diversity, inclusion, equity, implicit bias, racism, etc.
2. Acquire and/or build **dialogue and discussion skills** to use Village-wide. Strengthen **working relationships and partnerships** throughout the Village.
3. Develop an **action-oriented roadmap** for enhancing Dobbs Ferry as an inclusive, equitable, and just community.

The ask is that sessions will facilitate the move from conceptual understanding to action (i.e., *praxis*).

The Proposed Learning Journey

	Objectives	Terms/concepts	Application
Session 1:	Understand how who I am informs what I do. Build collective awareness of equity, transparency, hierarchical power. Examine engrained dynamics of race, power, and privilege.	Equity Racial Justice Race Power Privilege Marginalization Positionality Human rights	Self-reflection Collective reflection Community relations Relationships, Team-building
Session 2:	Interrogate the impact of bias in the context of structural inequity. Define mechanisms to reduce the emotional burden on BIPOC staff, LGBTQ+ staff, disabled staff, and staff who are distanced from positional power, who often are the ones calling out issues or calling in colleagues.	Implicit bias Racism Microaggressions Macro harms Inclusivity	Workplace climate Supervision and Feedback Repairing and restoring after harm Bias mitigation strategies
Session 3:	Examine and unpack the role I play in disrupting and dismantling racism and inequity within my sphere of influence. Identify policy gaps, propose ways to address gaps.	Institutional oppression Culture of power Performative allyship White saviorism Brave spaces Courageous conversations and actions	Policy and governance Data collection and analysis Hiring, retention, and leadership development
Consultation(s):	Follow up for small sub-committees and/or the whole cohort to take a deeper dive into application and reflection once changes are made	Disruption Operationalizing a commitment to equity, racial justice, and human rights	Communication, public-facing persona Ongoing professional learning, onboarding

Pricing Structure

(CSS is virtual through Fall 2021)

	Unit rate	Suggested units	Total
Committee engagements of 4 hours or less			
(Each unit can be broken into two 90-minute sessions)			
1 session open to ALL			
Human Rights and Diversity Committee	\$2250	9	\$20,250
2 sessions			
At least 3 cohorts of Village employees			
2 sessions per cohort			
Consultations of 1 hour or less with sub-committees			
Human Rights and Diversity Committee (2 sessions)	\$600 each if 5 or more	5	\$3000
At least 3 cohorts of Village employees (1 session per cohort)			
TOTAL			\$23,250