# EQUITY & INCLUSION SHARED LANGUAGE GUIDE

Sound Transit Office of Civil Rights, Equity & Inclusion

# EQUITY & INCLUSION SHARED LANGUAGE GUIDE

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# Background

The Office of Civil Rights, Equity & Inclusion (CREI) recognized a need across the agency to create uniformity and develop a shared understanding of equity and inclusion language. Over the course of several months, our office received input from employees across the agency and researched language guidelines used by a variety of equity and inclusion practitioners.

Constructing this document required linguistic exploration. It was important for us to investigate which words communities use to describe their own experiences/identities and which words are used outside of community to describe experiences/identities that are not the person's own. Oftentimes external designations are at odds with how we self-describe, and others superimpose language on us that we did not choose. Similarly, members of the mainstream often co-opt and dilute the power of words minoritized groups have coined to describe their own unique experiences — a process that creates linguistic erasure.

Our goal with the Equity and Inclusion Shared Language Guide is to honor identity and, where possible, use chosen language. This is not an exhaustive or static document. Instead, these are recommendations based on this moment in time. The equity landscape is constantly evolving and language along with it. Our goal is to revisit this guide on an annual basis to ensure that it is up-to-date and responsive to the current sociocultural climate.

## Race/ethnicity and Social Categorizations

### Summary

As we seek language to define communities and experiences, it is important to note that many of these terms are relational to whiteness. This, in turn, informs certain outcomes, which largely center on access to power and denial of power.

### Social Categorizations

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **AAPI** | Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander is an umbrella term for approximately 50 ethnic groups covering China, Japan, Vietnam, India, Korea, Hawaii, Micronesia, the Philippines and other ancestries. | There is much debate amongst the Pacific Islander community about their inclusion in the term AAPI. Some do not feel like this pan-ethnic designation represents them, nor do some members of the Pacific Islander community experience greater visibility through the adoption of this term. It is important to note that Asian and Pacific Islander are now two separate categories in the US Census, highlighting the disparity in cultural attitudes of the term AAPI. When collecting and evaluating demographic data, disaggregation and differentiation between Asian and Pacific Islander is critical. | *Recent violent crimes against the Asian community stem from xenophobic rhetoric describing the origins of COVID-19.*<br><br>*US immigration and wartime policy has had a historically divisive and often violent impact on AAPI communities.* |
| **BIPOC** | An acronym for "Black, Indigenous, People of Color."<br><br>A term used to center the complex and historic harm Black and Indigenous people of color face in the US; | When discussing the specificity of anti-Black racism or anti-Indigenous racism, using umbrella terms like BIPOC, People of Color (POC) and Communities of Color (COC) can be perceived | *Organizers in BIPOC communities are seeking federal remedies for the devastating impacts of colonization.* |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| | oftentimes, this term can conflate and blur these two experiences.<br><br>*It is important to note that BIPOC is a term that was coined on Twitter by a Black queer activist in 2013 and its meaning has been adapted for use in various spheres, with no universal definition or application. | as a form of erasure because it decenters Black and Indigenous people. This creates the assumption of a shared positionality among all people of color, which may not necessarily exist.<br><br>Use BIPOC when specifically referencing the overlapping layers of oppression experienced by both Black and Indigenous communities, not to be confused with *all* people of color and not to be confused with the nuanced oppression faced *differently and distinctly* by Black folks and Indigenous folks. | (This is correct usage because the sentence refers to the shared oppression experienced by Black & Indigenous folks and uses the term BIPOC.) |
| **Black and African American** | The definition of Black and African American under Title VI reads, "people having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa." | Cultural and linguistic scholars who self-identify as Black and/or African American still debate how to best pair or separately define the globalized experience of Blackness (Black) and the ancestral ties to the continent (African American).<br><br>From an immigration perspective, the term African American can refer to naturalized citizens and first-generation Americans (i.e., Nigerian Americans) who may not self-describe as Black and view a clear | *On campus, we have a Black Student Union for those who self-identify as Black and an African American Diaspora Union for those who immigrated from the continent.* |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | distinction between Black and African American.<br><br>Although Title VI uses the same definition for Black and African American, it is important not to conflate the two and understand the colonial origins. Lead with how a person would like to self-identify. | |
| **Chicano/Chicana** | Someone who lives in the United States who is from or descended from Mexico. | This term was originally used as a pejorative to describe Mexican Americans. It was later reclaimed by Mexican Americans during the 1960s Chicano Movement, where Mexican Americans wanted to express a specific cultural identity and demand liberties, including: land restoration, farmer's rights, and education reform. | *Chicano students organized walkouts in 1968 to protest against cultural erasure in the classroom.* |
| **Communities of color** | An umbrella term used to describe people of color living or occupying space in a specific geographic area. | The term COC can sanitize the history of segregation in the US, often disregarding the systematic formation of these communities, which grew not out of choice, but out of structural racism and Jim Crow laws. Using this term requires a recognition of the history of forced migration in the US. We recommend only using this term when critical. Alternatively, you can | *The west side of Manchester, NH, is home to a large East African community.*<br><br>(Here we use language that speaks to the specific cultural group we are referring to instead of using COC.) |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | interchange COC with POC and/or consider using language specific to the ethnic/racial group you are referencing. | |
| **Historically excluded** | Any group of people that society has historically denied (within a US context) full rights, privileges and opportunities. | Historic exclusion is an acknowledgment of how past harm informs current systems. The term "historically excluded" serves as a preferred alternative to "historically marginalized." | *The RET (Racial Equity Tool) calls on project teams to identify communities that have been historically excluded within the context of their work.* |
| **Hispanic** | Pan-ethnic term referring to people from Spain or predominately Spanish-speaking countries. | This term was coined in the 1970s to ensure equitable representation and resource distribution for the Hispanic community. Prior to 1970s, this community was classified as white. <br><br> In 1976, the US Congress passed legislation mandating the collection of data from "Americans of Spanish-speaking origin or Spanish descent)." <br><br> The Hispanic community often self-describes using more localized language because the term "Hispanic" has colonial implications. | *The term Hispanic excludes Brazilians because Brazil is a predominately Portuguese-speaking country and not a predominately Spanish-speaking country.* |
| **Indigenous peoples** | "Indigenous" describes any group of people native to a specific region and/or the | The term "Indigenous" is a way of recognizing all native people in the entire world. | *Land acknowledgments honor Indigenous* |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | people who lived in a given region before colonists or settlers arrived, defined new borders, and began to occupy the land. | We recommend using the name of the tribe name first as often as possible, and if characterizing Native Americans for compliance or census demographic purposes, to use AI/AN.<br><br>*Indigenous should always be capitalized.* | *peoples and their land.* |
| **Latino/Latina** | Pan-ethnic term referring to people who are from or descended from Latin America. | Latino/Latina was coined in the 1990s because of the colonial implications of the word "Hispanic."<br><br>Latina/Latino does not refer to race or include people from Spain. | *Mexicans make up the largest Latino/Latina group in the US (62%).* |
| **Latinx** | Non-binary term for Latino/Latina. | Latinx became socialized in the mainstream press after the Pulse nightclub shooting. | *The Latinx organizations on campus hosted a social for new students.* |
| **Minoritize** | Process by which groups are afforded less power or representation due to existing social structures. | This term places the responsibility on systems and structures that actively minoritize people (v.), as opposed to people naturally existing as a minority (n.), which the term minority implies. | *Racialized legislation, including restrictive voting laws, drug enforcement and immigration policies, serve to minoritize POC.* |
| **Undocumented Immigrant** | Anyone residing in a country without required documentation. | Undocumented and undocumented immigrant replaces the harmful terms that focus on legal status. | *Some undocumented immigrants have been living in a state of fear due to austere immigration policies,* |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **People of color** | An umbrella term to describe individuals or groups who are not white. | The term "People of Color" was created to demonstrate commonality and solidarity between non-white racial groups.<br><br>When used as a catch-all, this term can have the effect of minimizing or erasing specific racial or ethnic groups. | *POC organized acts of solidarity in response to the wave of violent attacks against Asian folks.*<br><br>*(This is correct usage because this sentence references cross-cultural solidarity movements in support of the Asian community and uses the term POC.)* |
| **Priority populations** | Group(s) in a geographic area with disproportionately low outcomes (socio-economic, health, education, etc.) due to systemic forms of racism and oppression. | The definition of "priority population" will likely vary based on the context and should not be used as a catch-all for historically excluded groups. | *While reviewing past fare enforcement policies and the corresponding racial disparities, the internal team decided that Black and unsheltered communities were their priority populations for a reimagined program.* |
| **Returning citizens** | A term used to describe people returning to society after incarceration. | This term centers the humanity of the person as opposed to their relationship with carceral systems (i.e., ex-convict or ex-felon).<br><br>Additional language includes formerly incarcerated person(s).<br><br>*Please note the term "citizen" can be divisive, harkening back to anti-immigrant sentiment.* | *Corey's team provides wraparound services to returning citizens to support their transition.* |
| **Under-resourced** | Under-resourced communities are those in relatively heavily | Under-resourced frames inequity in an institutional context, | *SisterSong is a reproductive justice organization working* |

| Term | Definition | Background | Sample Usage |
|------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| | populated areas of high poverty and low income.<br><br>Provided with inadequate resources (funding, political power, infrastructure, housing, economic opportunity, etc.) due to systems of oppression. | both in terms of access and accountability. This term acknowledges resources (or lack thereof) as the driver of inequity. | *in under-resourced communities to address maternal mortality and health disparities for birthing folks.*<br><br>*(This is correct usage because in this context, under-resourced is being used to specifically describe lack of access to quality health services.)* |
| **Underserved*** | Inadequate or insufficient levels of services that can affect any individual or group regardless of race, income, gender, etc. Whether or not someone is "underserved" is dependent on the specific context in which one is using the term. | Use only when specifically describing access to services and not as a catch-all term for racialized or other historically-excluded groups. | *Black women, underserved by our health care system, are eight times more likely to die during childbirth.*<br><br>*(Correct usage because underserved here describes the lack of services.)* |

## Equity concepts

### Summary

We have compiled a list of equity concepts to guide those in their journey toward anti-racism. This work requires introspection of your own biases and your relationship to power and oppressive systems. Sound Transit's STARTS training series will offer an opportunity to have greater exploration and conversation of the concepts outlined below, in addition to introducing new equity concepts for employees to unpack.

### Equity terms

| Term | Definition | Context |
|------|-----------|---------|
| **Allyship** | An active and consistent practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to operate in | There is a spectrum of allyship – ally, accomplice and co-conspirator – each denoting a level of |

| Term | Definition | Context |
|------|------------|---------|
| | solidarity with minoritized groups to end systems of oppression. | engagement in the equity outcome. Ally is the most passive form; accomplices react to systems of oppression, while co-conspirators proactively work toward justice. |
| **Anti-racism** | Active process of identifying and challenging racism, by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, to redistribute power in an equitable manner. | Although Sound Transit is actively working on its agency-wide anti-racist strategy, departments can work toward anti-racism by normalizing equity as an outcome in their work. |
| **Institutional racism** | Policies and practices within and across institutions that produce outcomes that chronically favor or put a racialized group at a disadvantage. | Occurs within institutions and systems of power. <br><br> ***Examples include:*** Japanese internment camps during WW2; stop and frisk policies; glass security cases around "ethnic" hair care products in pharmacies. |
| **Microaggression** | Verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color. | Some people prefer the term microabuse because it better communicates the cumulative effect these actions have on the psychology of POC. <br><br> ***Examples:*** Being followed in a store because you 'look' suspicious; being told you are articulate; not being called your full name because it is difficult to pronounce, etc. |
| **Racism** | A form of community violence (economic, political, cultural and/or physical) that targets or has disproportionate | It is important to note that there are derivations of racism that describe this relationship to racialized power on an individual, |

| Term | Definition | Context |
|------|-----------|---------|
|  | negative affect upon people of color. | interpersonal, intra-organizational and across systems level (ex. individual racism, interpersonal racism, structural racism, etc.) |
| **Stereotype** | A generalized belief system about characteristics of a particular group of people based on one's perception, observation, etc. | *Examples include*: Women are too emotional to be leaders; Asian people are good at math; Black people are uneducated. |
| **Structural racism** | A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in reinforcing ways to perpetuate racialized inequity. <br><br> *Structural racism is often used interchangeably with systemic racism.* | Structural racism occurs *between* institutions and across society. Institutional racism occurs *within* institutions. <br><br> *Examples include:* Forcible removal of Indigenous communities from their land; the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in Black communities; housing segregation. |
| **White fragility** | A range of defensive (and centering) emotions and behaviors that white people exhibit when confronted with uncomfortable truths about race. | White fragility reinforces whiteness as the status quo. It contributes to racism by centering white discomfort, gaslighting the experiences faced by POC and minimizing the voice of POC. |
| **White privilege** | The unearned power, benefits and other advantages racism affords to people identified as white, regardless of whether they are recognized by white people. | White privilege includes: having reliable access to public transportation; institutional favoritism by enforcement personnel (police, security, school enforcement officers etc.); widespread positive media representation. |

# Gender justice

## Summary

Sound Transit is committed to fostering an inclusive hiring, onboarding and retention experience for the LGBTQIA community. This work is ongoing and includes analyzing our current practices and assessing where gaps may exist. Our hope is to champion a Sound Transit where all can operate as their authentic selves and receive the appropriate internal resources to do so.

## Gender identity terms

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Affirmed gender** | The gender by which one wishes to be known. |
| **Agender** | A person who does not identify with or experience any gender. Agender is different from nonbinary because many nonbinary people do experience gender. |
| **Bigender** | Describes a person whose gender identity is a combination of two or more genders. |
| **BlaQ/BlaQueer** | Describes individuals of Black/African descent who recognize their LGBTQ+ identity as salient to their Blackness and vice versa. |
| **Cisgender** | A term used to refer to an individual whose gender identity aligns with the one associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. |
| **Deadname** | Use of a trans persons name before their transition (i.e., birth name) |
| **Gender expression** | The ways that a person communicates a gender identity to others, such as dress, behavior, hairstyle, voice and/or mannerisms. |
| **Gender fluid** | Describes a person who identifies their gender as shifting within a spectrum of gender identities and expressions. |
| **Gender identity** | One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth. |
| **Gender nonconforming** | A term for those who do not conform to traditional expectations of gender. Often an umbrella term for nonbinary genders. |
| **Gender perception** | How others interpret a person's gender identity based on their gender expression. |

| Term | Definition |
|------|------------|
| Genderqueer | Describes a person whose gender identity is neither masculine nor feminine, is between or beyond gender, or is some combination of genders. |
| LGBTQ+ | An umbrella term used to refer to the community of sexual and gender identities as a whole. |
| Misgender | To refer to someone using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, which does not correctly reflect their gender. |
| Nonbinary | A person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. |
| Pangender | Someone whose identity is comprised of all or many gender identities and expressions. |
| Polygender | Someone who has more than one gender and either experiences all of their genders at once or is moving between genders at any given time. |
| Queer | An umbrella term for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual. |
| Trans | Shorthand for transgender; is sometimes used as an umbrella term for multiple identities. |
| Transgender | A term describing a person's gender identity that does not necessarily match their assigned sex at birth. |
| Transition | A term sometimes used to refer to the process – social, legal, and/or medical – one goes through to discover and/or affirm one's gender identity. |

## Terms to avoid

| Prejudiced/outdated terms | Alternate terms | Guidance |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Chosen gender | Affirmed gender | |
| Hermaphrodite | Intersex | |
| Preferred pronouns | Pronouns | "Preferred" indicates that using a person's correct pronouns is optional.<br><br>How to introduce your pronouns:<br><br>"Hi! My name is Toya and my pronouns are she/they." |

| Prejudiced/outdated terms | Alternate terms | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **Sex change** | Transition | It is important to note that medical intervention is not always involved in one's transition. |
| **Transgendered** | Transgender | Use transgender as an adjective. Not as a noun. |
| **Use of birth name/given name*** | | Deadnaming is using the given name/birth name of a trans person before their transition. It could be considered a form of violence that has the potential to out the person and harm their mental health. |

## Pronouns

Pronouns can be used interchangeably and have different combinations; some people who use multiple pronouns have a preference between them and some do not. You can ask people which set they prefer. *Example: "I saw Sean at the office the other day. They looked great and he had a cute new pair of shoes."*

| Pronouns | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **He/Him/His** | Traditionally masculine pronouns |
| **Mx** | A gender-neutral honorific that can be used in place of Mr., Mrs. and Miss. |
| **She/Her/Hers** | Traditionally feminine pronouns |
| **They/Them/Theirs** | Gender neutral pronouns |
| **Ze/Hir/Hirs** | Gender-neutral neopronouns; neopronouns are any set of singular third-person pronouns that are not officially recognized in the language they are used in, typically created with the intent of being a gender-neutral pronoun set. |
| **Ze/Zir/Zirs** | Gender-neutral neopronouns; neopronouns are any set of singular third-person pronouns that are not officially recognized in the language they are used in, typically created with the intent of being a gender-neutral pronoun set. |

# Accessibility

## Summary

Below are terms often used when describing equitable access to services, organizations and systems.

## Accessibility terms

| Term | Definition | Context |
|---|---|---|
| Ableist | Discrimination or social prejudice against people living with disabilities. | Ableism often reveals our unconscious bias through our use of language, program development, infrastructure planning etc. |
| Accessibility | Ability to access, participate, and benefit | When thinking about accessibility, move beyond singularly focusing on ability to access and begin to center – how am I creating maximum utility for this community? How do we enable participation and create benefit for people living with disabilities, neuro-diverse communities, multi-lingual people, etc.? |
| Diverse abilities | Physical, cognitive, developmental, learning and/or neurological diversity; diverse abilities underscores that all different ability levels have value.<br><br>"Diverse ability" represents the variation of ability levels. | The term diverse ability does not replace "person with a disability."<br><br>When referencing a person with a disability, refer to a person's specific disability if possible. NCDJ has a Disability Language Style Guide for further learning. |
| Elders | Person(s) who pass down cultural knowledge and receive customary authority due to age and experience. | This is a cultural term that often appears in collectivist communities (ex., Indigenous, Korean, Indian, etc.), which is not to be conflated with the term senior. |
| Neurodiversity | Concept normalizing differences in sociability, | Seeks to include variations in cognitive ability (autism, Tourette's, dyslexia, etc.) in |

| Term | Definition | Context |
|------|-----------|---------|
|  | learning, attention, brain function, etc. | the mainstream instead of othering. Other terms focused on inclusion: *People with unique realities.* |
| **Youth** | Sound Transit defines youth as people between the ages of 6-18. | There is no universal definition of youth age. Age parameters may vary differently across community, cultures and organizations. |

## Terms to avoid

| Term to avoid | Replacement |
|---------------|-------------|
| **Disabled** | Person living with disability |
| **Old** | Senior, aging, elder |
| **Transit-dependent** | Core ridership |

# Socioeconomic

## Summary

Below are terms often used to describe situational socioeconomic inequity, some of the phenomena that underpins socio-economic inequity and people experiencing socio-economic inequity.

## Socioeconomic terms

| Term | Definition | Guidance |
|------|-----------|----------|
| **Disinvested neighborhoods** | Purposeful withdrawal of investment from communities resulting in economic inequity (employment, housing and income gaps). | Shift focus from people to institutions perpetuating harm. |
| **Unhoused/unsheltered** | Deprived of shelter |  |

## Terms to avoid

| Term to avoid | Replacement |
|---------------|-------------|
| **Homeless** | People experiencing homelessness; unhoused, unsheltered, houseless. |
| **Low-income neighborhoods** | Disinvested neighborhoods, under-resourced, low-wealth. |

# Preexisting terms and definitions (Title VI & Equity and Inclusion Policy)

## Summary

This list is comprised of terms that have preexisting definitions identified in either Title VI federal compliance or within our Equity and Inclusion Policy. Based on internal stakeholder interviews and outside research, some Title VI terms/definitions are not in alignment with our current equity landscape. We have provided guidance on when these terms require mandatory use for compliance purposes and when there is an opportunity to use alternate language.

## Title VI & Equity and Inclusion Policy terms

| Term | Definition | Guidance |
|------|-----------|----------|
| **Disability (Title VI)** | A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual. | Lead with people-first language: Person with a disability, person living with a disability. Whenever possible, refer to specific disability. Ex. *deafblind*. |
| **Discrimination (Title VI)** | Any action or inaction, whether intentional or unintentional, in any program or activity of a federal aid recipient, sub-recipient or contractor that results in disparate treatment, disparate impact, or perpetuating the effects of prior discrimination based on race, color or national origin. | |
| **Diversity (E&I Policy)** | Range of human differences, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values systems, national origin and political beliefs. | |
| **Equity (E&I Policy)** | Fairness in process, distribution of resources, opportunity and provision of varying levels of support upon need to achieve greater fairness of outcomes. | |

| Term | Definition | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **Inclusion (E&I Policy)** | Involvement and empowerment, where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported and valued. | |
| **Limited English Proficiency (Title VI)** | Refers to persons for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English. It includes people who reported to the U.S. Census that they speak English less than very well, not well or not at all. | The term LEP can be othering as it implies a perceived deficiency. When completing a Title VI analysis to ensure meaningful access to activities/programs for "LEP populations," Limited English Proficiency is the required language. Outside of that context, we recommend using alternative language such as: *ELL (English language learners), MLL (multilingual learners) and CLD (culturally and linguistically Diverse).* |
| **Low-income person (Title VI)** | A person whose median household income is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines. | Sound Transit qualifies low income as people in households earning 150% or less of the poverty level. To avoid deficit-based language, use people-first language. Suggested alternatives include: People whose incomes are below the federal poverty threshold; people whose self-reported income were in the lowest income bracket. |
| **Low-income population (Title VI)** | Any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity, and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a | Outside of use for Title VI compliance, a suggested alternative to Low Income Population is *(Historically) Disinvested Communities.* This term provides more nuance because it focuses on strategic public and private sector decisions that |

| Term | Definition | Guidance |
|------|-----------|----------|
| | proposed FTA program, policy or activity. | have laid the groundwork for economic inequality, instead of using deficit-based language that focuses on the individuals who reside in these communities. |
| **Minority person (Title VI)** | (1) American Indian and Alaska Native, which refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. <br>(2) Asian, which refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. <br>(3) Black or African American, which refers to people having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. <br>(4) Hispanic or Latino, which includes persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. <br>(5) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, which refers to people having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands. | Refer to *people of color*. |

| Term | Definition | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **Minority population (Title VI)** | Any readily identifiable group of minority persons who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient populations (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a proposed program, policy or activity. | Refer to *priority population*. |
| **Minority transit route (Title VI)** | A route that has at least 1/3 of its total revenue mileage in a census block or block group, or traffic analysis zone(s) with a percentage of minority population that exceeds the percentage of minority population in the transit service area. | Core ridership is a new term to denote essential workers, service workers, and those reliant on transit as their main mode of transportation. These are often people of color. |
| **Predominantly minority area (Title VI)** | A geographic area, such as a neighborhood, census tract, block or block group, or traffic analysis zone, where the proportion of minority persons residing in that area exceeds the average proportion of minority persons in the recipient's service area. | Refer to *communities of color*. |
| **Racial equity (E&I Policy)** | Acknowledgment of historical inequity based on race, where race no longer determines one's socio-economic outcomes and when everyone has what they need to thrive. | |
| **Senior (Title VI)** | An individual who is 65 years of age or older. | Describing senior populations can be culture-specific; some preferred alternatives include: *Aging community, elder(s).* |

# Survey Best Practices*

## Self-identification Questions

Below please find some sample demographic questions to use when asking community to self-identify. Self-identification yields valuable advocacy insights because it does not reinforce binary categories or static ideas around identity.

- How do you describe your gender(s)?

- How do you describe your sexual orientation?

- Which racial and ethnic identities do you hold?

    o Aggregate into categories on the back end.

- Do you identify as a person with one or more disabilities?

- Are there any other identities you hold that you want to share?

*More information on survey best practices will be published in the next iteration of this guide.*

# Index

## Consulted Sites

https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/socioeconomic-status

https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/White_Supremacy_Culture.pdf

https://www.ontario.ca/document/data-standards-identification-and-monitoring-systemic-racism/glossary

https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA_Title_VI_FINAL.pdf

https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

https://wsdot.wa.gov/EqualOpportunity/titlevi.htm

https://nbjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/LGBTQCulturalCompetencyTerminologyWorkbook-10-10-11.pdf

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/article/730061

https://pflag.org/glossary

https://www.identiversity.org/terms

https://www.ywboston.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MISS_VIT_BLD-SUPP-FOR-MISS_TRN-AND-DEVEL_SJ-GLOSSARY_MARCH_2016.pdf

https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Key-Equity-Terms-and-Concepts-vol1.pdf

https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-Racism-Glossary.pdf

https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/EquityInclusion/Allyship%20handout.pdf

https://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/about/resources/terms.html

https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667(20)30162-6.pdf

https://www.vox.com/2020/6/30/21300294/bipoc-what-does-it-mean-critical-race-linguistics-jonathan-rosa-deandra-miles-hercules

https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary

https://hbr.org/2020/12/why-you-need-to-stop-using-these-words-and-phrases

https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMms2025396

https://theconversation.com/structural-racism-what-it-is-and-how-it-works-158822

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