



STRATEGY & GOALS 2023

A WAY FORWARD



Together, we're working toward a racially just community where **all** people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable.

United Way of King County has been working to address the needs of King County residents since 1921. We're older than the states of Alaska and Hawaii, television and the Internet, 17 U.S. presidencies, and the discovery of antibiotics. We were in existence when the federal government adopted the 1956 Indian Relocation Act and when racially restrictive covenants were a thing.

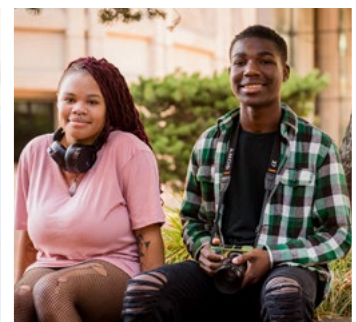
What role does a 101-year organization play in discerning its history, acknowledging its complicity and embracing its accountability? This is a question we've been asking ourselves as part of our commitment to work toward a racially just community.

Our goals around racial justice and being an anti-racist organization depend on understanding where we may have harmed or have caused harm, either through action or inaction. We're examining and changing how the work is done, both internally and externally, to realize our vision of an equitable and just community where all people thrive.

Toward that goal, after a year-long planning process that sought and considered opinions from community members, grantees, public and private funders, donors, volunteers and staff, the United Way of King County board approved the Strategic Roadmap in January 2022 to support the organization in growing and moving forward with thoughtfulness and intention. Focused and energized by the clarity and aspirational goals set forth in it, we are beginning the implementation of annual work plans that are guided by racial equity principles in our program delivery.

What does the Roadmap include? In short, an increased focus on transforming inequitable systems that perpetuate the disparities we see as we work toward a racially just community where *all* people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable.

We admit it's going to be hard work. But together, we can get started. The following pages will invite you into this critical work as we embark on it.



United Way of King County is uniquely positioned to bring people together to promote change and support our neighbors. We listen to and are connected to the people we serve. This allows us the ability to address large-scale issues through funding, direct services, advocacy, mobilizing communities, and elevating BIPOC voices and solutions. Through valuing our relationships and others' expertise, we can use our strengths to co-create powerful systems change to respond to this pivotal moment in our nation's history.

Mission We bring the community together to work toward racial justice by supporting our neighbors and transforming inequitable systems.

Vision We envision equitable and just communities where all people thrive.

Values United Way of King County's values define the core beliefs that guide the organization's work.

- Leadership** We believe in setting and meeting high aspirations and expectations, investing in solutions that work, and inspiring and amplifying others' work.
- Accountability** We believe in holding ourselves accountable to those with whom we are in relationship, delivering on commitments.
- Racial Equity** We believe that building racial equity-focused systems eliminates poverty and racial inequity.
- Integrity** We believe in earning trust by being honest, communicating transparently, and serving and advocating with humility.
- Collaboration** We believe in sharing power with the communities we serve, seeking and incorporating diverse points of view, and working together toward common goals.
- Supportive Work Environment** We believe in creating an excellent work environment that fosters trust, belonging, achievement and collaboration as envisioned in the [Culture of Care](#).



To solve some of our community's toughest challenges, we provide services and supports for the people closest to the pain—those who are marginalized, oppressed and disadvantaged—whose immediate needs can't wait for policy changes.

We also understand that we need to get to the root of systemic issues to fix them. So, we advocate for policies with those closest to power—lawmakers, the corporate sector, partners in philanthropy and other nonprofits—who can transform the systems that caused the problems in the first place and improve lives on a grand scale.

Our systems change work involves engaging the communities we serve to join us in our work to ensure all people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable, and to support them to do their own advocacy.

How will United Way of King County address the systems-level change needed to reduce racial inequities?

1

STRATEGY ONE

Increase resources by building relationships, leveraging expertise and talent, and growing funds to strengthen our impact and support of communities so that we are best positioned to follow through on our commitment to racial justice.

2

STRATEGY TWO

Grow efforts to influence changes that have a direct impact on community members' ability to thrive—directed by, and in partnership with, BIPOC organizations.

3

STRATEGY THREE

Increase impact by using our newly developed Racial Equity Theory of Change to evaluate the alignment of current programs and grow those that are racially equitable, community-centric and share power; while sunseting those that do not.

4

STRATEGY FOUR

Strengthen organizational culture by investing in people and systems, improving the employee experience, and developing a culture of trust and accountability that advances racial equity.

SO, WHAT'S "SYSTEMS CHANGE"?

The United Way of King County board of directors defines “systems change” as a comprehensive effort to change a complex social system through community engagement and structural support to affect policy, community norms, service provision practices, regulations and standards, and financing across the multiple organizations that make up a system to improve population-level outcomes in ways that are racially equitable and self-sustaining.

OUR COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY

An essential thread throughout the strategy development process and its result is the need for United Way of King County, as it continues its pursuit of ensuring people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable, to live into the organization’s racial equity values in a deeply meaningful way. This includes examining and changing how the work is done, both internally and externally.

To better frame this commitment, the following three components have been created: first, an organizational “why” statement; second, a guiding statement from the CEO; and third, a set of definitions to be used as future direction is articulated.

ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT: *WHY RACIAL EQUITY?*

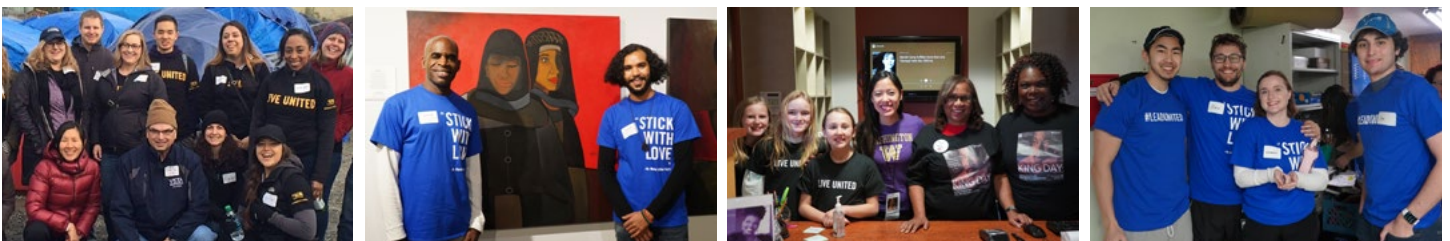
We recognize that...

The United Way of King County benefits from systems of racial inequity and oppression and operates in a society deeply rooted in white supremacy that perpetuates harm and injustice for BIPOC people and communities.

Given this, racial equity is critical to our work because...

In our role as a grantmaker, fundraiser and service provider we have a responsibility to restore power and resources to Black, Indigenous and other communities of color, address racial disparities and support systems change.

All people deserve the opportunity to thrive, manage their own destiny and contribute their unique strengths. By centering expertise, and especially the **lived experience** of BIPOC people and communities, we can tackle the root causes of inequity to bring us closer to our vision of justice, liberation and progress for all.



To learn more about United Way of King County’s vision and strategy, [read the 10-page version of our strategic road map.](#)

It will take all of us to create equitable and just communities where all people thrive. Thank you for your commitment to racial justice and to doing the hard work.

