

ForefrOnt RACIAL EQUITY COLLECTIVE

STATEWIDE MAPPING & SURVEY ANALYSIS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY







Forefront's Racial Equity Collective (The Collective) is a multi-sector community of leaders, nonprofit and private sector organizations, philanthropic funders, and legislators who come together to advance racial equity and carry out Forefront's mission to build a more vibrant social impact sector for all the people of Illinois.

Forefront partnered with NORC at the University of Chicago to design a survey and create a public digital asset map of organizations advancing racial equity in Illinois. NORC is an objective, independent, non-partisan research institution that helps governments, nonprofits, and businesses make better decisions through data and analysis. These findings and map will provide transparency to the sector to avoid duplication and organically form partnerships.

KEY FINDINGS

We defined racial equity as the process of correcting historical or contemporary imbalances between racial and ethnic groups. These imbalances may span across political, legal, social, and economic systems. We present findings from our 2023 survey and interview analysis of Illinois nonprofits, grantmakers, and individuals on their current programs and policies advancing racial equity. The survey gathered a detailed snapshot of 800+ programs and policies across Illinois. Most respondents were operating nonprofits. Nearly half of the respondents were small organizations led and/or staffed by people who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latine or other People of Color (BILPOC). These factors shaped the challenges below. Additionally, interviewees shared how unique, local factors influenced their work.

Challenges to Advancing Racial Equity

 Funding siloes, limited, short-term, inflexible	 Capacity lack time to train, build trust and knowledge	 Systemic Racism historical structural inequities	 Attitudes misconceptions and denial of racism	 Inclusivity need for greater diversity in orgs, sectors, society	 Data limited data & lack shared terminology
---	---	---	--	---	--

Equity Topics Most Cited

- Families & Youth Development
- Public Policy & Advocacy
- Trauma & Healing
- Employment & Labor
- Healthcare
- Housing

While racial equity efforts exploded recently, 22%-30% of the reported programs and policies have existed 10+ years. In identifying the industries, topics, and challenges of their work, 60% of survey respondents addressed systemic inequities through direct services. Many organizations also addressed perceptions of racism and racial inequities through arts and culture. Advancing racial equity is often nuanced and folded with other equity efforts. Most cited equity topics are listed, though the ranking vary between programs and policies.

Regional Factors

- Historical Legacies
- Current Political Climate
- Density & Regional Development
- Proximity to IL Borders
- Support from Stakeholders

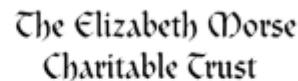
JOIN US

We deeply appreciate the nearly 450 organizations who shared their work with us. We recognize this map does not yet include all who are tirelessly working to dismantle racism in their communities and create an equitable Illinois. If your organization is not represented in this data, take the survey now via the QR code. Please email rec@myforefront.org to join our efforts.



ILLINOIS DATABASE OF RACIAL EQUITY ASSET MAP
myforefront.org/idream

Special thanks to REC's funding partners. To support this work, contact development@myforefront.org.



If you would like to join the Racial Equity Collective, please contact Sharmin Shahjahan at REC@myforefront.org.