

Auditing Resources Using an Anti-Racism Lens

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Introduction

Ontario Organizational Development Program

The [Ontario Organizational Development Program](#) (OODP) provides customized services to meet the organizational development needs of community-based HIV/AIDS organizations and programs. Established in 1995, the mission of the OODP is to strengthen the capacity of HIV/AIDS organizations and programs in Ontario to determine their direction with awareness and to foster a culture within HIV/AIDS organizations and programs in Ontario to take responsibility for their own organizational development.

Why Have a Tool Like This?

A tool for auditing resources using an anti-racism lens (hereafter called *The Anti-Racism Resource Audit Tool*) has been created by the Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP) to support HIV/AIDS organizations and programs in Ontario to develop resources that better reflect the communities they serve and that are impacted by HIV. The Tool supports organizations to assess the written resources and program materials they develop to ensure they are grounded in a framework that explicitly acknowledges and offers ways to dismantle racism. The Tool focuses on **anti-racism** and explicitly names **anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism** for the particular ways in which Black communities and Indigenous people and/or communities experience harm and structural violence. Throughout the document, “resources” will be used to mean written resources and program materials, and these can include:

- Service brochures
- Informational pamphlets
- Workshop presentations and handouts
- Educational resources

A resource on anti-racist writing out of Simon Fraser University (2022) states that “Inclusive writing [content] means paying attention to the ways that language can be, and has been, used to exclude people or groups of people. Exclusive language is often used unintentionally, out of both habit and assumption. So, if you want to write in an inclusive way, you must **intentionally** think

about the perspectives, peoples, and groups that might be excluded and even harmed through careless word choice.”¹ This statement can be applied to all aspects of written resources and program materials, such as graphics, images and symbols.

Additionally, the Style Guide for Reporting on Indigenous People (2017) states that, “Indigenous people are the original inhabitants of what is now called Canada. The history, identities and languages of Indigenous people are complex and diverse. Whenever possible, be specific about the group, people or community, and defer to the community or individual(s) on how they prefer to be identified. In all instances, capitalize.”². It goes on to say that Indigenous people in Canada are categorized by the Canadian government into three distinct groups: First Nations, Inuit and Métis. For the purpose of this Tool, we will use “Indigenous people and/or communities”.

[Appendix A](#) offers more reading on the importance of an anti-racism lens for all your work.

How Do I Use This Tool?

The Tool is composed of a set of standards that you can score to assess your resources to see where you are doing well and where you can improve. Follow the four steps below.

Step 1: Identify a Resource to Review

Identify a resource you want to assess. It could be one of your more popular resources, or one that you have been considering revising. Remember, though, that almost any resource you have could likely be reviewed with an anti-racism lens if it hasn’t been already. Beyond resources, you could also use the standards to consider how such things as program policies, Board policies and partnership agreements align with anti-racist principles, practice and language.

¹ Simon Fraser University (2022). “Inclusive and Anti-Racist Writing Overview.” <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/writing/inclusive-antiracist-writing#:~:text=About%20inclusive%20%26%20antiracist%20writing,-Inclusive%20and%20antiracist&text=Exclusive%20language%20is%20often%20used,harmed%20through%20careless%20word%20choice>.

² Journalists for Human Rights (2017). “Style Guide for Reporting on Indigenous People”. <https://jhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/JHR2017-Style-Book-Indigenous-People.pdf>

Step 2: Determine Who Should Review the Resource

Determine who should be involved in reviewing the resource:

The intended audience for the resource: this may involve asking individuals from the intended audience (e.g., service users, volunteers, peers and/or community members) to audit the resource individually using the tool. You may also decide to engage intended audience members through a focus group discussion where a facilitator uses the tool to gather feedback. Consider having a facilitator that is not a staff person in order to help create a safer space to give feedback on the resource.

Staff: staff may include the individual(s) who developed the resource, the individual(s) most responsible for developing resources in the organization, identified senior leaders and/or those with expertise in the subject matter of the resource. It is best if each individual identified for the review completes the Tool on their own.

After the resource is reviewed, hold a discussion with everyone who completed the Tool in order to review the results. Incorporate any focus group data gathered in that discussion. See where people agreed and where they didn't in terms of the checkmarks; discuss differences in the assessment of the tool and why they may be occurring.

Step 3: Familiarize Yourself with the Standards

Your review of your resource will be much more effective if you take a few minutes and review the 14 standards below in Step 4. This will help you to be more efficient with your time, because when you go to review your resource, you will already have the standards in mind.

Step 4: Review the Resource!

1. Name of Resource:
2. Type of Resource (e.g., service brochure, informational pamphlet, workshop presentation, educational resource):

3. Target Audience (if any):

Read through each of the standards below and think about the degree to which your resource reflects each one. Put a checkmark in the appropriate box for each standard.

	Standard	Low/No Degree	To Some Degree	High Degree	Don't Know	Not Applicable	Notes
1	The resource presents information about HIV/AIDS in a way that respects current-day social contexts, including identifying how barriers impact Black, Indigenous people and/or communities and racialized communities' experience of health care services and supports. ³						
2	The resource acknowledges the history of racism and white supremacy as context for oppression and marginalization experienced today by Black and racialized communities.						
3	The resource acknowledges the history of racism, white supremacy, and colonization as context for oppression and marginalization experienced today by Indigenous people and/or communities.						
4	The resource acknowledges how privilege based on race offers more/better access and experiences as a staff person, volunteer or service user in the HIV sector.						
5	The resource incorporates anti-racist language/terminology, e.g., using "racialized" or "Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC)" instead of						

³ Ward, Branch and Firdkin. "What is Indigenous Cultural Safety—and Why Should I Care About It?" Visions Journal, 2016. <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/indigenous-people-vol11/what-indigenous-cultural-safety-and-why-should-i-care-about-it>

	Standard	Low/No Degree	To Some Degree	High Degree	Don't Know	Not Applicable	Notes
	"visible minority" and capitalizing the terms Black and Indigenous.						
6	The resource distinguishes Indigenous people from people who are "racialized" to recognize that the term "racialized" does not appropriately account for Canada's specific history and context of systemic racism against Indigenous people and/or communities.						
7	The resource centres the voices of Indigenous, Black, and racialized people and/or communities by using examples that reflect a diversity of experiences.						
8	The resource uses graphics, images and symbols which reflect a wide range of communities, and don't simply reinforce whiteness as the norm.						
9	The resource identifies intersectional identities and experiences in addition to race (e.g., disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status). ⁴						
10	The resource expresses relationship dynamics that are free of value judgements or stereotypes based on the dominant culture (e.g., white people depicted as active/givers and Indigenous, Black and racialized people and/or communities depicted as passive/receivers).						

⁴ The concept of intersectionality describes the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination "intersect" to create unique dynamics and effects. All forms of inequality are mutually reinforcing and must therefore be considered together to prevent one form of inequality from reinforcing another. For example, exploring the gender pay gap – without considering how other dimensions such as race, socio-economic status and immigration status – will likely reinforce inequalities among women. It is not possible to do anti-racist work in the HIV sector without thinking about people who are living at these intersections of identity and how they experience the world as well as their access to HIV support and care.

	Standard	Low/No Degree	To Some Degree	High Degree	Don't Know	Not Applicable	Notes
11	The resource offers ways to actively oppose racism, anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism at individual, organizational and/or systemic levels.						
12	The resource was developed with active participation from the communities it talks about, from conceptualization through to completion.						
13	The resource uses plain language.						
14	Based on the intended audience and goal of the resource, the right formats are used (i.e., oral, visual and written formats).						
	TOTAL (number of checkmarks in each column)						

Step 5: Look at Your Results & Next Steps

As stated above, after completing the Tool individually, hold a discussion with everyone who completed the Tool in order to review the results. Explore where people agree and where they don't agree or assessed differently and why. Pay special attention to the standards that were marked low or where there is disagreement.

If you have mostly “low/no degree” (with possibly a few “to some degree” checkmarks), your resource needs to better incorporate an anti-racist framework, inclusive language, or inclusive examples. It is recommended that you conduct additional research, access some expert support and/or consult with your intended communit(ies) for the resource to help you revise your resource to be more inclusive. [Appendix A](#) can be a great place to start.

If you have a mix of “low/no degree” and “to some degree” and “high degree” checkmarks, your resource incorporates an anti-racist framework in some areas, so you have a good start! Review the standards where you scored the lowest and use them as your roadmap for additional review and revisions. It is recommended that you consult additional resources in order to revise and strengthen your resource. Use [Appendix A](#) to get you on your way.

If you have mostly “high degree” (with possibly a few “to some degree” checkmarks), your resource incorporates an anti-racist framework in many areas, so congratulations! It is recommended that you review any standards where you scored low and use them as a roadmap for revisions.

If you chose “Don't Know” or “Not Applicable” for any statements, discuss if you need the answer or if the standard SHOULD apply when considering what kind of revisions might need to occur. If you are not sure, the resources in [Appendix A](#) can offer you guidance.

A Last Note

It should be an ongoing practice to regularly evaluate your resource. Ensure you have confidential ways to gather feedback from your intended users of the resource, so that you can keep revising it to meet stakeholders' needs in the best way possible.

Appendix A: Additional Resources

Annie E. Casey Foundation. “Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: Embracing Racial Equity: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization” which can be accessed on their website: <https://www.aecf.org/resources/race-equity-and-inclusion-action-guide>

Chavez, Felicia Rose. “The anti-racist writing workshop: how to decolonize the creative classroom” which can be access on their website: <https://www.antiracistworkshop.com/>

CommunityWise Resource Centre: “Anti-Racist Organizational Change: Resources & Tools for Nonprofits” which can be accessed on their website: https://communitywise.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/AROC-Resources-and-Tools_web.pdf

Equity in the Center. “AWAKE TO WOKE TO WORK: Building a Race Equity Culture” which can be accessed on their website: https://equityinthecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/eic_aww-pub_wip_final-112021.pdf

Journalists for Human Rights (2017). Style Guide for Reporting on Indigenous People. <https://jhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/JHR2017-Style-Book-Indigenous-People.pdf>

Race Forward, Center for Social Inclusion. (2018). *Ready for Equity in Workforce Development: Racial Equity Readiness Assessment Tool*. Race Forward. <https://www.raceforward.org/practice/Tools/workforce-development-racial-equity-readiness-assessment>

Rubio et al. (2014). *Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity*. Coalition of Communities of Colour.

Shenker-Osorio, Anat. (2017). *Messaging this Moment: A Handbook for Progressive Communicators*. Centre for Community Change. <https://communitychange.org/messaging-moment-handbook-progressive-communicators/>

Simon Fraser University Library Student Learning Commons offers a number of resources on inclusive and anti-racist writing which can be accessed on their website <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/writing/inclusive-antiracist-writing#:~:text=About%20inclusive%20%26%20antiracist%20writing,-Inclusive%20and%20antiracist&text=Exclusive%20language%20is%20often%20used,harmed%20through%20careless%20word%20choice.>

The Centre for Community Organizations. (2019). “White Supremacy Culture in Organizations.” COCO, Kira Page. <https://coco-net.org/white-supremacy-culture-in-organizations/>

The Centre for Community Organizations. (2020). “Tools for Addressing White Dominant Culture” COCO. <https://coco-net.org/Tools-for-addressing-white-supremacy-culture/>

The Centre for Community Organizations. (2020). “Accessibility on Zoom.” COCO, Kira Page. <https://coco-net.org/accessibility-on-zoom/>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015). *Truth & Reconciliation: Calls to Action*.
[https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls to Action English2.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

United Nations. (2007). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

University of Saskatchewan’s Workshop called “Practicing Anti-Racist Language” can be accessed asynchronously on their website:
<https://usask.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=c62911b3-0a53-4c99-bd30-adcd015f17e1&start=1.448648>