

# The Pittsburgh/Southwestern Pennsylvania Initiative for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



*In order to thrive and prosper in the global economy, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region must work collectively to achieve significantly higher levels of inclusion of communities of color and diversity in the workforce, in business ownership and in business development.*

Presented by the Corporate Equity and Inclusion  
Roundtable June 9, 2014

Updates – May 22, 2015, May 4, 2017

This report is made possible by grants from  
the Jewish Federation of Greater  
Pittsburgh – Community Relations Council.

## **Preamble**

The Corporate Equity & Inclusion Roundtable consists of community and corporate partners that are committed to making Southwestern Pennsylvania a better place to live and work for all of its citizens. The Roundtable's purpose is to bring about broad-based, lasting change and breakthroughs in workforce diversity, inclusion and equity in economic opportunities. Our goal is to develop a spirit of inclusiveness, and market our diversity as a positive attribute of our region. We are specifically concerned with ensuring equal access to employment and economic opportunities for African Americans and other people of color throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania.

## **Shared Beliefs**

1. The competitive strength of our region's businesses and organizations and the quality of life available to our citizens and families depend on the full and fair participation of all segments of the community in the region's economic growth. Stagnant socio-economic opportunities, an aging workforce, and high levels of poverty have a detrimental impact on the desirability of a region and can lead to the loss of talented, younger workers who are so important to future economic prosperity.
2. Local businesses, being the main driving force of economic growth in the region, have a powerful and pivotal role to play and must lead the way. Rectifying economic inequities and disparities in workforce representation and business ownership will require focused and deliberate actions to change corporate cultures related to human resource policies and supplier diversity.
3. While many employers in the region are engaged in programs to expand diversity in their workforce, much still remains to be done. Increasing promotional opportunities and improving retention rates among African Americans and other people of color will ensure our businesses and communities benefit from this wealth of talent and potential.
4. Education is the cornerstone of opportunity for all of our citizens. Organizations have a powerful and pivotal role to play in strengthening our educational system to ensure all children become part of a world-class workforce, possessing the knowledge, education, and technological skills necessary to thrive in a global economy.

## **Objectives**

To achieve full participation of all segments of the community the following is necessary:

1. Business opportunities are broadcast to the widest possible market of product and service providers to ensure businesses owned by African Americans and other people

of color are fully aware of all opportunities that capitalize on their products, programs and services.

2. Employment opportunities are broadcast to the widest possible market of qualified job candidates, to encourage recruiting and hiring of African Americans and other people of color who can capitalize on the opportunities offered from entry level to “C suite.”
3. Financial institutions create and expand initiatives that significantly improve access to capital for businesses owned by African Americans and other people of color.
4. SWPA businesses create and implement career-path programs that encourage professional development of the workforce comprised of African Americans and other people of color.

**Goals**

ITEM	TYPE OF ACTIVITY
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase and expand market opportunities for suppliers owned by African Americans and other people of color. <sup>1</sup> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Companies, corporations, non-profits, universities, and colleges should have a stated commitment to African Americans and people of color to a specific spend percentage based on the annual spend commitment of said entity.</li> <li>b. Provide pre-bid “open houses’ specifically oriented to African Americans and people of color for prospective contracts, on at least a semi-annual basis.</li> <li>c. Provide extensive and recurring opportunities to African Americans and people of color for <i>non-bid</i> contracts. (This is a frequently unused, but easily implemented to increase diversity in the allotting of multi-year contracts,).</li> <li>d. Provide annual reports on the utilization of vendors who are African American and people of color. Such reports should include actual <i>total</i> dollar amounts. There should be a specific listing of companies receiving contracts. (The specific contract amount is not required. See sample corporate diversity metrics document located at the end of this document.)</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>Supplier Development</p>

<sup>1</sup> Create a “Hybrid Rooney Rule” to consider awarding construction and procurement contracts to companies owned by African Americans and other people of color.

2. Increase capital available for businesses owned by African Americans and other people of color. <sup>2</sup>	Supplier Development
3. Increase corporate and business participation in minority chambers of commerce, economic development programs, and business development councils.	Supplier Development
4. Increase the diversity of corporate boards of directors.	Corporate Culture
5. Ensure corporate cultures exist where diversity, equity & inclusion are valued, promoted, and expected through actions, words and deeds.	Corporate Culture
6. Increase employment opportunities for African Americans and other people of color at every level, including professional positions, middle and senior management and boards of directors. <sup>3</sup>	Employment Practices

7. Identify and eliminate informal barriers to employment, promotion and retention of African Americans and other people of color.	Employment Practices
8. Evaluate internal staffing plans to ensure African Americans and other people of color are aware of and given consideration for promotional opportunities.	Employment Practices
9. Ensure developmental opportunities such as mentoring, networking, training, and professional development, are provided for all employees to improve the ability of African Americans and other people of color to qualify for advancement opportunities.	Employment Practices
10. Conduct exit interviews with African Americans and other people of color: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine what could have been done differently to make the experience or environment more positive and inclusive.</li> <li>• Use this information to improve recruitment, development, advancement, engagement, and retention of a diverse workforce.</li> </ul>	Employment Practices
11. Develop employment recruitment strategies that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minority advisors and diversity coordinators of local colleges and universities;</li> </ul>	Employment Practices

<sup>2</sup> Create a “Hybrid Rooney Rule.”

<sup>3</sup> Create a version of the “Rooney Rule” to consider interviewing African Americans and other people of color for job openings.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs)<sup>4</sup>;</li> <li>Nationally recognized organizations that further career opportunities for African Americans and other people of color, i.e. National Black MBA and Engineers Associations, etc.</li> </ul>	
<p>12. Create internal and inter-organizational affinity groups or employee resource groups that share effective innovations and remove barriers to equity, diversity and inclusion, which provide a supportive environment for all employees.</p>	<p>Employment Practices</p>
<p>13. Establish cooperative process among firms to share best practices that improve recruitment, development, retention and engagement of African Americans and other people of color. Encourage corporations to share and establish similar internal equity and inclusion metrics that can be combined into an anonymous regional measure for comparing year-after-year progress of the region as a whole.</p>	<p>Employment Practices</p>

<p>14. Adopt the “Ban the Box” policy by updating hiring and recruitment software and job applications so that prior convictions are not an automatic disqualifier to hiring. Update human resource policies so that prior convictions are evaluated to determine relevancy to the position being sought.</p>	<p>Employment Practices</p>
<p>15. Investigate and implement alternative transportations options to encourage greater employment by individuals without automobiles.</p>	<p>Employment Practices</p>
<p>16. Encourage staff to participate on community boards to broaden their networks and provide expertise, resources and support to community organizations.</p>	<p>Community Outreach</p>
<p>17. Increase corporate allocations for sustainable projects/programs that improve communities of African Americans and other people of color. Encourage civic and philanthropic organizations to do the same.</p>	<p>Community Outreach</p>
<p>18. Invest and create jobs in neighborhoods where populated by African Americans and other people of color typically reside.</p>	<p>Community Outreach</p>
<p>19. Establish partnerships with public school systems, including vocational programs, to support curriculum development and establish programs for career exploration, mentoring, internships, job shadowing, and entry level employment.</p>	<p>Education</p>

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<sup>4</sup> For listings and contact information of HBUs and PBIs, Companies should contact NAFEO (the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education). [www.nafeonation.org](http://www.nafeonation.org)

20. Establish community investment in effective (NPO) non-profit organizations providing career training and placement programs that build sustainable capacity and scale. This should be an <i>ongoing, permanent</i> commitment to the community.	
21. Establish partnerships with community colleges, universities, and trade schools to develop curriculum to support “industry specific” needs.	Education

**Action Plan**

1. Organizations should select and implement goals that will promote an internal culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
2. Organizations should track and report their results year-over-year in terms of:
  - a. The total “supply-chain spend” to organizations owned by African Americans and other people of color, and the percentage of that spend in relationship to all purchases.
  - b. The number of African Americans and other people of color hired and/or promoted into entry-level positions, professional positions, middle and senior management positions, and boards of directors, and the percentages in relationship to the totals hired and/or promoted at each level.
  - c. The turnover of African Americans and other people of color in entry-level positions, professional positions, middle and senior management positions, and boards of directors in relationship to total turnover at each level.
  - d. Other metrics based on the selected goals. See Appendix for other data collection metrics.
3. The Corporate Equity & Inclusion Roundtable Advisory Board and Working Group will:
  - a. Develop and provide strategies and tactics to support participating companies’ efforts to achieve the outlined goals.
  - b. Identify priority initiatives.
  - c. Establish working groups to focus on solutions.
  - d. Identify companies deserving special recognition based on exemplary results.
  - e. Hold an annual event to celebrate successes.

**Time Horizons**

The full attainment of our goals is a long-term undertaking. This initiative is seen as a concerted effort of five years, with the last reporting period for this Initiative being the first quarter of 2018. At the end of the fifth year of the implementation of the goals of the Initiative there will be a full assessment of the effectiveness of our collective efforts, with a view toward plans and goals for future years.