

Anti-Racism Program Critical Milestones

Introduction

Since the establishment of the Anti-Racism program in 2021, the program has engaged more than 2,500 people in the community and over 3,000 employees within the Organization to understand the lived and living experiences of Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized peoples and their recommendations for creating an anti-racist city and organization.

Systemic Changes that Impact Calgarians

Calgary Community Anti-Racism Action Strategy

- The City of Calgary hired consultants Habitus and ActionDignity to engage with Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized community members to develop the Calgary Community Anti-Racism Action Strategy. From 2021 to 2022, the consultants utilized focus groups, interviews, surveys, and polls to engage with over 2,500 community members. Participants ranged in racial identity, ethnicity, age, language, and primary residency within the city (see Figure 1 for further information). The resulting Community Anti-Racism Action Strategy discusses the barriers Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized peoples experience and directs The City of Calgary to take bold and courageous actions to bring systemic change to the municipal government, as well as the broader city of Calgary.
- The key community findings from the Strategy focus on recommendations that relate to four main themes:
 - Lack of awareness, accessibility and responsiveness of services and resources;
 - Failure to ensure safety and experiences of mistreatment by public safety providers;
 - Lack of representation in workplaces, healthcare, educational facilities, and political processes; and
 - Underinvestment and unequal distribution of resources and services.
- The Strategy recommends key actions to attend to systemic racism over a five-year period to improve accessibility, responsiveness, and accountability in The City and community; representation of Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized peoples; and participatory governance.

Systemic Changes that Impact City of Calgary Employees

Developing the Racial Equity Assessment Model

- As part of The City of Calgary's commitment to anti-racism, the organization engaged Ernst & Young LLP to help develop the Racial Equity Assessment Model. The model is a tool that helps assess internal policies, practices, and culture with a racial equity lens, evaluate findings, inform decision making, and support anti-racism actions across the organization.
- To support the development of the model, a high-level preliminary assessment was conducted using qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. This research process focused on the employee experience and included a review of relevant administrative documentation, interviews with leaders, focus groups involving different levels of Administration, a joint Cultural Assessment and Anti-Racism Survey, equitable leader assessment, and external consultation with subject matter experts. Over 3,000 employees were engaged in these processes.
- To foster racial equity actions, a cohort of cross departmental City employees were involved in knowledge transfer sessions which focused on the delivery and application of the Racial Equity Assessment Model.

Anti-Racism Learning and Development

- To facilitate transformational organizational change, anti-racism learning and development opportunities are offered and available to all City employees. The program adopts a co-creation approach to strengthen the integration of anti-racism concepts into day-to-day practice. The Program often collaborates with respective leaders, learning and development consultants, human resources business partners, and support staff to understand the context of the division/business unit seeking support.
- In becoming an anti-racist organization, investing in learning and development to address systemic racism also require evaluation of strategies. To gauge the impact of anti-racism learning and development actions, performance measures and indicators have been developed. These measures are administered in a survey to understand how the activity has influenced behaviours, skills, or attitudes, from the participant's perspective, post activity. Currently, these measures focus on change related to overcoming the fear of discussing racism; awareness of the impact of systemic racism and racial inequities; and actioning anti-racism in the workplace.
- Additional feedback loops are being explored to ensure learning and development opportunities continue to be reflective of staff and organizational needs in hybrid and service delivery contexts. The Anti-Racism Program has facilitated over 100 learning and development sessions across various departments in the organization.

Supporting Difficult Conversations

- The Anti-Racism Program responds to queries made by leaders and frontline staff who are addressing issues such as racism, microaggressions, fostering safe spaces, and are seeking ways to model anti-racism approaches and behaviours in workplace settings. Through conversations with employees, the Anti-Racism Program has learned about existing racial inequities experienced by Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized employees, and how this contributes to the perpetuation of systemic racism. Themes that have emerged from these engagements include: a lack of knowledge of what systemic racism is and how it presents in the workplace; support needed to develop anti-racism skills for leaders; and racial equity gaps that exist in policies and practices, and the effects on workplace advancement, safety, and accountability.

Systemic Changes that Impact Public Safety, Order, Peace, and Dignity

Public Safety Action Strategy

- The program is engaging with Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized Calgarians on their experiences of hate in public spaces with municipal enforcement and City service providers, including but not limited to Calgary Police Service, Emergency Management & Community Safety (community peace officers and 9-1-1) Corporate Security, Calgary Fire Department, and Recreation & Social Programs.
- A survey has been designed that will be shared publicly with 1,500+ Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized groups in Calgary on their experience of safety in public spaces. Case interviews, focus groups and storytelling will also be used to engage with 500 additional Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized Calgarians to understand their lived experiences of hate activities, racism, and discrimination.
- The information gathered from the community will be shared with Indigenous, legal and policy, and community wellbeing/public safety groups. These special interest groups will review the community feedback to develop action plans and build a network of champions across the city.
- Internal City staff engagement will take place to reflect on the experiences of the community and co-develop actions for systems change that include re-defining public safety, building a hate-free environment, and positively impacting Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized communities.

Anti-Racism Public safety training and education

- Customized anti-racism training has been developed for public safety providers to educate them on the historical evolution of toxic public spaces and how it has impacted Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized peoples. The training develops skills and creates awareness for public safety providers to ensure their interactions with community members foregrounds the safety and dignity of all Calgarians, especially Indigenous, Black, and diverse Racialized peoples.

- There have been over 30 anti-racism public safety learning and development opportunities with more than 400 individuals, internally and externally, to create awareness of systemic racism in public safety design and delivery, and to build relationships with public safety providers to develop anti-racism strategy actions.

The Anti-Racism Program is participating in ride and sit-alongs with public safety providers to understand their role, identify racial inequities, and provide opportunities for systems changes that dismantle the root causes of racialization. The aim of this collaboration is to create racially just public service delivery that ensures the safety, well-being, and dignity of all Calgarians.

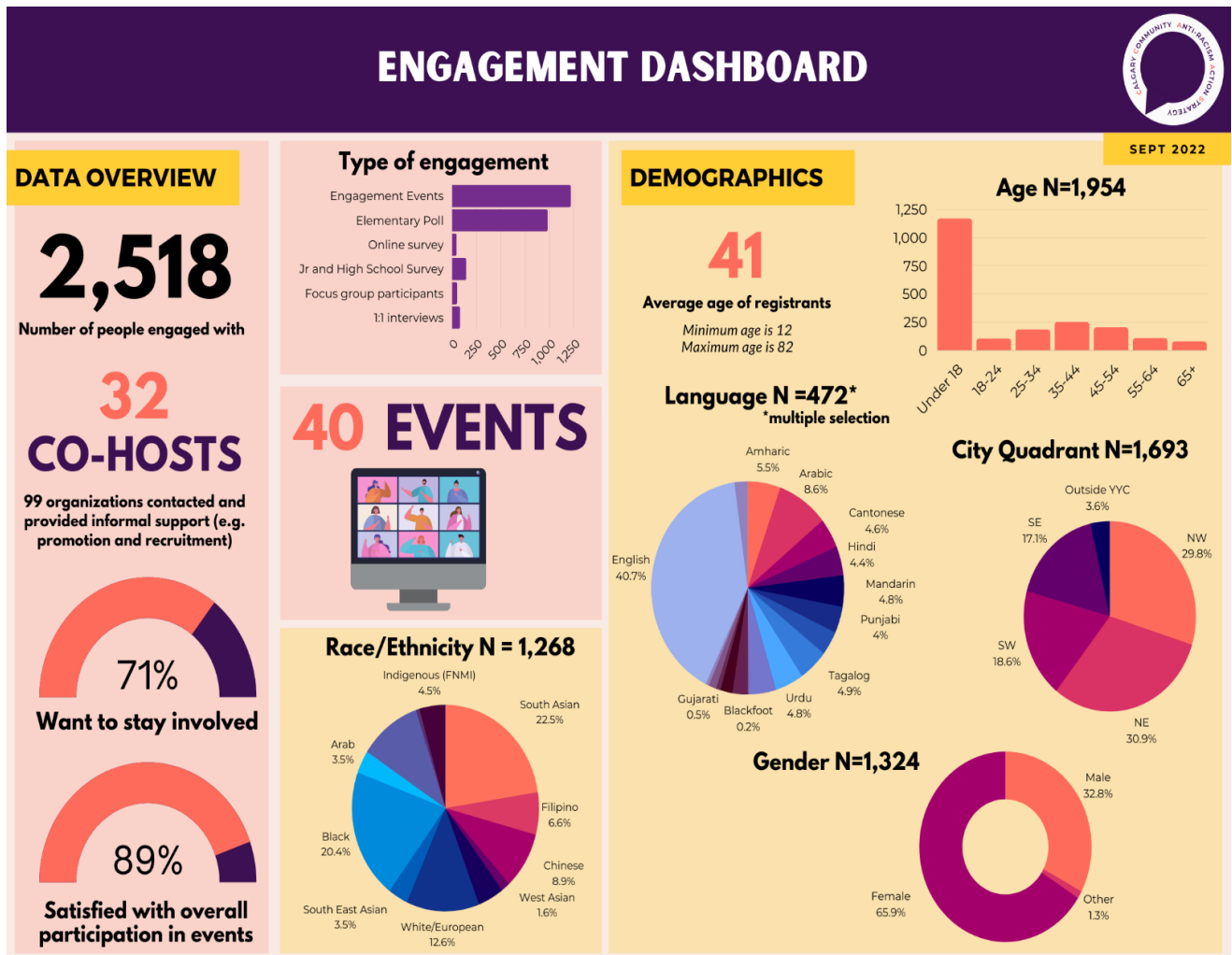


Figure 1: Community engagement dashboard