



Council for Economic and Racial Equity Charter

BACKGROUND

With the adoption of the [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#) by the Prosper Portland Board on May 13, 2015, the agency committed to build an economy that works for everyone, especially for communities of color and those historically underserved. Prosper Portland's Social Equity Policy plays a critical role, ensuring implementation and monitoring of equitable practices. The formation of a new group of individuals with unique skills, experience, and expertise in the implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion will help us achieve our goals. This new group will be called the the Council for Economic and Racial Equity (CERE).

CITY of PORTLAND SOCIAL EQUITY

The City of Portland defines equity in the following way: *"Equity is **when everyone has access to the opportunity necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential.** We have a shared fate as individuals within a community, and communities within a society. All communities need the ability to shape their own present and future. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefits us all."*¹

PROSPER PORTLAND'S EQUITY STATEMENT

We acknowledge our past as we move forward to create economic opportunity and prosperity for all communities. We make racial equity the foundation of our community and economic development work. We hold ourselves accountable to Portland's communities of color and others our work has negatively impacted. While racial equity is the primary lens to focus our efforts, we understand the connection between racism and other forms of bias that lead to oppression.

Within our workplace and working with our partners, we embrace values of authentic inclusion, transparency, and collaboration.

We work toward nothing less than an anti-racist Portland that welcomes and serves all communities and perspectives. We encourage our partners to do the same.

Advancing **Equity** at Prosper Portland means the following:

1. Because opportunities currently do not exist for everyone, equity is a restorative measure of redistributing benefits and burdens.
2. Because as individuals we operate within systems that create inequities, equity requires both individual and systems level change.
3. Because "business as usual" will not change by itself, equity requires transforming the culture that produces different outcomes of the organization.

¹ <http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/index.cfm?c=58776&a=420370>

Equity and **equality** are not the same thing. Equality is treating everyone the same, while equity is ensuring everyone has what they need to be successful. While equality aims to promote fairness, it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and has the same needs and goals.

CERE's RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENT

We recognize that inequity, intentional and unintentional, has always existed. There is a false promise that anyone can achieve success through hard work. Our nation was built upon the labor, ideas and efforts of exploited people of color who were denied success. Oppression continues to thrive today and is a direct result of systemic racism that sustains the wealth and power of the dominant culture and minimizes access to opportunities and resources to disenfranchised communities. We commit to continuously reflect and challenge the ways in which we, as a community, and as individuals, perpetuate inequity. Remaining passive or neutral makes us complicit in the oppression of others. By seeing, hearing, and valuing the diversity and strength of our communities we hope to create prosperity and generational support for disenfranchised communities in Portland.

CERE sees racial equity as both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, we achieve racial equity when race and the intersectionality of race no longer determine one's socioeconomic future. As a process to measure success, diverse communities of color will become the owners, planners, and decision-makers in the systems that govern their communities.

We acknowledge that we operate on the stolen land of resilient, indigenous communities, and one of our specific intentions is to provide all people, especially those most impacted by racial inequities, the infrastructure needed to thrive.

CERE's SCOPE OF WORK

CERE members will help ensure racial and economic equity are the primary lens used in Prosper Portland's policies, programs, projects, investments, and strategies to advance equitable outcomes and to decenter whiteness. Initially, the major responsibilities of CERE will be to:

- Identify institutional racism and cultural barriers that prohibit equitable access to Prosper Portland resources
- Make recommendations to dismantle institutional racism and to improve diversity and cultural competency
- Review and provide input on Prosper Portland outcomes and impact reporting/**Provide ongoing reporting of programs and projects based on existing data collection timelines**
- Advise and provide guidance on Prosper Portland's equity outcomes identified in Agency Work Plan
- Identify potential partnerships and assist in making connections between Prosper Portland and historically underserved populations (or communities)
- Provide an annual update of accomplishments to the Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners and have **CERE representation on the Board of Commissioners on a quarterly basis**
- **Hold biannual meetings with Prosper Portland management that are open to Prosper Portland staff to discuss progress and brainstorm ideas**
- **Co-chairs will have quarterly meetings with Prosper Portland's executive director if co-chairs deem it necessary.**

TEAM EXPECTATIONS

Team members are expected to abide by these ground rules when participating in CERE activities:

- Foster and commit to both active and reflective listening skills;
- Create a safe, open, nurturing, and respectful environment;
- Step up and speak your truth;
- Step back and ensure all voices are heard;
- Be courageous and take risks;
- Give feedback with kindness;
- Honor confidentiality and trust;
- Work collaboratively to bring out the best ideas from the group;
- Challenge ourselves in our learning and understanding.
- Be mindful and understanding of Intent vs Impact

These ground rules will be reviewed annually and may be revised and updated based on opportunities to increase equitable practices at CERE meetings.

STRUCTURE

CERE will be composed of 14 people with diverse backgrounds, experience, or expertise relevant to delivering on equity initiatives and outcomes in community and economic development, including:

- Culturally responsive service provision and policy making
- Diverse contracting and workforce
- Community benefit agreements
- Community leadership and engagement
- Workforce development and hiring

CERE will be represented by two co-chairs designated by the full group. Co-chairs will serve two-year terms for consistency.

In addition, CERE co-chairs are entrusted to:

- Commit to additional hours needed to plan monthly meetings and ensure transparency and alignment (10 hours per month approximately)
- Hold group accountable to participants' expectations and attendance
- Assist in facilitation
- Check in with members as needed
- Maintain a thorough understanding of the existence and impact of racism and other oppressions that perpetuate societal inequities through lived experiences;
- Demonstrate ability to articulate the value and benefit of eliminating bias, discrimination, and institutional racism;
- Be willing to be courageous, take risks, ask questions, and speak truth to power.
- Share knowledge of key topic areas in the scope

CERE will have the option to name one adviser per term, in recognition of past members who have played critical roles in the creation and progress of the group.

CERE will reflect Portland's racial demographic makeup (i.e., diversity in ethnicity, age, gender, and geography).

Time Commitment:

CERE meetings will be monthly and are expected to be two to three hours in length. Members may also be asked to participate on ad hoc sub-committees to address specific initiatives and projects related to CERE's scope of work.

Subcommittees: Each CERE member may serve on sub-committees established by the group to provide focus on a program, project, or initiative.

Meeting Attendance: CERE members are expected to attend all meetings either in person or via phone and should not send delegates. Members who are unable to attend a meeting must contact the Prosper Portland staff and/or co-chairs in advance. If a member misses up to three meetings in a twelve-month period (consecutive or not), CERE's co-chairs will evaluate the circumstances and decide whether that member should continue to serve on CERE directly. Co-chairs will work with members who cannot commit the time needed to CERE to find alternate ways to participate when desired.

Organization and Facilitation: The co-chairs in coordination with Prosper Portland staff will send out a meeting agenda and any related materials (including prior meeting summaries) prior to the CERE meeting. Prosper Portland will provide administrative support and project/program/policy expertise as appropriate to CERE. Facilitation of each meeting will be shared among CERE members, Prosper Portland staff and professional facilitators as needed. As applicable, meetings will be open to the public and provide a set amount of time at the beginning of each meeting for public comment.

Decision-making Process for Providing Recommendations: CERE recommendations should represent a broad base of collective wisdom about what will best serve our city. CERE will work by consensus in making decisions or in developing recommendations to be forwarded to the appropriate individual or body. If consensus is not possible, CERE will allow for a simple majority vote by verbal assent to provide the basis for a decision or a recommendation.

When a meeting has low attendance, members are still empowered to make decisions using the following protocol.

Intent: Everyone wants to be here and sometimes that can't happen. We believe in co-ownership and co-creation.

- The people in the room have the trust of the group to make decisions.
- We will use call-in resources when needed and nominate a facilitator for the day from the group.
- Decisions made will be shared with all.
- One week after meeting people can vote yes, no or abstain via email.
- All decisions will be documented to be here for all of us.

Term Length: CERE members are expected to serve a term of up to two years. Every two years, CERE co-chairs and Prosper Portland staff will review CERE membership to determine if its composition can effectively carry out the work of CERE and if all members can maintain the required time commitment. CERE membership may be rescinded at any time by a decision of co-chairs and Prosper Portland for reasons including, but not limited to, poor attendance, disengagement, or lack of participation.

Recruitment: When a vacancy exists on CERE, the co-chairs and Prosper Portland will recruit new members using the composition and qualifications criteria described above. Recruitment activities may include a community-wide solicitation for new members or targeted recruitment of individuals. When seeking to fill a vacancy, CERE members may nominate individuals. Once all nominations are received, the CERE co-chairs and Prosper Portland staff will review and consider all nominations and select a new member to recommend to the executive director. The executive director will formally appoint members to CERE based only on recommendations received from co-chairs and staff.

Budget and Compensation: CERE members will have an annual budget to be determined on a yearly basis and receive stipends in accordance with Prosper Portland advisory committee/community engagement guidelines.