

PROSPER PORTLAND EQUITY COUNCIL CHARTER

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EQUITY COUNCIL

1.1 **Purpose.** Prosper Portland’s Board of Commissioners hereby charters the Equity Council (or “Council”) to be a supporting body for agency-wide culture change and providing advice on organizational equitable practices to achieve it.

1.2 **Scope.** To achieve its purpose, the Council will:

- a. Support the culture change towards a more inclusive and equitable culture
 - Assist in the identification of institutional racism and cultural barriers that prohibit equitable access to Prosper Portland resources
 - Provide leadership for creating a culturally responsive work environment
 - Model effective and inclusive engagement with underrepresented communities
 - Initiate and champion courageous conversations that increase employee awareness and sensitivity to issues of race, privilege, and inequity;
- b. Identify and enable training opportunities to support individual and agency-wide skill building
 - provide support in the delivery of training, facilitation and other assistance, as necessary, to promote progress toward achieving Equity Policy objectives
 - Help Facilitate the involvement of the Prosper Portland Leadership Management in Council initiatives;
- c. Review and provide input on key elements of the equity framework and equity action plan
- d. Act as conduits to/from respective teams for agency-wide discussions.

1.3 **“Equity,” defined.** 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*

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.

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.

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

2.0 EQUITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The recruitment and selection of Council members shall follow the process detailed below:

2.1 Size. The Council will consist of 12 Prosper Portland employees and may also include one external representative and one Prosper Portland board member.

2.2 Composition. The Council will strive to compose itself with members that include a wide range of organizational roles, skills, and points of view in alignment with the scope of work. Prosper Portland's Executive Director, Human Resources Director and Equity, Governance and Communications Director and Equity and Inclusion Program Manager will be ongoing members. For the remaining 8 seats the Council will aim to have representatives from different positions and functions.

2.3 Preferred Qualifications. The following qualifications are preferred for all Council members:

- Ability to stay engaged in difficult conversations on bias, racism, and privilege;
- Willingness and ability to lead discussions on equity in their own department and at various levels of the organization;
- Willingness to be courageous, take risks, ask questions, and speak truth to power.
- A commitment to Equity Council Charter & Purpose
- Competency in foundational equity issues, practices and implicit bias
- Demonstrated commitment to personal growth and ongoing learning on issues of equity and inclusion at Prosper Portland and in the community
- Readiness to talk about complex issues related to race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, culture and other identities as it relates to our work
- Prepared to work on advancing equity internally and externally, and to mentor other staff to advance equity

2.4 Recruitment. When a vacancy exists on the Council, the Council will recruit new members using the composition and qualifications criteria described above. Recruitment activities may include an agency-wide solicitation for new members or targeted recruitment of individuals. When seeking to fill a vacancy, Council members may nominate individuals and the Council may accept written expressions of interest from Prosper Portland staff. Once all nominations are received, the Council will review and consider all nominations and select a new member to recommend to the Executive Director using the decision-making process described in Section 4.0. The Executive Director will formally appoint members to the Council based only on recommendations received from the Council. When an individual is selected to serve on the Council, the Executive Director will notify the individual and his or her supervisor at the same time to ensure that the supervisor can approve the required allocation from the individual's workplan. Managers are strongly encouraged to work with new Council members to adjust individual's workplan to allow for participation on the Council.

2.5 Time Commitment. All members must commit to *a minimum of ten (10) hours* per month to carry out the work of the Council. This time commitment includes, but is not limited to, reviewing meeting notes and handouts, attending trainings, and additional meetings related to Equity Council business as needed. In addition, Equity Council members may present at Commission Meetings and participate in briefings with the Executive Team, Executive Director and with community stakeholders, to discuss Equity Council initiatives.

2.6 Meeting Attendance. Council members are expected to attend all monthly meetings. Members who are unable to attend a meeting should contact the Equity and Inclusion Program manager in advance. If a member misses three meetings in a twelve-month period, the Council will evaluate the circumstances and decide on whether that member should continue to serve on the Council.

2.7 Staffing. The Social Equity, Policy and Communications Director will act as sponsor for the Council and the Equity and Inclusion Program Manager will act as project manager.

2.8 Term Lengths. Council members are expected to serve a term of at least two years and no more than four years unless the member is in one of the named positions (e.g. HR director). Every two years, the Council will review its membership to determine if its composition can effectively carry out the work of the Council and if all members can maintain the required time commitment. If new members are required, the Council will follow the recruitment options described above. Equity Council membership may be rescinded at any time by a decision of the Council for reasons including, but not limited to, poor attendance disruptive behavior, or lack of commitment to the scope of work. Previous members will have the ability to remain engaged in supportive roles within activities and efforts Equity Council members will pursue.

3.0 GROUND RULES

Members are expected to abide these ground rules when participating in Council activities:

- Create equal power sharing in the room regardless of position;
- 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;
- Assume the best of intentions;
- Honor confidentiality and trust;
- Work collaboratively to bring out the best ideas from the group; and
- Challenge ourselves in our learning and understanding.

4.0 DECISION-MAKING

The Council represents a diversity of expertise, skill sets, and viewpoints. As such, Council members are expected to listen, analyze, and contribute in ways that further the Council's goals. Council recommendations and decisions should represent a broad base of collective wisdom that will best serve Prosper Portland.

4.1 **Consensus.** When making decision, the Council will strive to reach consensus, a decision-making method where the group reaches substantial, though not necessarily unanimous, agreement on matters of overall direction and policy.

4.2 **Supermajority.** If consensus on a decision cannot be reached, the decision will be made by a supermajority (two-thirds) vote of members in a Council meeting. In these cases, the Council will offer the opportunity to include minority reports in meeting summaries.

4.3 **Quorum.** A quorum is required to conduct business and make official decisions (e.g., voting on new members, approving a strategic plan). A quorum is defined as 50% of the total Council membership, plus one, rounded up. For instance, if the Council has twelve members, a quorum is seven members. Once a quorum is reached, a quorum is maintained for the remainder of the meeting, even if a member leaves during the meeting.

4.4 **Changing this Charter.** Changes to Section 1.0 and 4.0 may only be made through approval by Prosper Portland’s Board of Commissioners. Changes to Section 2.0 and 3.0 may be made through a supermajority vote of the Council’s members.

5.0 ADOPTION OF THIS CHARTER

This Charter was originally adopted on May 11, 2016 and last revised on April ____, 2019.

By: _____ By: _____

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Equity Council Sponsor