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JUSTICE EQUITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION

INITIATIVE v 1.1

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP

MARCH 2022

INTRODUCTION

This document presents Equity Lab and its framework, and it outlines the Miller Hull JEDI Initiative.

Miller Hull aspires to **Do Good, Go Deep** and **Be Bold**. Since we're at the beginning of our anti-racist journey, this Initiative serves to describe what we believe is possible for us as a firm, and not what is mandated by either Federal or State law. By publishing this Initiative, we seek to set an example of racial equity, opportunity, and sponsorship for the profession of architecture. We acknowledge there will be both successes and failures; we commit to celebrating our successes and will create learning opportunities from our failures. Therefore, this Initiative will be a living document, which will be regularly discussed, revised, and updated, in the process of realizing Miller Hull's potential.

Leading With Race. Equity Lab recognizes the importance of ending all forms of oppression, and in version 1.0 of the Miller Hull JEDI Initiative we have chosen to lead with race as the best way to work toward that goal. Race is unique in that there is not a single example of any system in our society that does not suffer from racial disparities in outcomes. Race is also unique in that inequities based on race exist within every other dimension of identity, such as income, gender, sexuality, education, and age. The tools we use to understand and eliminate systemic racism can also be used to understand and eliminate other systemic oppressions. Leading with race is an inherently intersectional approach that we believe provides the best way to ensure our work produces positive change in the lived experiences of every person in our community.

GLOSSARY

Please visit racialequitytools.org for a resource of anti-racist terms.

EQUITY LAB

The mission of Equity Lab is to continue to foster an anti-racist environment within Miller Hull that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, supported, respected, protected and welcomed. We must continually evaluate our progress while remaining open to criticism, discomfort, and learning as we acknowledge that although we don't have all the answers, we have an obligation to move the dial in an anti-racist direction.

By equipping our internal Miller Hull community with the tools, knowledge, and skills to better understand the necessity and urgency of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work, we can promote anti-racism in all external facets of our work and business. **Equity Lab is an advisory group** of individuals within the Miller Hull Partnership who collectively provide **recommendations, support and guidance** as we continue on our JEDI path. Equity Lab is also introspective, self-evaluating and evolving - we aim to hold **ourselves and our community accountable** to a high standard of anti-racist practice and recognize that as we are in the beginning of the journey, our methods and authorship may change to better achieve justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

We believe that architecture designed by teams of diverse, multicultural and multiracial talent starts from a broader basis of understanding and results in a built environment better designed for all people.

We do our work best when we do it together. We do our best work when we include all voices.

OUR VISION

To: foster an anti-racist practice and community at Miller Hull

In a way that: focuses on continual, honest and open re-evaluation of all aspects of our practice through a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lens

So that: we maintain a safe and trustworthy community that implements the best architecture that reflects our commitment to equity and becomes the change we wish to see in our industry and beyond.

FRAMEWORK

Equity Lab is an advisory group of individuals within the Miller Hull Partnership who collectively provide recommendations, support and guidance to the Partners and office at large as we collectively continue on our JEDI path. Equity Lab is also introspective, self-evaluating and evolving - we aim to hold ourselves and our community accountable to a high standard of anti-racist practice and recognize that as we are in the beginning of the journey, our methods and make up may change to better achieve diversity, equity and inclusion.

Equity Lab is responsible for implementing the goals, objectives and strategies outlined in this Initiative. Equity Lab currently meets every two weeks for one hour to discuss and work on these goals. Equity Lab participation and work is paid time. Equity Lab members are expected to attend all meetings and actively contribute to the group's work. Equity Lab will provide brief updates on current progress and planned work at quarterly office meetings, Open Mic discussions, and/or MHuse posts.

HOW OUR MEMBERSHIP WORKS

Equity Lab is intended to be rotational and representative of the organizational structure of the office at large. The following will outline the intended membership of Equity Lab including membership, terms, and roles.

The recommended membership of Equity Lab should be representative of the general composition of the office in terms of Partners, Principals and Associates, and Staff both Architectural and Non-architectural. Representation should also reflect the range of staff at all career stages/levels and from each studio location. Ideally, the racial makeup of Equity Lab will also be similar to that of the office (e.g., if the office is currently composed of 75% white staff and 25% Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) staff, this will also be reflected in Equity Lab membership).

The actual membership-mix and demographics are subject to interest in participation and may be adjusted based on availability.

Recommended Membership:	(9 members)
1. Partner Representative	(1)
2. Principals and Associates	(1-3)
3. Non-Architecture Staff	(1-3)
4. Architecture Staff	(3-5)

The Partner member role is to communicate between Equity Lab and the Partnership group as well as to facilitate decision making.

TENURE

Partner Representative: 5-year commitment or as determined by the Partners

PA, Non-Architecture Staff and Architecture Staff: 2-year commitment

Equity Lab is a minimum two-year commitment. Terms will begin and end on a staggered 1-year basis so that there is a continuous transfer of context, history, and general information. In other words, the recommended total members for Equity Lab (not including the Partner representative) is 9; in any given year, 3 existing members' terms will end, and 3 new members' terms will begin. Note that terms for the inaugural group of Equity Lab may be extended so that there is a smooth transition for future groups.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As new members cycle on, their roles should be established and made clear per the following categories:

Objective Leads

Miller Hull has established internal goals and made commitments through external pledges with our local NOMA chapters. These internal goals and pledges will be achieved through a series of actions. For each action, there are assigned Equity Lab members (one lead and support roles as required) who will champion the action and associated commitments, work, and follow-through. Each Equity Lab member must serve as a lead on at least one action, but can assist with any and as many objectives as they are interested in. This requirement of each Equity Lab member is to ensure that our commitments are championed, and progress is continual.

Minutes and Agenda Planning

Producing meeting minutes and meeting agendas should be shared equally by all Equity Lab members (not including the Partner). This can be done on a rotating weekly basis, a monthly basis, or however is agreed upon by the group at large. This ensures that the administrative work is equitably shared among all members.

Meeting agendas and notes are kept in One Note.

File location for Equity Lab on the server: Y:\OFFICE\EQUITY LAB

Ops Groups

Equity Lab works with Ops groups to establish uniform criteria for membership where applicable, publicizing opportunities with the groups or associated Labs, and other general communication. One EL representative is assigned to each Ops group to facilitate communication and monitor progress of initiatives that the Ops Groups are working on in conjunction with Equity Lab.

NOMA NW and SoCal NOMA

We have made pledge commitments to our local regional NOMA chapters. While many of these pledge items overlap, the administration and organizations are separate. To track and report progress and status, at least one Equity Lab member from each Studio will be the representative and general contact for the respective NOMA organizations. These members will also be responsible for tracking general pledge accountability for their respective organization.

Role Matrix:

This is a living matrix and should be updated as membership transitions with rolling appointments. This matrix outlines roles and responsibilities as defined in this document. The current matrix is located in the Equity Lab OneNote and will be posted to the MHuse.

JEDI INITIATIVE

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Our JEDI Initiative is broken into three key goals:

- Goal 1:** Miller Hull fosters an anti-racist environment that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, protected, and welcomed.
- Goal 2:** Miller Hull designs equitable projects.
- Goal 3:** Miller Hull practices in an anti-racist Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) industry.



NOMA PLEDGES

In addition to staying accountable to Miller Hull's self-evaluation and commitment to anti-racist efforts, our Initiative targets meeting pledges made with our local NOMA chapters.

GOAL 1:

Miller Hull fosters an anti-racist environment that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, protected, and welcomed

Objective A: Educate ourselves

STRATEGY A.1: Facilitate anti-racist self-awareness and continuous learning

ACTIONS:

- Every other year, hire a third-party diversity, equity and inclusion consultant to perform assessment of Miller Hull
- Provide ongoing DEI training to every staff member, including allyship training
- Track progress via annual employee surveys
- Publish anti-racist book list on the MHuse
- Organize a book club to continue important conversations about race
- Educate all staff on the JUST label criteria for Diversity & Inclusion and Equity sections
- Provide education to both studios on the historic and current history of the indigenous stewards of Seattle and San Diego

STRATEGY A.2: Recognize and acknowledge systemic and institutional racism

ACTIONS:

- Openly state “Black Lives Matter” and acknowledge U.S. history of systemic racism
- Get holistic buy in from PPA and staff that systemic racism and gender inequality in America is real, pervasive and continues to persist in our current structures and interactions
- Investigate and address ways in which institutional racism manifests within Miller Hull (e.g., salary transparency, pay equity)
- Every project will research the land specific to the project to understand the lands on which it sits.
- Investigate what a land acknowledgment is. Why we would do it? What’s the point? Who do we harm? How can we do better?
- Support (e.g. financial, advocacy, volunteerism, etc.) the tribal stewards of Seattle and San Diego studio lands

GOAL 1:

Miller Hull fosters an anti-racist environment that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, protected, and welcomed

Objective B: Promote Psychological Safety by establishing an anti-racist office culture

STRATEGY B.1: Review and update all Miller Hull policies and plans with an equity lens

ACTIONS:

- Include more explicit information about racial and social justice expectations, expressly addressing microaggressions and implicit biases in the Employee Handbooks
- Review the Sustainability Action Plan for equity intersections and blind spots
- Review the 2020 Charter with an eye toward equity issues
- Review Emission Zero for opportunities to partner with equity-forward non-profits

STRATEGY B.2: Create a culture of trust and transparency

ACTIONS:

- Give equal opportunity to BIPOC employees to make mistakes, learn and grow, and fully support and value them while doing so
- Conduct focus groups on how we can move away from tokenization toward accountability to racially oppressed staff
- Understand if our culture is anti-racist, and if not, be willing to change it

STRATEGY B.3: Provide supportive networks / safe space

ACTIONS:

- Support Equity Lab with compensated planned time
- Be respectful and accommodating of the needs of BIPOC cultures and religions
- Promote diverse perspectives and cultural differences as assets
- Internal meetings periodically begin with a 'temperature check' as a regular practice (A temperature check is a check-in to see how people are doing and to allow team members to voice any concerns)
- Encourage daily, appropriate, effective acknowledgment, validation, amplification and credit of BIPOC voices
- Create a system/structure whereby white people can receive feedback and action it such that BIPOC feel safe and supported in giving this feedback

STRATEGY B.4: Ensure company 'norms' have been vetted for inequities and corrected

ACTIONS:

- Conduct racial pay equity analysis. Make pay adjustments to achieve equity.
- Establish a process for identifying 'norms' (unspoken expectations that are socially enforced) as they come up and quickly addressing them
- Be thoughtful and intentional when including BIPOC staff in marketing materials, social media, and other professional publications

GOAL 1:

Miller Hull fosters an anti-racist environment that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, protected, and welcomed

Objective C: Support BIPOC Staff

STRATEGY C.1: Mentor BIPOC Staff

ACTIONS:

- Leverage the MHX structure to more effectively support BIPOC
- PPA use their networks to provide access to external BIPOC mentors
- Recruit external mentors
- Be deliberate in pairing mentors with mentees and give space for individuals to select their own mentors.

STRATEGY C.2: Recruit more BIPOC staff and interns

ACTIONS:

- Include BIPOC staff in hiring committees, and listen to all voices within this committee
- Proactively engage more diverse recruiters/recruitment tools to “widen the net”
- Target more diverse pipeline opportunities (eg. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU))
- Develop collaborative partnerships with HBCUs, Minority Serving Institutions (MSI), and/or local community colleges, universities, affinity groups, and BIPOC - focused organizations, to attract underrepresented BIPOC interns.
- Provide a competitive salary and benefits

STRATEGY C.3: Sponsor BIPOC Staff

ACTIONS:

- Be deliberate in making sponsorship pairings and connections
- Make sponsorship opportunities transparent and accessible by publishing clear pathways and instructions for them
- Clarify the pathway to promotion
- Update and publish the pathway to leadership job descriptions
- Sponsors will: introduce BIPOC staff to professional groups, nominate for boards and propose for speaking opportunities

STRATEGY C.4: Invest in BIPOC staff as future firm leadership

ACTIONS:

- Exercise intentional retention and promotion of qualified BIPOC staff to leadership positions

GOAL 1:

Miller Hull fosters an anti-racist environment that empowers all individuals in our community to feel seen, affirmed, understood, valued, protected, and welcomed

Objective D: Diversify perspectives in decision making

STRATEGY D.1: Ensure that decision making process is never 'about us, without us'

ACTIONS:

- Enlist BIPOC feedback BEFORE confirming direction, even when BIPOC are not part of the decision making body
- Make Ops group membership structure and criteria transparent, explicit and anti-racist
- Make Labs membership structure and criteria transparent, explicit and anti-racist
- Assess and revise VERBS membership to increase diverse perspectives and provide opportunity so that subject matter expertise exists in all staff, BIPOC included

STRATEGY D.2: Uphold clear metrics of staff / leadership to evaluate progress

ACTIONS:

- Follow JUST label for diversity and inclusion to move forward to achieving all 4 boxes
- Track and report metric requirements for local NOMA chapters' DEI challenges and pledges.
- Conduct an annual survey of staff to assess opportunity and representation specific to leadership and diversity (e.g. Do you feel like the current leadership group is representing your best interest? Do you see opportunity for yourself as part of leadership in the future?)
- Conduct annual report to evaluate quantity and percentage of BIPOC employees at all tiers of staff and leadership
- Use a qualified 3rd party (EASI) to perform annual analysis; make the results transparent to the office as a whole

STRATEGY D.3: Diversify Leadership

ACTIONS:

- Survey staff to confirm if they feel represented in leadership and utilize results/information to inform actions taken by leadership to address
- Hire and engage a third party consultant to assess current leadership structure and makeup for inherent bias and hidden racism.

GOAL 2: Miller Hull designs equitable projects.

Objective A: Cultivate more diverse project teams

STRATEGY A.1: Make diversity a fundamental consideration for project opportunity and staffing.

ACTIONS:

- Create internal project teams that include BIPOC in prime management, partner, or consultant roles
- Partner and/or collaborate regularly on projects with Black or Minority Woman-Owned, or owned by underrepresented people of color, within the AEC Industry
- Create project teams that include Black or underrepresented persons of color in a prime, partner, or sub-consultant roles
- Whenever possible, engage tribal representation as part of the project team, (e.g. design, advisory, client representation)

STRATEGY A.2: Actively seek clients and consultants who share our values on equity and anti-racism.

ACTIONS:

- Create internal processes to explicitly include social and racial justice as a shared value in marketing pursuits
- Empower all levels of staff to stand up for our values and work as allies, especially in front of consultants and clients
- Ensure that the pursuit of new work includes a vetting process for shared equity values
- Ensure that our marketing and pursuit materials reflect and convey our anti-racist position

GOAL 2: Miller Hull designs equitable projects.

Objective B: Engage the community of stakeholders with equitable processes

STRATEGY B.1: Proactively perform community outreach at every phase of the project, always including non-user stakeholders.

ACTIONS:

- Ask every client if they have an inclusion plan. If not, ask if they are willing to create one with us for every project, including a robust community identification and outreach plan
- Use the Social Economic Environmental Design (SEED) Evaluator to track progress and identify gaps in community engagement processes
- Support and educate our clients to reach a broader community

STRATEGY B.2: Decolonize our relationship with local tribes

ACTIONS:

- Every project researches and develops its own land acknowledgment
- Partner with tribal representatives throughout the process, with a focus on research/education and awareness

STRATEGY B.3: Build authentic relationships

ACTIONS:

- Provide pro-bono design and/or consulting services to organizations or businesses from historically disinherited communities of color each year
- Create project opportunities to hire trades and specialties from local underserved communities where possible and appropriate.

GOAL 2: Miller Hull designs equitable projects.

Objective C: Incorporate equity in all aspects of project design

STRATEGY C.1: Decolonize the office and libraries

ACTIONS:

- Integrate BIPOC books, materials and vendors into the office's circulation of reference materials
- Early project research will include a deep dive into the historic and current relationship with the local indigenous tribe(s) for that project's site

STRATEGY C.2: Support and promote the BIPOC community's contributions to architectural history and the built environment

ACTIONS:

- Integrate at least (1) precedent project from the BIPOC community in project research
- Encourage Design Ops to provide quarterly DP topics that dive deep into the historical contributions of BIPOC designers

STRATEGY C.3: Provide inclusive designs that promote equity in their context

ACTIONS:

- Include BIPOC in renderings to increase diversity and representation
- Design for universal access and gender inclusivity
- Provide quarterly DP topics that specifically focus on equitable design strategies and considerations

GOAL 2: **Miller Hull designs equitable projects.**

*Objective D: Further our understanding of what constitutes equitable design
(note: this section is to be developed in collaboration with Design Ops)*

STRATEGY D.1: Research

ACTIONS:

- Reach out to consultants in the industry who are working directly with or on equitable design projects to speak to Miller Hull during a Design Panel or Year End Show.

STRATEGY D.2: Exploration

ACTIONS:

- Discuss with office on what constitutes equitable design.
- Continue the conversation with the office to encourage equitable design on all project types.

GOAL 3: Miller Hull practices in an anti-racist Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) industry.

Objective A: Increase the pipeline for BIPOC talent

STRATEGY A.1: Support and grow Open Studio and Summer Bridge

ACTIONS:

- Expand Open Studio to both studios
- Increase our outreach to more diverse and underrepresented schools for broader youth participation
- Invite and mentor other firms to begin or participate in their own pipeline improvement program
- Introduce to the broader community and assist in networking

STRATEGY A.2: Volunteer at local K-12 schools and organizations primarily in underserved communities

ACTIONS:

- Encourage use of volunteer hours to mentor, sponsor, and advocate for BIPOC students in HBCUs, MSIs and higher education institutions
- As a firm, establish and maintain long term relationships with these programs that can live beyond staff turnover

STRATEGY A.3: Provide financial support to BIPOC talent

ACTIONS:

- Donate time and money to BIPOC STEAM youth programs
- Create or fund already existing architecture scholarships at HBCUs (historically black colleges and universities)
- Contribute to existing or new scholarship funds that give priority access to BIPOC
- Employ paid BIPOC interns through the Open Studio program and explore scholarships for Open Studio participants

GOAL 3:

Miller Hull practices in an anti-racist Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) industry.

*Objective B: Use public support and influence to advocate for BIPOC
Communities and to elevate BIPOC voices*

STRATEGY B.1: Engage at the state and local levels in policy work that impacts BIPOC

ACTIONS:

- Encourage sharing advocacy opportunities that identify relevant policy issues and allow interested staff to participate as individuals
- As a firm, advocate for policies that promote integrated neighborhoods; legislation that benefits the growth, resources, infrastructure and, therefore, prosperity of all communities and demographics
- Encourage and support (with paid time) interested staff members to participate on boards of organizations engaged in local advocacy work
- Support local, state and national nonprofit organizations that are working at the legislative level for just causes, such as human and civil rights

GOAL 3: Miller Hull practices in an anti-racist Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) industry.

Objective C: Be transparent in our efforts to becoming a Just, Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Firm.

STRATEGY C.1: Share tools and research

ACTIONS:

- Share our current JEDI Initiative on the website
- Share any process tools for integrating more inclusive conversations
- Share relevant project case studies regarding equitable design (e.g. Population Health)

STRATEGY C.2: Share our progress and lessons learned

ACTIONS:

- Be vulnerable, tell our story while in progress (e.g. knowledge sharing between firms...)
- Schedule regular social media updates of current actions
- Seek out opportunities for speaking
- Seek out opportunities for writing (e.g. white paper, blog posts)
- Share our metrics (if a tool is developed to mark our progress or use third party survey)

Diversity is who is in the room.

Inclusion is who has influence in that room.

Anti-racism is a mindset, way of being, and goal for a group of people in a room.

These are not interchangeable terms.

- Namira Islam Anani