



**CALGARY
FOUNDATION**
FOR COMMUNITY, FOREVER

MIND THE GAP

RACIAL EQUITY AUDIT OVERVIEW

THE AUDIT TEAM

In early 2021, Calgary Foundation engaged in an equity audit with the support of consultants Thulasy Lettner, Evans Yellow Old Woman, Joanne Kinya Baker, Jordan Baylon, and Erin McFarlane to identify what's working and what's not for the Calgary Foundation's Black, Indigenous and racialized stakeholders.

The Foundation would like to share our early assessment of the audit results.

AUDIT PROCESS

The intent of the audit was to identify barriers so that we can replace them with structures that can make Calgary Foundation more inclusive and responsive, with the approach being more relational and qualitative, rather than quantitative. The auditors spent more time in conversation with people than with data or documents.

To gain insights, the audit team's approach centered the experiences of the Foundation's Black, Indigenous, and racialized stakeholders, including: staff, grant applicants (successful and unsuccessful), volunteers, Indigenous Network Gathering participants, donors, board members, Youth Council participants, and Stride participants.

In total, the audit team spoke to 65 such stakeholders in a series of racial affinity group conversations and we received 12 responses through anonymous input forms. They also met with the board and staff to better understand how work is done within each operational area being audited, in addition to reviewing relevant documentation and data.

RESULTS

Calgary Foundation is viewed favourably by interviewees. Many cited examples of positive interactions with Calgary Foundation and expressed appreciation that the organization is talking about reconciliation and racial equity. Calgary Foundation's work on reconciliation has had notable impact on funding to Indigenous charities as well as deep learning for the organization and its work in community.

Many interviewees also pointed out the deeper, less obvious elements of the organization that are not inclusive of, or responsive to, their experiences as Black, Indigenous, and racialized people and communities.

The audit identified some gaps between Calgary Foundation's intention to serve everyone equally and its impact on Black, Indigenous, and racialized people.

One of the recommendations is that the Foundation be open to feedback, even when it hurts.

The audit team explored how work within each of 15 operational areas of the Foundation is currently done. Four overarching themes emerged:

1) REPRESENTATION

Calgary Foundation is a racially diverse organization; however, representation is below what would be reflective of Calgary's current demographics.

2) ACCOUNTABILITY

Calgary Foundation, by its mission, serves two 'customer groups'; 1) charitable organizations and community needs; and 2) donor and philanthropic interests. There are perceptions that the donor and philanthropic interests are more important than the charitable organizations and community needs. At their 2019 strategic retreat the Board affirmed the equality of these two 'customer groups', neither shall trump the other. It is important that Calgary Foundation ensure its actions are in alignment with this intent.

THEMES CONTINUED

3) RELATIONSHIPS

Calgary Foundation has relationships with Black, Indigenous, and racialized individuals and communities; however, these are few. More and deeper relationships need to be built.

4) FRAGILITY

Calgary Foundation recognizes that critical feedback may challenge the organization's core identity as good "For Calgary, For Everyone, For Ever". This may be a barrier to hearing the needs, goals, and priorities of Black, Indigenous, and racialized Calgarians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit team does not believe there is a blueprint for, or roadmap to, racial equity. There is only a constant, on-going process of listening, acting, and learning. Based on these themes the audit team provided recommendations, outlining how Calgary Foundation can more effectively advance reconciliation and racial equity within the organization and the work it does.

There are two categories of recommendations and a spectrum of actions offered in each:

- 1) Actions that can support the Foundation in being more inclusive and equitable within its existing structure**
- 2) Additional recommendations for deeper change, that sometimes involves challenging the existing structure**

NEXT STEPS

The work of racial equity is a long-term process. The audit provides guidance and insights.

The findings will be kept top of mind for the foreseeable future, and our implementation plans, and progress will be documented with regular reporting to our stakeholders, remembering that this is a journey with no completion date.

Over the coming months, each team within the Foundation will consider the audit recommendations, and how we might do better.

There is no endpoint in achieving our racial equity goals – so we must regularly ask ourselves:

How do we stay on this journey, grow as a learning organization and move forward to deliver on our mission in a more inclusive and equitable way?