

Westside UU Congregation Equity Decision-Making Tool

Purpose and Use

WSUU is committed to making our congregation a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for everyone who feels called to our community and the principles of Unitarian Universalism. The purpose of this tool is to encourage everyone involved within our congregation to think about and address the equity impacts of our choices in programming, worship language and structure, RE curriculum, staffing, funding, and policy.

This tool:

- Supports making decisions that endure because they are built on a strong foundation of inclusivity.
- Leads decision-makers to take the time to include the voices of those who will be impacted by the decision.
- Is not a formula and does not reveal the “right” answer. It is a way to check assumptions.
- Emphasizes community and relationship-building rather than expediency.
- Promotes transparency by providing documentation of the deliberation process that can be shared with others who were not directly involved in the decision.

Examples of deliberations that would benefit from use of the equity tool include:

- Overall setting of priorities or strategic direction
- Decisions about the allocation of funding and other resources
- Planning for the content, theme, promotion, and logistics for a significant event or program
- Planning for gathering feedback from the congregation (survey, workshop, etc.)

IMPORTANT NOTE ON USE OF THIS TOOL: *The use of the equity tool has proven effective in making more inclusive decisions at Westside. Whether your decision or plan is relatively minor or major, we encourage you to use it. For less impactful decisions, you can use the pocket guide version.*

For the questions that include a green/yellow assessment, use this guide to make your selection:

Green: We have made a strong effort to be fully inclusive of diverse identities, including race, gender, class, sexuality, gender identity, culture, age, and ability.

Yellow: While we’ve put some effort into being intentionally inclusive, we may have some gaps in understanding that we haven’t addressed. If you’ve circled “yellow” as a response, consider what your decision-making group can do to reduce any gaps in understanding.

We acknowledge and honor the sources for this tool: Seattle’s Arts Corps and the Western States Center.

Equity Tool Questions

Date:	Group Making the Decision:
Subject of the Decision:	

Section A: Pause and examine WE - Who are we?			
Who is involved in making the decision?			
What diverse identities (race, gender, class, sexuality, gender identity, culture, age, ability) are represented here?			
Who does this exclude? Can we expand the group making the decision to be more inclusive? How?			
Section B: Who is affected?			
Are there elements of the plan, program, or decision that will impact people? What diverse identities are in the impacted group?	Answer:		
Is the impacted group involved in the decision-making? Why?	Answer:		
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; background-color: #00b050; color: white; text-align: center;">Green</td> <td style="width: 50%; background-color: #ffff00; text-align: center;">Yellow</td> </tr> </table>	Green	Yellow
Green	Yellow		
How can we make sure that everyone can fully participate?	Answer:		
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Can this decision itself cause any physical or emotional harm?	Answer:		
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Section C: Institutional Barriers/Policies			
What are the challenges, structural barriers, or unexpected gaps in understanding to making the outcome of the decision more inclusive?	Answer:		
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What don't we know and who does?	Answer:		
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Section D: Next Steps

Given our answers to the questions in Sections A-C, what are the next steps in the process?

What are the resources needed to move forward the next steps?

Equity Tool Questions to Reflect on After the Decision has been Implemented

Section E: What do *we* think happened?

Did we succeed in advancing equity and inclusion? Where?

Who helped us in ways we did not expect?

What didn't work? Why?

What are the lessons?

Section F: What do *others* think happened? (Ask them to answer)

Did those planning this program or making this decision at WSUU succeed in equity and inclusion? How?

Did you feel empowered and included? Or not?

What worked well?

What didn't work? If you could, what would you have done differently?