



## Frequently Asked Questions: Equity in Communications Review

### What is the Health Foundation’s definition of equity?

**Health equity:** Health equity is achieved when every person can “attain his or her full health potential” and no one is “disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.” Health inequities are reflected in differences in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, and death; severity of disease; and access to treatment.

**Health Justice:** Health justice recognizes and removes the systemic barriers that cause health inequity, enabling all people to have the opportunities to achieve good health.

### Where would the foundation like to improve in terms of equity?

We’ve been working on improving our processes to ensure they aren’t overly arduous or would otherwise exclude smaller or non-traditional organizations from working with us. In terms of communications, we have started some internal work to ensure our comms strategies are explicitly asset framed and based in best practices in equity communications. The next step for that would be building our comms strategy to better communicate to the community – including orgs we have not reached before because of preconceived notions of working with philanthropy – that we are doing this work and are here for them. We would like to improve how we reach grassroots or BIPOC-led orgs in the city areas of Syracuse and Buffalo, as well as smaller organizations serving the rural areas within our footprint.

**Have you recently conducted any research about brand perception or communications among your audiences?**

We have some stakeholder scans that were done as part of our strategic planning process in 2019, but it wasn't specific to communications. Before that our most recent brand perception survey was in 2015.

We expect, given the scope and budget for this stage, that the first steps will be the materials review, and some community surveying may be recommended as a follow-on stage. We are however open to a different approach recommended by the selected firm as it works best within their budgeted scope.

**Is your team available to participate in the process—such as reviewing the initial insights from the audit and discussing possible implications before we provide our recommendations?**

Absolutely! We expect our communications team to participate throughout the process.

**Do you currently have a brand guide or written documentation of your key messages and visual identity system that would be available once we work together?**

Yes. We have some historical standards/brand guide, and our team has also developed an equity-work-specific style guide that we can share.

**Have you created an equity rubric that you use to measure progress/success of the changes you are looking to make?**

We have an internal workplan for the whole org's equity work, with a section for communications. It includes metrics that will likely evolve with this process.

**What is the volume of the content to audit?**

We will be looking for a comprehensive but not exhaustive review of our collateral – so not necessarily every page of our website, but rather a representative selection of our content that we will provide to the selected firm

to review. So the participant should expect to review approximately 10-12 pages of our site, 3-4 additional pieces of collateral, and recent content (going back 6-12 months) on four social media channels (FB, LinkedIn, Twitter, and IG) in order to provide some overall strategic recommendations.