LEVEL BIPOC Grants
Glossary of Terms & Definitions

Vancouver Foundation acknowledges that terminology and definitions, particularly regarding identities, are complex. Identities are more than just words—they hold meaning and have different relationships to power, shaped by various cultural contexts.

This Glossary of Terms and Definitions draws upon various community resources and knowledge to provide shared understanding and language to guide the LEVEL BIPOC grant program.

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LEVEL

Adjudicated process means grant applications are reviewed by our Community Advisors, who use a decision-making framework to assess and evaluate them based on specific criteria. This process ensures fairness and supports organizations that best serve the needs and goals of BIPOC communities.

BIPOC - Black, Indigenous, People(s) of Colour. Variations of this acronym are also sometimes used, including:

- IBPOC: Indigenous, Black, People(s) of Colour
- BIMPOC: Black, Indigenous, Multiracial, People(s) of Colour
- QTIBIPOC: Queer, Trans, and Intersex, Black, Indigenous, People(s) of Colour.

When we say "BIPOC," we specifically highlight Black and Indigenous individuals within the broader category of People of Colour. This distinction recognizes the unique historical and systemic challenges faced by Black and Indigenous communities, often resulting from colonialism, slavery, displacement, and ongoing racial discrimination. By explicitly naming Black and Indigenous people, it acknowledges their distinct experiences and needs within discussions of racial equity and Justice.

Black is a term used to refer to individuals of African descent. It emerged as part of a broader racial equality and self-identification movement in the 20th century. During the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and similar movements globally, there was a shift towards self-empowerment and pride in racial identity. Leaders and activists advocated using "Black" with a capital "B" to assert dignity, cultural heritage, and political solidarity among people of African descent. This shift rejected derogatory terms and an assertion of autonomy in defining their identity.

Capitalizing "Black" acknowledges the historical and contemporary significance of Black identity, culture, and struggles against racism and oppression. It underscores the importance of recognizing and respecting diversity within the Black community while promoting equality and Justice.

BIPOC-led is defined as an organization with at least two-thirds (67%) of its leadership positions (Board of Directors and/or leadership team if staff are employed and/or any other unconventional governance structure that influences operational and strategic decision-making) are held by people who self-identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Colour.

Community Accountability is about an organization's duty to the communities it serves. This means involving the community in decisions and ensuring that the organization's actions, goals, and values match the community's needs.

LEVEL BIPOC grants acknowledge (but are not limited to) various community accountability practices, including a complaints process, equity and inclusion policy, and anti-discrimination policy.

Some other examples of community accountability practices are:

- Maintaining openness in decision-making and regularly updating the community on its strategies, successes and challenges.
- Actively soliciting, listening to, and acting on feedback from the community through surveys, town halls, focus groups, etc.
- Involving the community in setting funding priorities or deciding how funds are allocated to different programs, through participatory budgeting.
- Evaluating projects regularly with community input to assess impact and adjust strategies accordingly.
- Consistently sharing progress and setbacks with the community to build trust and seek collaborative solutions.
- Unlocking the capacity of community members to take on grassroots leadership roles within the organization or other community groups.
- Adapting programs and services to meet the community's specific cultural, linguistic, and social needs.
- Establishing clear ethical guidelines to ensure that projects and partnerships align with community values and avoid exploiting or misrepresenting community interests.

Culture of White Supremacy is the idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Colour and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. White supremacy expresses itself interpersonally as well as structurally (through our governments, education systems, food systems, etc).

Equity is a principle and process that promotes fair conditions for everyone to fully participate in society. It recognizes that while everyone has the right to be treated equally, not all experience equal access to resources, opportunities, or benefits. Achieving equality does not necessarily mean treating individuals or groups in the same way, but specific measures may be required to ensure fairness.

Governance is how organizations are managed and regulated, ensuring accountability, transparency, fairness, and responsibility in decision-making. Good governance includes clear roles, ethical standards, and strategic decision-making aligned with organizational goals.

Indigenous is a term used to encompass a variety of Aboriginal groups. It is most frequently used in an international, transnational, or global context. This term was widely used during the 1970s when Aboriginal groups organized transnationally and pushed for a more significant presence in the United Nations (UN). In the UN, "Indigenous" refers broadly to peoples of long settlement and connection to specific lands which have been adversely affected by incursions by industrial economies, displacement, and settlement of their traditional territories by others.

Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw. Crenshaw's work on critical race theory and intersectionality provides a framework for understanding that the facets of our identities are not "detachable" from one another and that inequalities can compound. Individuals who embody multiple marginalized identities (for example, Black trans women, disabled queer people, women of colour) are exposed to various forms of systemic oppression, and these experiences of oppression compound one another.

Capitalizing "Indigenous" shows respect for the distinct cultural identities, histories, and rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide. It recognizes their sovereignty, contributions to global heritage, and ongoing struggles for Justice and equality.

Large urban population centres refer to cities or metropolitan areas with substantial populations and infrastructure development, distinguishing them from smaller towns or rural communities. The designation helps focus resources and support on areas with higher concentrations of people and services, addressing unique urban challenges and opportunities.

LGTBQIA2S - Lesbian, Gay, Trans, Bisexual, Queer, Intersex, Asexual & Aromantic, Two-Spirit

Not-for-Profit Organization is an entity that operates for purposes other than making a profit for its owners or shareholders. Instead, it focuses on serving a specific mission and/or providing community benefit.

Non-conventional governance structure refers to organizational frameworks that depart from traditional hierarchical governance models, such as those in corporate or bureaucratic settings.

Examples of unconventional governance structures:

- Flat Hierarchy: Where decision-making is distributed evenly among all members rather than being top-down.

- Participatory Governance: Involving community members, stakeholders, and beneficiaries directly in decision-making processes.

- Collective Leadership: Shared leadership responsibilities among a group of individuals rather than relying on a single leader or CEO.

- Rotating Leadership: Leadership positions rotate among members regularly to ensure equal participation and prevent power imbalances.

Operational Funding refers to financial support for day-to-day expenses like salaries, utilities, and administrative costs, ensuring organizations can sustain their core functions and activities while maintaining stability to continue delivering services or fulfilling their mission over time.

People(s) of Colour (POC) generally refers to individuals not of white or European descent. It encompasses a diverse group of racial and ethnic minorities. POC emerged in the mid-20th century during the civil rights movements in the United States and other parts of the world
.
The term "People of Colour" was coined as a way to unite and empower diverse racial and ethnic minority groups, emphasizing shared experiences of systemic racism, discrimination, and marginalization.

Privilege is a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group.

Society grants privileges to people because of certain aspects of their identity. These aspects can include race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, geographical location, ability, and religion.

Racialized can be used to understand how the history of the idea of "race" is still with us and impacts us all in different ways. The term emphasizes the ideological and systemic, often unconscious processes at work. It also emphasizes how racial categories, including skin colour, are socially constructed but are socially and culturally very real.

Racialization is a complex and contradictory process whereby groups are designated as being a particular "race" and, on that basis, they are subject to differential and/or unequal treatment. Simply put, "racialization [is] the process of manufacturing and utilizing the notion of race in any capacity" (Dalal, 2002, p. 27).

While white people are also racialized, this process is often rendered invisible or normative to those designated as white. As a result, white people may not see themselves as part of a race but still maintain the authority to name and racialize "others."

Racial Equity is both a process and an outcome. Racial equity is achieved when race no longer determines one's socioeconomic or health outcomes; everyone has access to what they need to thrive, regardless of race. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in creating and implementing the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

Racial Justice separates symptoms from causes, but a racial justice lens shows the confrontation of power, the redistribution of resources and the systemic transformation needed for lasting change.

Randomized selection is a method where applications are chosen randomly from a pool of eligible candidates. This approach minimizes bias and ensures fairness in the selection process. Randomization helps impartially allocate funding opportunities among qualified applicants, enhancing transparency and equity in grant distribution.

Settlers refer to those who are not Indigenous to a place and who either chose to settle there or had ancestors who settled there.

Smaller population centres and rural and/or remote communities are areas with lower population densities and limited access to urban services. In granting contexts, these communities are often targeted for support due to their geographic isolation, economic challenges, and need for specialized resources and development initiatives.

Sustainability (operational) refers to an organization's ability to keep running and fulfil its mission, adjusting to changes while staying true to its values. This means managing resources well to handle financial, social, and environmental changes.

Operational sustainability also entails the organization's ability to effectively serve the community. This can be achieved through leadership that mirrors the community and practices that encourage long-lasting community involvement and resilience. Sustainability isn't just about lasting a long time; it's about offering quality service that adapts to community needs and changes over time.

White is used to refer to people with white skin. The context of white supremacy culture (as defined above) means that the term white is also often associated with significant socio-cultural privilege.

White presenting refers to people who have a cultural and/or racial identity that is not white, but who experience what has been called "white skin privilege" because of how they look.

Youth refers to individuals between 19-30 years old (inclusive).

Youth-engaging refers to organizations whose governance structures actively enable BIPOC youth to significantly influence decision-making processes.

An example could be a decolonized organization that actively involves young BIPOC individuals. They don't just offer suggestions; they ensure their input is valued and implemented, shaping the organization's policies and direction. This approach goes beyond youth advisory or consulting roles because it ensures that youth perspectives shape the organization's actions and strategies.

Youth-led refers to a group/ organization in which at least two-thirds (67%) of the leadership team and/or board/other governance structures are held by individuals between 19 and 30 years old.

References

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