

# Neighborhood Partnerships Racial Equity Statement

## **Introduction:**

Neighborhood Partnerships has adopted a racial equity statement. We know that all of us need a safe, stable and affordable place to call home, and financial stability and security to allow us to reach our fullest potential. We also know that those are not yet available to all.

We choose to focus on equity across race and ethnicity because we know that racism has been baked into our institutions, and results in deep, pervasive, and systemic inequity. We know that groups and individuals are also marginalized because of their identities, including gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, and history in this country, to name a few. Those identities may also intersect with race. We will not neglect those by focusing on racial equity, but are aware that shifting the deep and historical structures of racism requires a direct and focused approach. Universalist or “race neutral” strategies have failed time and time again. Focus and specificity are necessary to forging real solutions.

A racial equity framework that is clear about the interplay of individual, institutional and structural racism, as well as the history and current reality of inequities, will cross-cut other marginalized groups, and lead us toward a more equitable Oregon for all.

## **Neighborhood Partnerships Racial Equity Statement**

Neighborhood Partnerships’ mission is to help create a better Oregon, one in which we all have access to opportunity, stability, and what we need to thrive. For us, this begins with financial well-being and a stable, affordable place to call home. Our work calls on us to engage all Oregonians: indigenous tribes; residents whose families have called Oregon home for generations; folks who arrived just recently—from elsewhere in the U.S. or the world. Whether we live in cities, small towns, or rural lands, we all need resources to build a better future for ourselves, our families and our communities.

The reality in Oregon today is that for generations, white people have structured and benefitted from institutions, policies, laws, and systems of oppression, while denying people of color power, resources, and access. At Neighborhood Partnerships, we see this history embedded into racist and inequitable institutions and systems for providing housing, economic stability, and prosperity. This historical and ongoing injustice is reflected in inequitable and disparate outcomes. Until we dismantle this structure, there is no way all of us—black, brown, and white—will reach our full potentials.

Neighborhood Partnerships will work to confront and disrupt the barriers and racism that are persistent and pervasive in our organization, our culture, and our public systems. We recognize that we are both late and new to this work. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the leaders, individuals, and communities of color who have been doing this work and who have helped show us the way forward. Neighborhood Partnerships' work will focus on creating structures that will build a more equitable Oregon. We will share decision making and power with those impacted by decisions, and move resources to the communities that most need them. Together we can create an Oregon where all of us have the sense of belonging, stability, and the resources that we need to work toward our dreams today, and for generations to come... creating opportunity for all Oregonians.

**Accountability:**

We ask that you hold us accountable. In that spirit, we will share our goals, our outcome measures, and our progress on our web site and in our monthly email newsletters. This is still a work in progress, and we value your feedback.

In the past year, this work for us has included both internally focused steps and externally focused steps.

Internally, we have: incorporated tools such as an equity lens and inclusive decision making and shared power; reworked our hiring and onboarding practices; used race and demographic data to guide resource allocation; changed board practices, established term limits, and recruited new board members; revised our procurement policy; equipped ourselves to use equity centered collaborative design.

Externally, we have: supported the launch of a network of residents of affordable housing, so that they can have a voice in policy and programs affecting their homes; continued to make Housing Alliance decision making more inclusive and elevate new leaders; worked with partners in the Oregon IDA Initiative on shared decision making and planning.

In the coming year, in addition to continuing the work listed above, our priorities will be:

Internally, we will continue work on procurement and work on our employee benefits and personnel practices; continue work on consciousness raising and on onboarding of new team members; continue to make our Board more diverse and more inclusive.

Externally, we will work to develop an equity lens for use by the Housing Alliance and with assets policy; we will work with IDA Initiative partners on a strategic plan using equity centered community design practices; we will use an equity lens and disaggregated data to support resource allocation decisions.