



LIVING CITIES
INNOVATE • INVEST • LEAD

CLOSING THE GAPS NETWORK

WEBINAR SERIES

The Closing the Gaps Network will bring together leaders from cities across the country that are committed to closing racial income and wealth gaps in their communities. They will imagine what a racially equitable, just, and prosperous society can look like, and play an important role in building it through transforming government policies, practices, and operations.

LEARN MORE + CONNECT WITH PUBLIC SECTOR PEERS AT AN UPCOMING WEBINAR



INFORMATIONAL

Learn more about the Closing the Gaps Network, what your city can gain from joining us, and how you can stay engaged.



FAQ

We want to hear from you! We will open the conversation so you have an opportunity to get questions answered and feedback heard.



CONNECTION

Connect to a supportive community of peers who are navigating a shared crisis with COVID-19, and ground in a set of values that can inform a race-centered approach to crisis response.

WEBINAR DATES

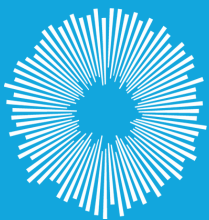
April 1, 2020
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM EST

April 8, 2020
3:00 PM- 4:00 PM EST

May 5, 2020
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM EST

Contact Us for Additional Information: Norris Williams, nwilliams@livingcities.org

Closing the Gaps Network



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WHO IS LIVING CITIES?

Founded in 1991, Living Cities harnesses the collective power of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions to close racial income and wealth gaps in American cities.

Together, we are partnering with cross-sector leaders in cities across the country to imagine and create an America in which all people are economically secure and building wealth. Our staff, investments, convenings, and networks support efforts that operationalize racial equity and inclusion in local government, create inclusive narratives, bring communities together to devise and act on a shared vision for the future, and eliminate inequities in systems such as entrepreneurship, homeownership, and access to capital.

We combine support for innovative, comprehensive, local approaches with cross-city learning communities and the real-time sharing of knowledge to accelerate and deepen adoption in more places.

Mission: Living Cities harnesses the collective power of philanthropy, financial institutions, and local governments to close racial income and wealth gaps in American cities.

Vision: All People in U.S. Cities are economically secure, building wealth, and living abundant, dignified, and connected lives.

WHAT IS THE CLOSING THE GAPS NETWORK?

The Closing the Gaps Network will bring together leaders from cities across the country that are committed to imagining what an antiracist society might look like, and to playing an important role in building it through transforming government policies, practices, and operations.

The Network will be a year-round community that leverages proven practices from our decades of public sector work, including:

- Cross-city learning opportunities, both in-person and virtual
- Access to technical assistance providers, facilitators, resources and other networks
- A shared vision and measures to track progress
- Accountability partnerships
- Cover and support to test new approaches as part of a national movement
- Opportunities to publicize progress and results, both nationally and locally
- Open-sourced knowledge sharing

Within the network, up to 10 cities will be selected for deeper engagement. These cities will demonstrate a profound commitment to racial equity at all levels and a high degree of readiness for making meaningful progress towards closing racial gaps. They will continue to build on the work already underway in their cities including competency building for staff to equip them to apply a racial equity analysis to all the city's work.

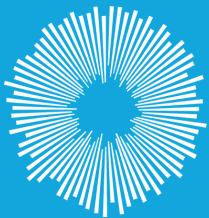
All of our work will be done with a commitment to the anti-racism values outlined on page 2.

CLOSING THE GAPS NETWORK ANTI-RACISM VALUES

Living Cities holds a deep commitment to racial equity and inclusion. We know that our vision cannot be realized without centering race. The wealth gaps will not be closed without an explicitly anti-racist approach.

We also know that we are not the first to do this work, and we cannot do it alone. As we collectively build towards an anti-racist society, we have to work to undo and dismantle the ways that our institutions--including Living Cities itself--have been complicit. Living Cities is committed to working with city governments and organizations that serve the public sector to understand the history that led us here and transform our institutions in service of a more racially equitable future.

As we move toward the launch of the Closing the Gaps Network, we hold the following anti-racism values closely and ask that our partners do the same.



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We honor the labor that got us here. This means we understand what it took to push when institutions were not ready and acknowledge those who might have been pushed out. When talking about institutional capacity, we interrogate what REI work really takes and the fact that Black women in particular often face an undue burden in holding the work.

We value working with an abundance mindset and an openness to possibilities. We root this work in the recognition that communities at the margins have always had to discover resources where “there aren’t any” and craft possibilities for thriving without institutional support. We strive for accountability to these communities in the cities where we work and commit to fostering creative, visionary spaces rooted in a pro-Black vision for the future.

Racial equity is a process and an outcome. We seek to move beyond the binary thinking that suggests there is an “end” or that some cities are “on top” or “more successful” when it comes to racial equity. We are interested in investing in people within city agencies and departments who are willing to take on transformational REI work, including reckoning with history and the present.

When we say community, we name what we mean. We understand the different relationships communities may have with the city governments we work with. We acknowledge that many people working in city government are part of the community.

We know that racial equity work is a day-to-day practice of shifting our behaviors and power. We are committed to:

- **anti-racist principles** as outlined by the People’s Institute for Survival & Beyond, including understanding history, understanding and willingness to interrogate the power public sector holds in gatekeeping, and acknowledging harm
- **antidotes to white institutional culture** as outlined by Tema Okun. To us this means centering relational culture, healing & accountability, and interrogating how our work upholds white supremacy.
- **accountability at all levels.** There must be infrastructure and a mechanism for accountability: to our partners and our public sector relationships, to our communities, to each other. We are committed to identifying mechanisms to understand community perception (especially communities of color) within the cities where we work.
- **working together in new, transformational ways** that are rooted in deep trust, candor, and courage. We commit to recognizing people as full, complex human beings (with ambitions, desires and frailty) and being patient with one another as we model new ways of being in relationship.
- **continuous learning and improvement** rooted in deep learning and radical imagination to inform bold action for the long term.

