

## Town of Arlington DEI Workshops Overview

### Project Overview

The town of Arlington has a long history of working to build a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected. In service to that, the town continues to invest in efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion; seeking to understand the identities and experiences of all townspeople.

Working in mixed departmental groups, Town employees will participate in a series of facilitated workshops that will combine the presentation of data, opportunity for self-reflection, work in small groups, the presentation of helpful theories and frameworks, and the development of plans. This is an opportunity to build relationships across departments and also to bring together all areas of the Town's DEI work. Below is a brief outline of each workshop:

**1. "Phase 0": Developing a common language and understanding our approach including :**

- i. Bias (forms of it, conscious and unconscious) and how it operates in all of us for both good and bad outcomes
- ii. History of structural racism

**2. Co-creating an understanding of the status quo.**

- i. Where are we, with respect to diversity, equity (especially racial equity), and inclusion in our work and lives?
- ii. A self-assessment: Who am I in relation to all of these issues? What are my personal commitments, challenges, and questions?

**3. Skills development:**

Building competency and practicing healthy conflict, leadership skills, and decision making models to increase fairness and transparency

**4. Collaboratively setting goals for the future.**

Based on the learning from the equity audit and the first three sessions, staff will decide what they want to do, achieve, and commit to going forward.

**5. Creating a town-wide strategy and action plan for reaching the goals, including:**

Strategy is how a team decides to accomplish their goals. For instance, if you were to be planning a drive to the Berkshires one strategy to get there is to take the pike, another strategy is to take Route 2. While the goal remains the same (get to the Berkshires), you have two strategy options for how you can accomplish that goal (pike or Route 2).

In this last session (for all participants!) we will create a strategy for achieving the goals as well as action plans.

## Project Goals

### What do we want to come out of this process in terms of decisions and materials?

- 1) Build upon the work that the Town has done
- 2) A final report containing:
  - Meeting notes/reports
  - Goals
  - Action plans
  - Strategy statement
  - Consultant recommendations
  - Additional resources

### How do we want people to feel about their participation in this process?

- 1) Interactive
- 2) Engaging
- 3) Collaborative
- 4) Offer employees a transformational and personal experience

### What could and should be different within our organization and for our community as a result of the work we do together in this process?

- 1) Employees will participate in leading change, and will see themselves as doing such
- 2) Ability to interpret data and information in service to identifying areas for growth, change, and repair
- 3) Employees will leave this process with a feeling of ownership over implementing equity into their work

## About Us

Strategy Matters is a Boston based, certified woman-owned consulting group founded in 2000. We work with mission-driven organizations to develop creative solutions to complex problems. We are a unique consulting firm in many respects, including the collaborative, equitable management style we embrace. Aspects of this are visible in some of our policies, including that the Principal cannot earn more than 3x the salary of the lowest paid employee, a profit sharing program with 40% of all profits paid out quarterly to employees with more than 1 year on the job, and our commitment to Open Books Management, enabling every staff member to see our full financials at any time. Over 80% of our clients since 2016 have referred us to a colleague, hired us for a second (third or fourth) project, or both.

In 2021 we won two awards: [The Inner City 100](#), for America's fastest growing inner city businesses, and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce's [Small Business of the Year](#) for Cultural Excellence.

**Our Services Include:**

- Strategic planning design and facilitation
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative leadership and support
- Leadership and management training
- Teambuilding, conflict management
- Change management
- Implementation support
- Training design and delivery

We work in many sectors and domains, and this enables our team to bring ideas and insights across professional and industry boundaries. We often find that a framework, tool, or metaphor from, for example, arts and culture serves to help clients think differently in, for example, education or public safety.

Our approach to working with groups is tailored to meet each organization's specific needs and is highly results-oriented. We have been trained in a wide range of planning methodologies, including [Public Conversations](#), [Technologies of Participation](#) (Institute for Cultural Affairs), Appreciative Inquiry, [Open Space Technology](#), and [Future Search](#), but rarely use any of these methods off-the-shelf. Instead, we work with client teams to identify the best tools and custom design innovative approaches to meet unique and specific organizational goals.

Our clients include associations, nonprofits, professional services firms, government agencies, and partnerships ranging in size from small to very large.