

Justice, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Resources

In the autumn of 2020, VLCT's Board of Directors began taking deliberate actions to provide our members with resources to assist them in undertaking justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work. By the Spring of 2021, VLCT adopted a Statement of Equity and Racial Justice, adopted an Equity and Social Justice Plan, and formed an Equity Committee. VLCT's Equity

Committee, an advisory body that provides VLCT staff and board members with advice on how to help municipalities tackle this topic, continues to make annual recommendations on what programming to offer our members each year.

For 2025 and 2026, VLCT will be providing members with the following equity-related resources:

- **Prosocial Behavior Educational Series:** VLCT will be offering all members a new, free, eight-part, online, custom on-demand training entitled “Governing for All with Skill”. In partnership with cultural transformation consultancy Abundant Sun, the consultant that managed our Welcoming and Engaging Community Cohorts, municipal leaders will have access to training that helps them put other people and society ahead of the individual. It will include sessions that educate people about human psychology (and why prosocial behavior is difficult), diplomacy, and empathy.
- **Dignity Index Campaign:** As political and cultural divisions continue to increase in the country, so do the tensions and challenges facing local government leaders who must bridge these divides within their communities. The co-creator of the [Dignity Index](#), [Tami Pyfer](#), will keynote Town Fair to discuss how dignity can be a powerful tool in helping leaders ease divisions and solve problems in our communities and our country.
- **New Effective Meetings Tools:** VLCT will provide municipalities with new tools and trainings to improve public meetings.
- **Public Campaign to Encourage Service:** VLCT will try to bring new voices into municipal government through a media campaign to encourage municipal service ([Vermont Town Careers](#)).

More Information about these initiatives will be available here in the near future.

Changing federal policies have created ambiguity on whether municipalities may or should continue conducting equity-related work, whether funded by local, state or federal dollars. VLCT and our national partner, the National League of Cities, continues to monitor federal policies to evaluate how they impact you. Members receiving federal funding should carefully read their grant conditions, and be aware that current executive orders largely prevent federal money from being used to conduct equity work. In addition, when a municipality accepts federal funding for any project (even with no equity work involved) they are required to sign off on several grant conditions. Municipalities that are conducting any equity work should carefully read those grant

conditions with an eye for prohibitions on equity related work. If a municipality has questions about whether the equity work they do is in conflict with any grant conditions, they should ask their grant officer for clarification or [contact VLCT](#) for assistance.

[Equity Committee](#)

Read [VLCT's Equity and Social Justice Plan](#) which outlines how we will undertake this work.