

Municipal Efforts to Address Equity

October 5, 2021



- Ted Brady, VLCT Executive Director
- Elaine Wang, Barre Town Assistant Manager and VLCT Equity Committee Cochair
- Al Wakefield, Declaration of Inclusion
- Bob Harnish, Declaration of Inclusion
- Jude Smith Rachele, Co-founder and CEO, Abundant Sun
- Lindsey Fuentes-George, Middlebury Selectboard

SEPTEMBER 29 + OCTOBER 4 - 8

2021

TRAINING FOR TOMORROW

TOWN FAIR

VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES & TOWNS

VLCT Equity Committee

WHAT:

This advisory committee to the VLCT Board will help create an action plan for VLCT to actively promote equity and inclusion internally as well as with our members.

HOW:

The committee will discuss and investigate tools municipalities may need and how to develop them, as well as explore other ways the League can support its members as they seek to establish a culture of equity in their own communities.

WHO:

Municipal and equity experts from across Vermont appointed by the VLCT Board.

VLCT Equity Committee

- Background
- As case study
- Takeaways
- What municipalities are doing



VLCT Equity Committee - Takeaways

1. Don't skimp the groundwork (sharpen the axe - 磨刀不误砍材工)
2. Invest in an equity professional
3. Keep the train moving



What Vermont municipalities are doing

Equity committee types

- Staff only
- Community members with TM/TA staffing
- Selectboard and community members with town staff

Activities

- Statements of inclusion
- Staff-wide training
- Leadership-only training
- Community focus groups
- Policy work
- Equity review of policies
- Build relationships with community groups
- Consultant-created community affinity groups

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Declaration of Inclusion

The Town of _____ condemns racism and welcomes all person, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community.

As a town, we formally condemn all discrimination in all of its forms, commit to a fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community, and will strive to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment.

The Town of _____ has and will continue to be a place where individuals can live freely and express their opinions.

By the _____ Selectboard on _____ 2021.



Rationale for Adopting a Declaration of Inclusion

- Population decline
- United States becoming more diverse
- Vermont one of the least diverse states in the country
- State is losing and not attracting young people
- Businesses can't find employees
- Economic survival

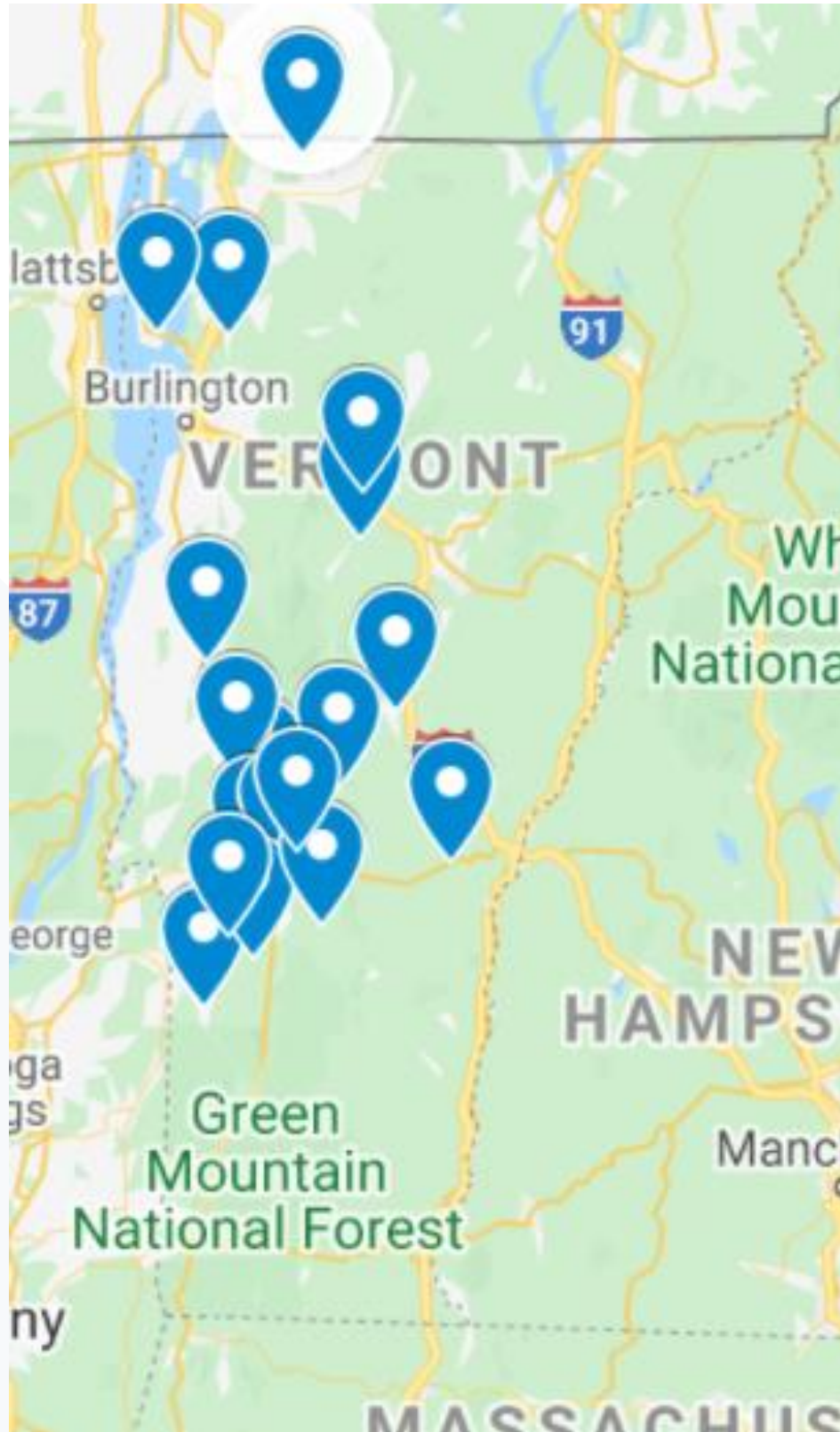


Our Goal

To have each Vermont municipality adopt and implement a Declaration of Inclusion. Adopt means formal approval by the municipality's governing body. Implement means the enactment and furtherance of plans, policies, programs, procedures and relevant training which support and advance the intent and spirit of the Declaration.



Declaration of Inclusion Adopted In...



- Franklin
- Pittsford
- Brandon
- Moretown
- Waterbury
- Milton
- South Hero
- Middlebury
- West Rutland
- Rutland City
- Pawlet
- Randolph
- Pittsfield
- Woodstock
- Tinmouth
- Shrewsbury
- Mendon
- Middletown Springs
- **Your Town Here!**



Declaration of Inclusion Being Considered...

- Bennington
- Manchester
- Bristol
- Alburgh
- Mt. Tabor
- Hartland

There are several other towns that have indicated their interest but have not formally moved the Declaration of Inclusion forward.



Including the DOI in Your Own Statement

Middlebury Selectboard Statement of Equity and Racial Justice

Human diversity can be defined as differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and/or mental capabilities, and religious beliefs, among other differences; and all of these vast diversities exist among and between the residents of The Town of Middlebury.

The Middlebury Selectboard stands with our community and commits to being more visible, vocal, and supportive in our efforts to ensure equity and racial justice, and to directly address systemic and overt racism and implicit bias. We are ready to assist and, with Town staff, will do our best to make a difference.

As leaders, the Middlebury Selectboard commits to strengthen the trust in our community by employing Town staff team members who reflect the values of integrity, compassion and respect for the diversity of all individuals, and demonstrate these high moral values every day.

What follows are concrete ways that we are addressing these issues. We will continue to add to this list throughout the coming months. We welcome your input.

COMMITTEE. The Selectboard has formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Workgroup composed of three Selectboard members - Farhad Khan, Dan Brown, and Lindsey Fuentes-George - tasked with vetting our options for moving forward with our DEI work. The Selectboard is also considering converting the DEI Workgroup to a full Committee, which would potentially include staff members as well as members of the general public.

PARTNERSHIPS. The Selectboard commits to broadening our partnerships in ways that will amplify all of our efforts and help effect real change around these critical issues.

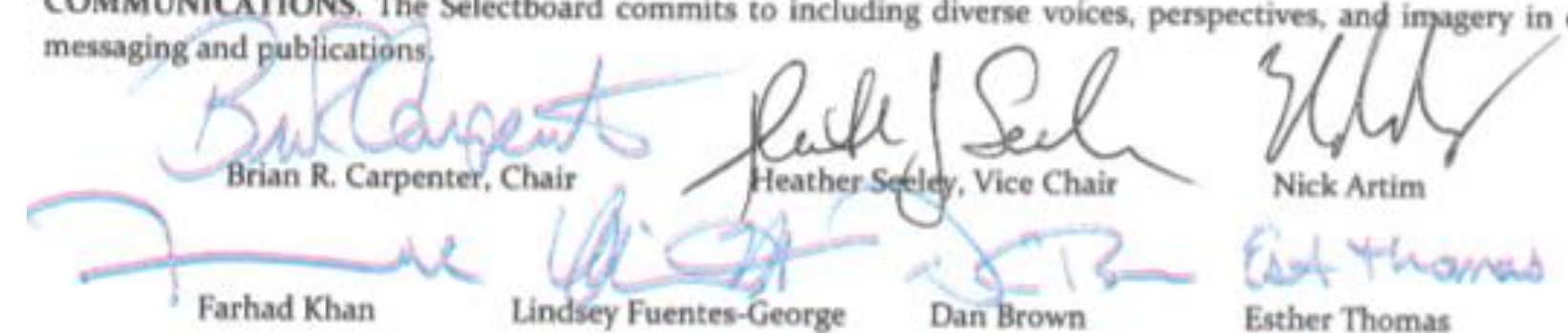
REPRESENTATION. The Selectboard encourages diverse candidates to apply for staff and board positions. We will work to implement new ways to broaden and enhance this outreach.

EDUCATION. The Selectboard commits to investing in additional staff and board training around topics related to implicit bias, racism, and equity at the municipal level. We will also share these resources with the public.

RESOURCES. The Selectboard will work to identify and partner with experts, affected communities and organizations to provide a digital toolkit of resources, including reporting mechanisms, and information available to members, partners, and staff.

REPORTING. The Selectboard will publicize avenues for community members and staff to report racist or discriminatory incidents.

COMMUNICATIONS. The Selectboard commits to including diverse voices, perspectives, and imagery in our messaging and publications.


Brian R. Carpenter, Chair Heather Seeley, Vice Chair Nick Artim
Farhad Khan Lindsey Fuentes-George Dan Brown Esther Thomas

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VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES & TOWNS

Declaration of Inclusion Adopted by Vermont

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip B. Scott, Governor, hereby proclaim as follows:

1. The State of Vermont formally condemns discrimination in all of its forms and welcomes all people who want to live and work and add richness to our State, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability and will protect these classes to the fullest extent of the law.
2. Let the second week of May be known as Inclusion Week to emphasize these ongoing efforts to make Vermont a more inviting state for all people.
3. I call upon all Vermonters to denounce prejudice, to openly acknowledge and address our own implicit bias and welcome and celebrate all people, of all races, colors, religions, national origins, sex, gender identity or expression, ages, disabilities, and continue to work together to ensure every individual can live freely, equitably, and express their opinions free from fear, intolerance and prejudice.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont on this 7th day of May, A.D. 2021.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

Brittney L. Wilson
Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs



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Contact the Declaration of Inclusion Team

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Liz Weinmann

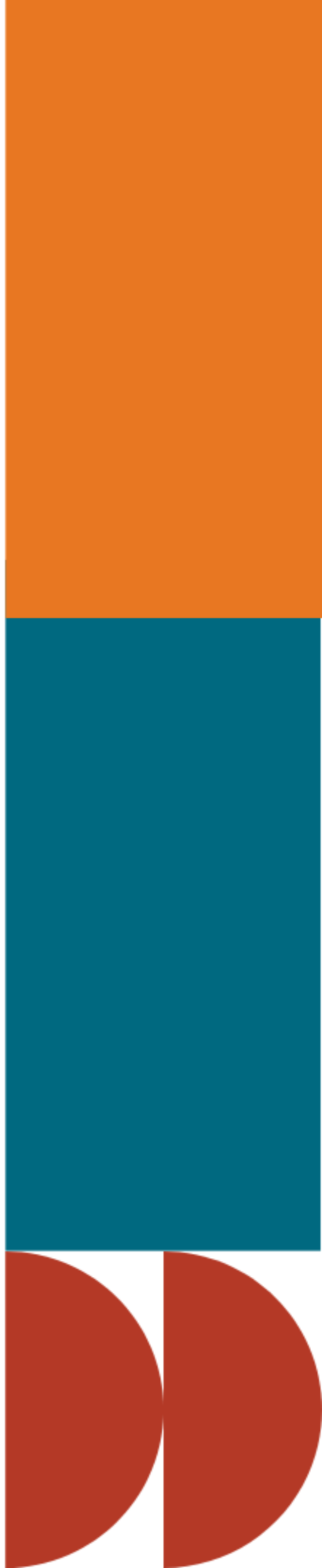
lizweinmann@gmail.com





VLCT: Town Fair 2021

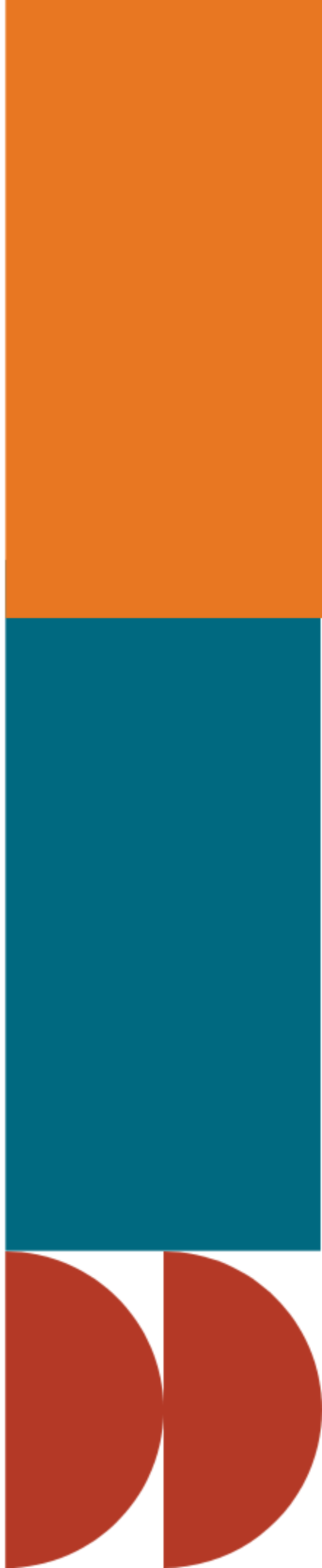
MUNICIPAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS EQUITY





VLCT: Town Fair 2021

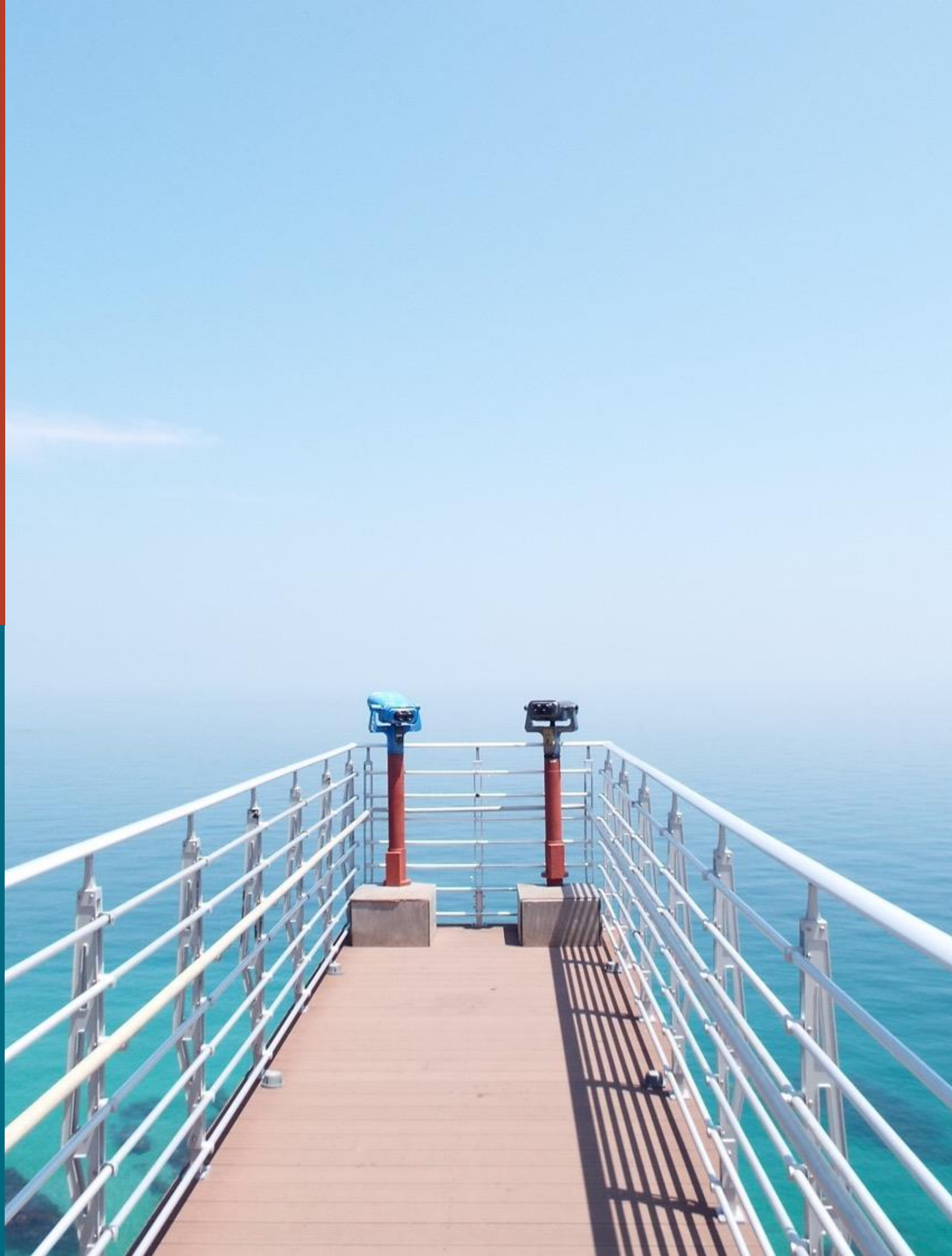
MUNICIPAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS EQUITY





ENGAGE IN CIVIL DISCOURSE

- Be honest
- Keep discussions productive
- Participate
- Listen attentively
- Keep an open mind
- Take responsibility for your own words
- Respect the intentions of others
- Don't be a bystander
- Determine options for action





What Is Diversity?



Planning in Our VUCA World: Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity

VUCA World Template

VUCA World Template





Equality – Federally Protected Classes

1. Age (40+)
2. Citizen Status (must be able to legally work in the US)
3. Disabilities
4. Genetic Information
5. Military Service
6. National Origin
7. Nursing Mothers
8. Pregnancy
9. Race/Color
10. Religion
11. Sex***
12. Veteran Status

***Now includes sexual orientation and transgender employees, per 2020 Supreme Court Decision

***Biden administration also interprets sex to include gender identity, as did the Obama administration

<https://www.eeoc.gov/employees>



Equality – Federally Protected Classes

1. Age (18+)
2. Ancestry
3. Gender Identity
4. HIV+ status
5. Place of Birth
6. Sexual Orientation

<https://workplacesforall.vermont.gov/employers/responsibilities/overview-employment-discrimination-under-vermont-law>





INCLUSION IS...

Societal

The ability to sustain an environment that recruits for diversity at all levels; and that values and respects all members for their unique characteristics.

An inclusive society strives for diversity over "*cultural fit*".

Personal

A cultural and environmental feeling of value, belonging, being respected. A sense of assurance that I can safely be my ***authentic self***.



**Think Data.
Plan Strategically.
Act Professionally.**

Inclusion & Belonging Index



Employment Net Promoter: Vermont

Net Promoter Score™

Employment Net Promoter® Score: **+16**

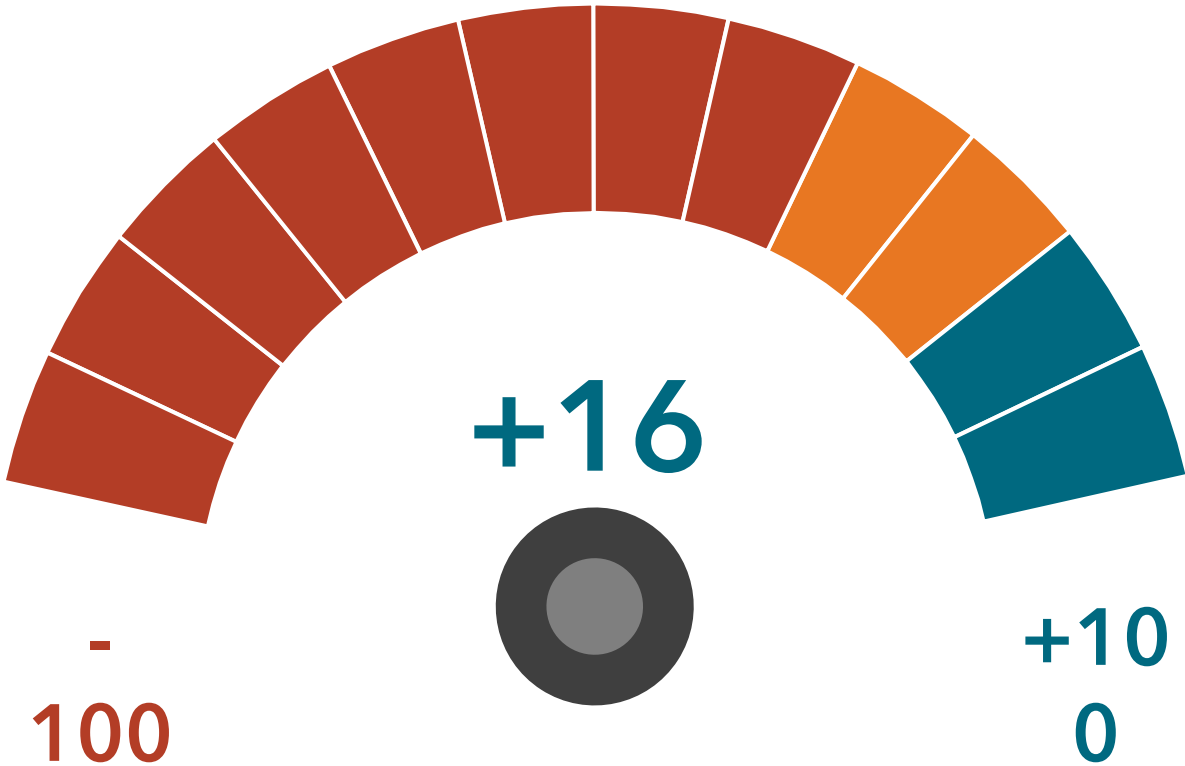
This is calculated as follows:

Promoters % - Detractors %

Promoters 36.1%

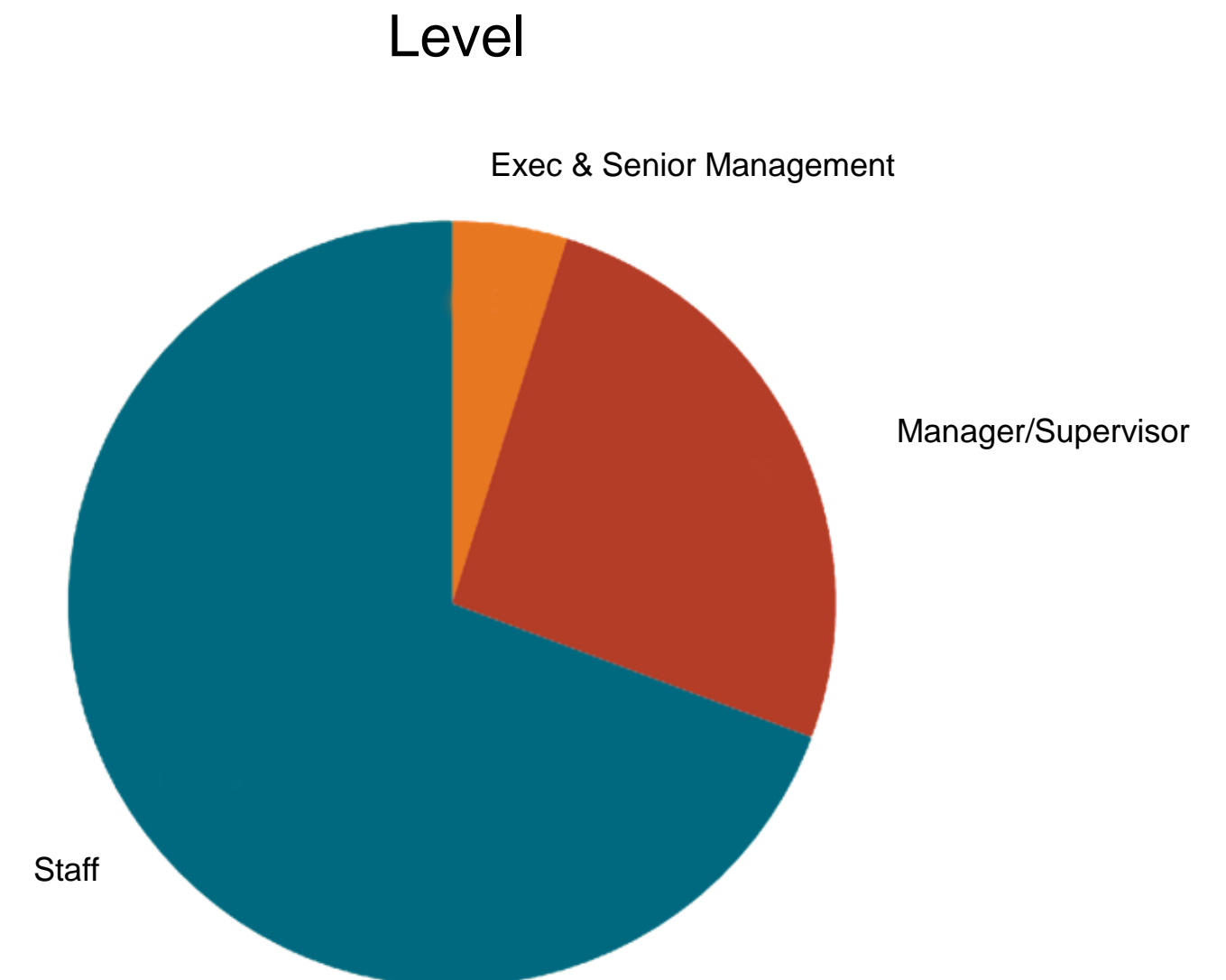
Passives 43.4%

Detractors 20.5%



Results by Demographic Categories - Level

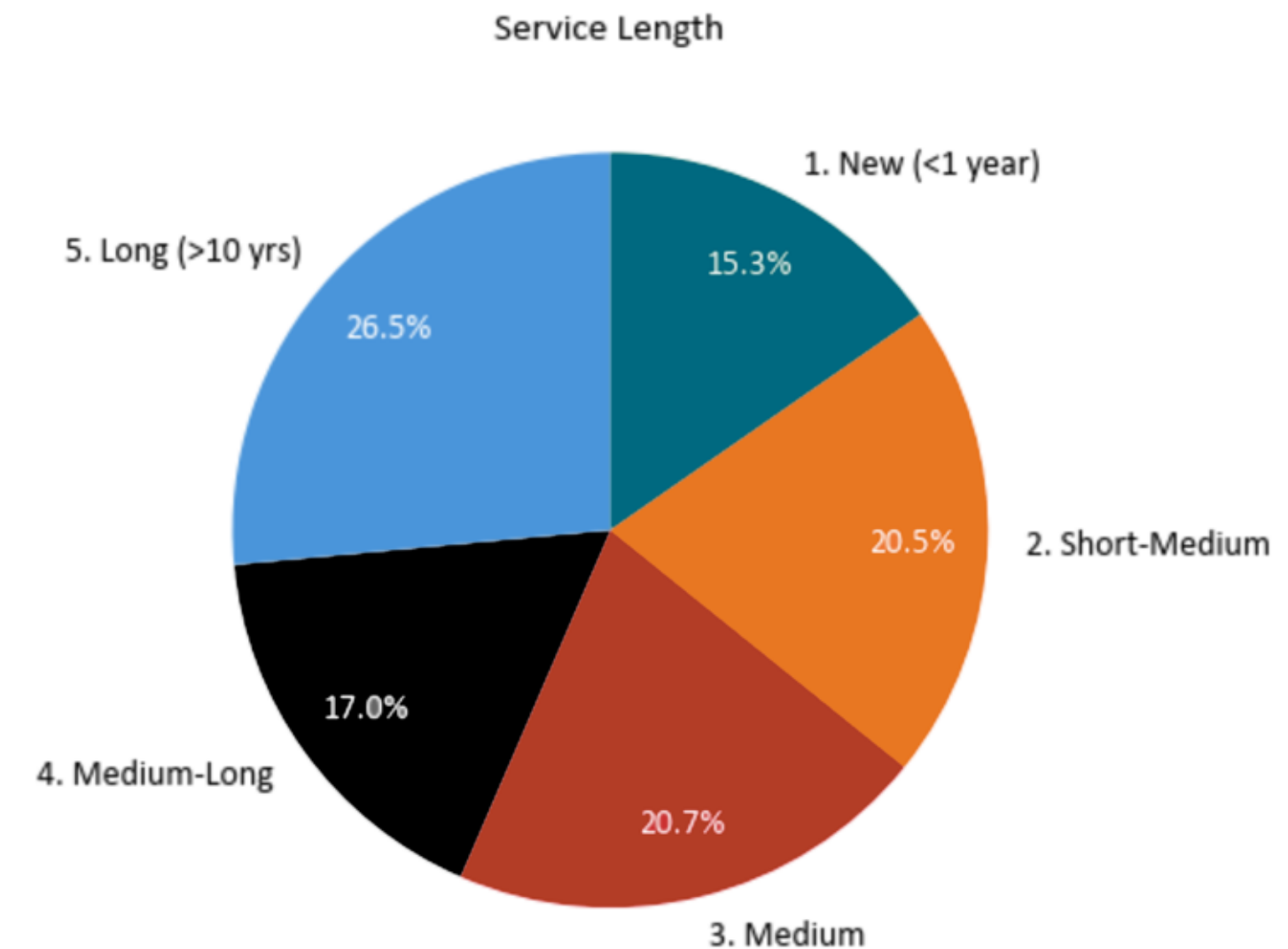
I & B Index LEVEL Respondent n	Exec & Senior Mgt 102	Manager/ Supervisor 544	Staff 1,459
Relationship with Supervisor	89.0	88.7	84.5
Relationship with Coworkers	89.4	86.5	81.4
Treated with Respect	85.0	81.7	78.4
Satisfied with Culture	80.1	73.9	69.9
Commitment to D&I	79.9	74.1	73.3
Advocacy	85.6	80.5	75.1
Overall I&B Index Score	84.2	81.4	77.0



Results by Demographic Categories – Service Length

I & B Index LENGTH OF SERVICE Respondent n	New (<12m) 340	Short - Medium 454	Medium 459	Medium - Long 378	Long (>10 yrs) 587
Relationship with Supervisor *	86.6	86.0	83.4	86.2	86.0
Relationship with Coworkers	80.4	81.9	81.3	84.0	85.7
Treated with Respect	83.0	80.1	76.2	78.6	79.9
Satisfied with Culture	75.8	70.2	67.2	70.4	73.4
Commitment to D&I	77.7	73.3	70.5	72.7	76.7
Advocacy	81.2	77.3	73.9	74.9	77.2
Overall I&B Index Score	80.9	78.4	75.6	77.8	79.3

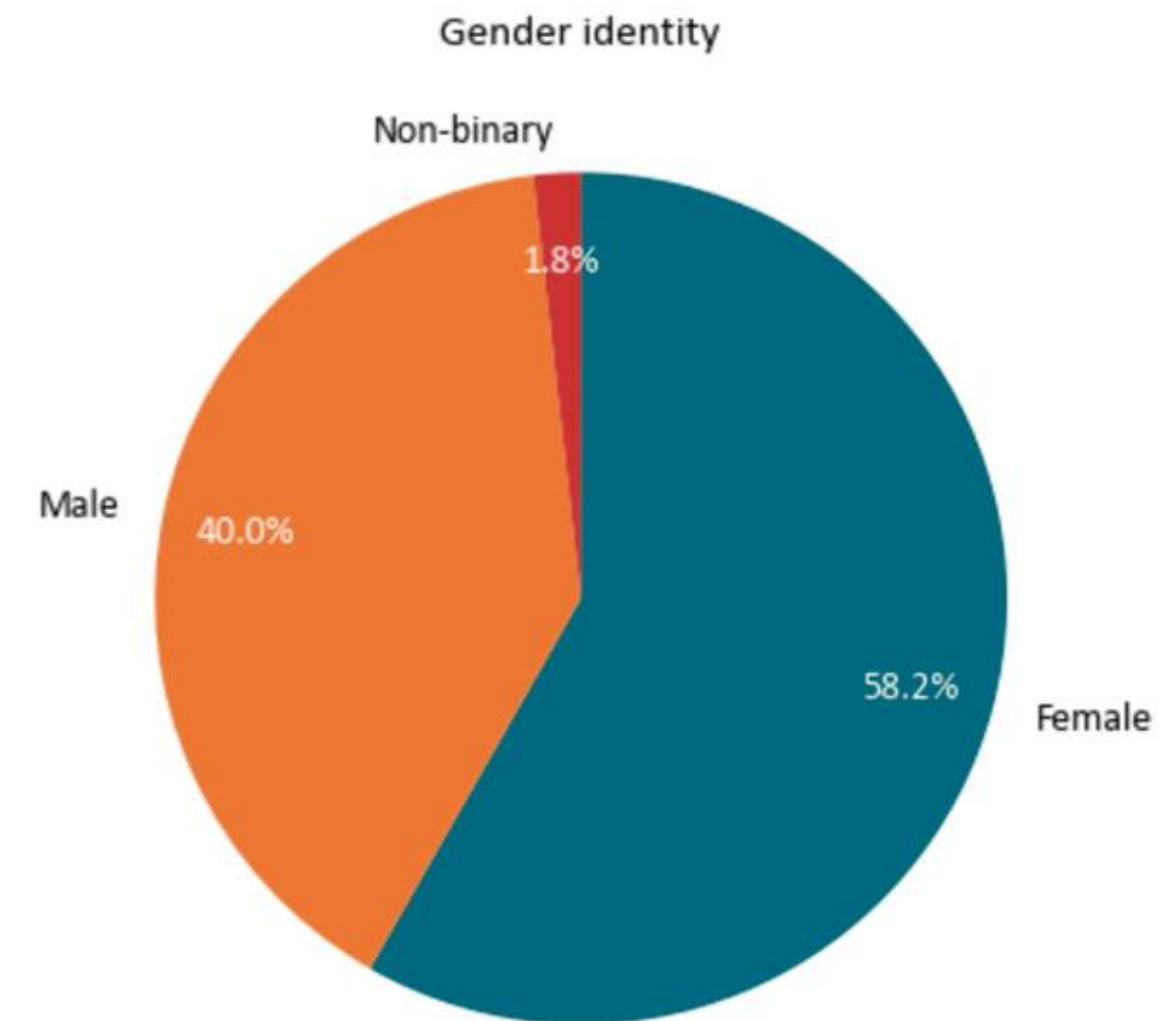
*Not statistically significant



Results by Demographic Categories – Gender Identity

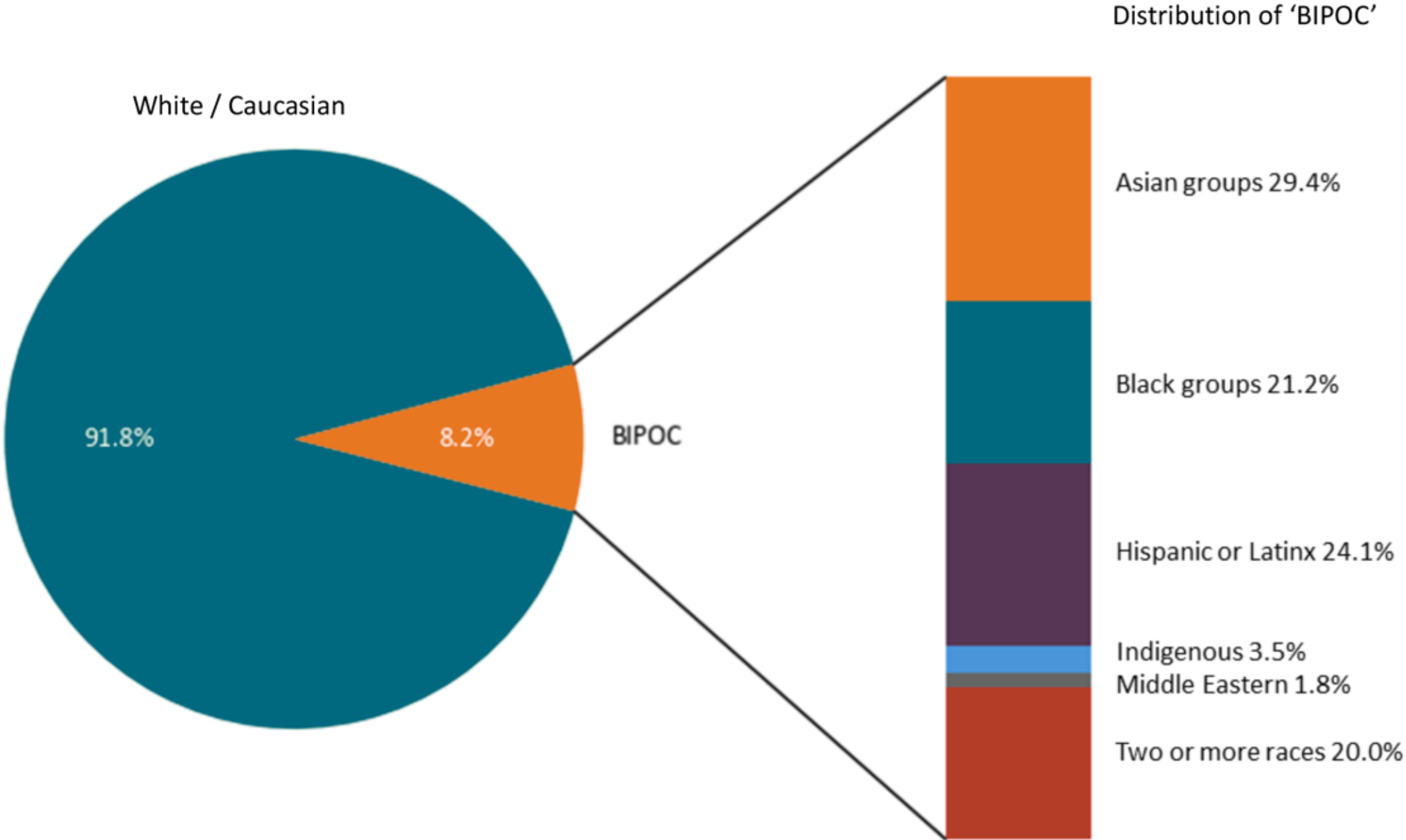
I & B Index GENDER IDENTITY Respondent n	Female 1,233	Male 846	Non-Binary 38
Relationship with Supervisor	86.0	86.3	74.3
Relationship with Coworkers *	83.3	83.2	78.9
Treated with Respect	79.2	81.2	67.1
Satisfied with Culture	70.2	74.6	53.3
Commitment to D&I	74.1	75.6	52.5
Advocacy	77.2	77.8	67.8
Overall I&B Index Score	78.4	79.8	66.4

*Not statistically significant



Results by Demographic Categories – Racial Identity

Racial or ethnic identity	n
African-American / Black-American / Black-Other	24
American Asian	1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2
Asian	31
Black or African American	12
East Asian	6
Hispanic or Latinx	41
Indigenous Person/Native American/American Indian or Alaskan Native	2
Middle Eastern	3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2
South Asian	7
Southeast Asian	5
Two or More Races	34
White / Caucasian	1,910
Total	2,080



We observe some differences in the use of categories across employers, but it is possible to amalgamate all data of staff identifying with a BIPOC category in to one of 6 core groups.

Benefits of Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Approach them with a positive mindset

Make it work for your whole community

- 
- **Creativity**
 - **Balance**
 - **Harmony**
 - **Health & Wellbeing**
 - **Abundance**

Thank You



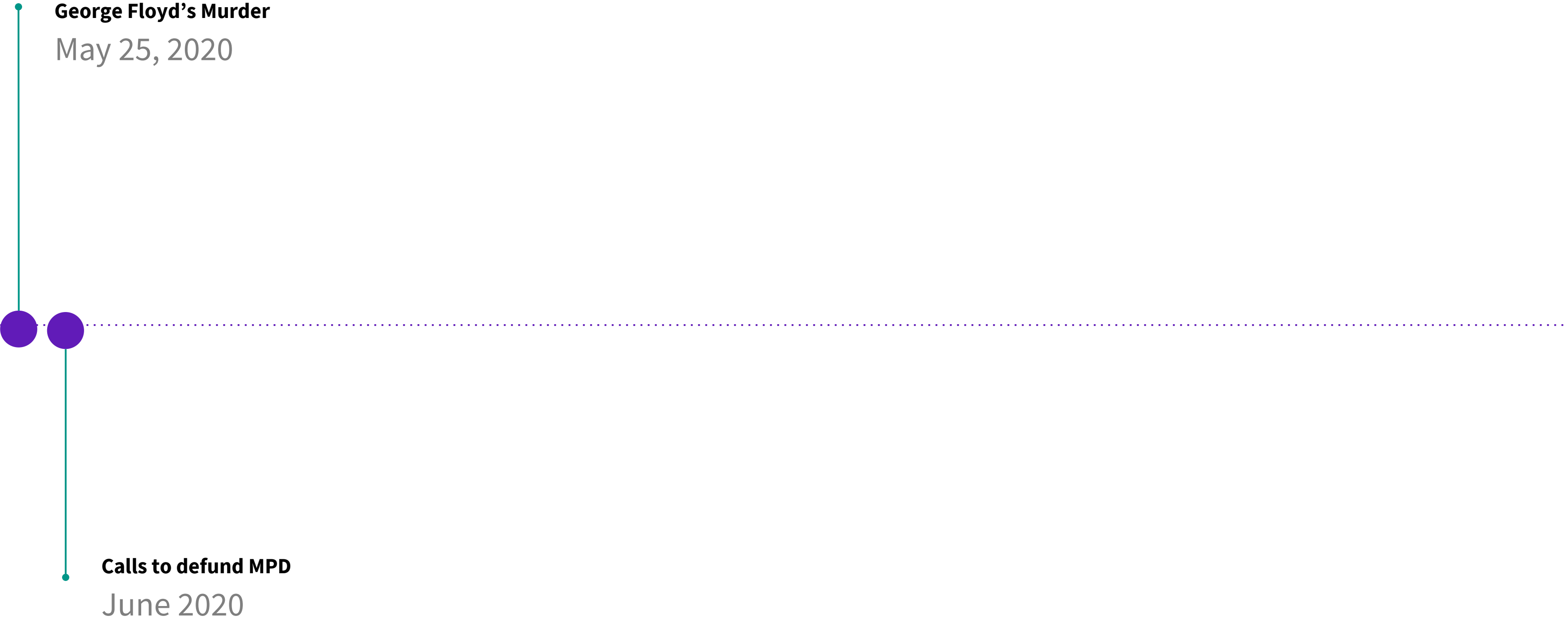
Contact us for more information at Abundantsun.com

DEI Workgroup

Town of Middlebury, Vermont
Lindsey Fuentes-George



Timeline of DEI process - Phase 1: TALKING!



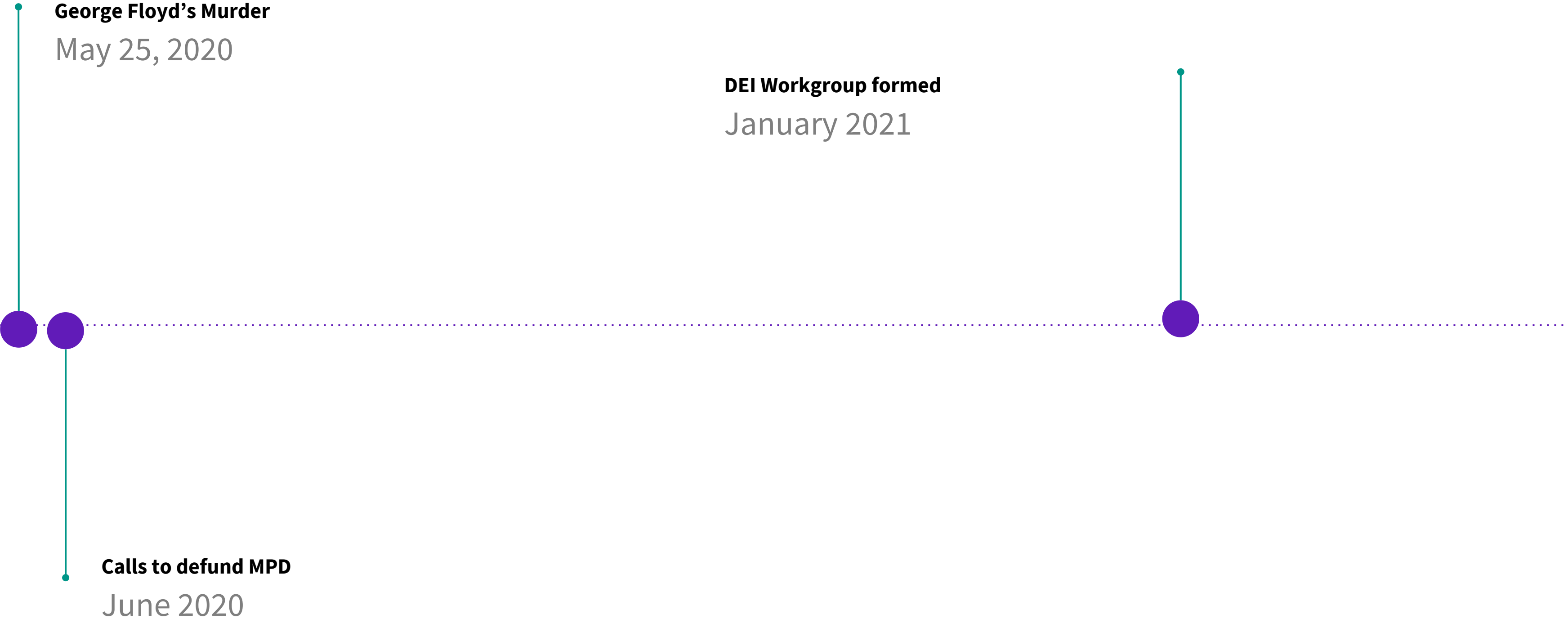
Contributors:

Results:

- Community members
- IDEAL Middlebury
- Town Staff
- Entire Selectboard

- Statement of Equity
 - Focus on meaningful change
 - Acknowledge limitations
-

Timeline of DEI process - Phase 2: Seek help



Original Charge:

Formed in the January 2021, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Workgroup is a short-term subcommittee of the Selectboard **charged with evaluating potential consulting resources** to assist the Board with building capacity to engage the Middlebury community in discussions regarding the local impacts of racism. The workgroup will make recommendations to the Selectboard regarding these resources, help identify community stakeholders to participate in this work, and investigate related matters, as directed by the Board.



Timeline of DEI process - Phase 3: WORK!



Clarified Goals:

- Gather staff & community input
- Avenue for addressing concerns
- Process for evaluating & changing policies & procedures
- Standing DEI Committee that prepared to carry the work forward

Timeline of DEI process



Thank you!



CONTACT US



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- Lindsey Fuentes-George, Middlebury Selectboard – lindseyfuentes@gmail.com