City of Boston
Equity and Inclusion

2024 IMPACT REPORT

This impact report highlights the City of Boston's ongoing commitment to fostering equity, inclusion, and cultural vibrancy across our diverse communities. Through innovative programs, strategic partnerships, and purposeful engagement, we strive to create a city where every resident feels valued and empowered. From supporting Indigenous communities to celebrating cultural heritage, this report captures our progress and reaffirms our dedication to building a city where everybody belongs.

Prepared by:

Equity and Inclusion Cabinet,
City of Boston

617-635-5714
equity@boston.gov
boston.gov/equity

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Dear Residents of Boston,

As we step into 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on the progress we've made together and express my heartfelt gratitude for your partnership and trust throughout 2024. The Equity and Inclusion team is a powerful and diverse group, representing over 12 countries and speaking 7 languages—many of which mirror the rich nationalities of our residents. This incredible work would not be possible without their dedication or your unwavering support. Your voices and ideas continue to guide and inspire us.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are energized by the opportunities to further our mission and build a city that feels like home for everyone. Despite any challenges that may arise, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our vision and goals. Together, we will continue to make meaningful progress and foster impactful collaboration.

Wishing you a safe, joyful, and restful year filled with love and hope.

Warm regards,
Mariangely Solis Cervera
Chief, Equity and Inclusion Cabinet

Our Mission

Improve **life outcomes** with and for the historically excluded constituencies we represent by addressing social determinants of health through a racial justice lens.

Theory of Change

01

Technical Assistance

Provide Equity and Inclusion services to other City agencies. The goal is to impact systemic change in policy, programs, and services.

02

Execute

Execute targeted and intentional programming that improves quality of life for residents.

03

Convene

Convene day-to-day residents and stakeholders. We want to build coalitions and trust between community and the City, and among lines of difference within community.

E&I Cabinet Priorities

Overview

City of Boston
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E&I Priorities Overview

Transforming Policies, Programs, and Communities

E&I Academy

The E&I Academy equips city employees with tools to address systemic inequities, improving social determinants of health by centering racial justice. It builds capacity within city agencies to embed equity into policies and services, fostering trust and cultural competency between city employees and the communities they serve.

E&I Network

The E&I Network fosters collaboration among equity managers, ensuring historically excluded groups are prioritized across city departments. By connecting city agencies and communities, the network standardizes equity practices, builds trust, and drives systemic change to eliminate disparities.

E&I Technical Assistance

Technical assistance ensures city departments have the resources to implement equitable policies and programs effectively. By improving service delivery and embedding equity in city operations, it strengthens trust with marginalized groups and supports long-term systemic change.

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E&I Priorities Overview

Transforming Policies, Programs, and Communities

Reparations

Reparations address the legacy of systemic racism, improving social determinants of health for Black Bostonians through targeted investments and acknowledgment of historical harm. This initiative drives systemic change, fosters reconciliation, and strengthens trust between the city and its Black communities.

Cultural Affairs

Cultural affairs initiatives celebrate Boston's diverse heritage, centering historically excluded communities and fostering a sense of belonging. By convening residents across differences, these programs build trust, reduce exclusion, and promote equitable representation citywide.

Department Specialties

Our eight departments tackle systemic inequities by centering historically excluded groups in city policies and services. By advancing equity in health, gender, race, accessibility, housing, and immigration, they foster trust, collaboration, and systemic change for a more inclusive Boston.

E&I Cabinet

Highlights

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Goals

Develop a Comprehensive Indigenous Engagement Guide:

Create a detailed resource to guide City departments in building meaningful relationships and fostering trust with Indigenous communities.

Establish a Permanent Indigenous Public Art and Cultural Spaces Role:

Make the Indigenous consultant role a permanent position to ensure ongoing advocacy and representation in public art and cultural initiatives.

Advance Cultural Respect Easements:

Collaborate with Indigenous communities to protect culturally significant spaces and promote respectful stewardship of ancestral lands.

Highlights

- **Educational Support for American Indian Students:** Secured Indian Education Formula Funding in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and UMass Boston's INENAS program to enhance resources and opportunities for American Indian students in the BPS system.
- **Celebrating Indigenous Leadership**: Hosted the inaugural Indigenous Symposium, a landmark event dedicated to uplifting and celebrating the voices of Indigenous leaders within the community.
- **Showcasing Indigenous Creativity**: Partnered with MassArt and the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture to present We Still Dance, a captivating performance honoring Indigenous artistry and resilience.
- **Exploring Indigenous Perspectives**: Collaborated with the Leventhal Map Center and the North American Indian Center of Boston to release two editions of the Indigenous Map Series, highlighting Indigenous worldviews through cartography.

E&I Academy

Goals

Enhance Workforce Competencies for Equitable Public Service:

Develop impactful curriculum and learning sessions to equip city employees with the skills, awareness, and tools needed to serve residents of diverse backgrounds effectively.

Foster Dialogue and Collaboration Across Departments:

Facilitate engagement around sensitive topics, build cross-departmental relationships, and create opportunities for collaboration that break down silos and encourage shared understanding.

Sustain an Equity-Focused Community of Practice:

Establish and maintain a network of E&I Ambassadors who champion equity and inclusion initiatives, ensuring ongoing collaboration and support during and beyond the E&I Academy.

Highlights

- **Ambassador Participation**: A total of 120 ambassadors have successfully completed the Equity and Inclusion Academy, encompassing participants from the pilot program and the most recent cohort. The Academy has facilitated six cohorts to date.
- **Inaugural EI Summit:** The inaugural Equity and Inclusion (EI) Summit welcomed nearly 90 registrants, representing over 45 City departments and 8 cabinets.
- **Program Highlights**: The Summit showcased the journey of participants toward becoming EI Ambassadors, emphasizing the diverse learning objectives and session topics covered in both the Academy and the Summit.

120 Ambassadors Graduated from the E&I Academy in 2024

Reparations

Goals

- **Study and Document Boston's Role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade:**
  Working with research partners to study and document the City of Boston's role in the transatlantic slave trade and its legacies

- **Evaluate the City's Progress on Addressing Historical Inequities:**
  Assessing the City's actions to date to address continued impacts of enslavement

- **Develop Recommendations for Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations:**
  Recommendations for truth, reconciliation, and reparations addressing the City's involvement with the transatlantic slave trade

Grassroots Partnership Program:

44 Projects ***19 grants*** ***25 contracts***

Highlights

- **Grassroots Partnership Program:** The Reparations Task Force is funding community leaders, organizations, artists, historians, and educators across four partnership opportunities to amplify community engagement, document oral histories, share public storytelling projects, and conduct research on Boston's ties to slavery. This initiative aims to supplement the research team's Phase 1 report with community-grounded strategies and insights.

- **Leadership Expansion**: The Task Force has welcomed Khalid Mustafa as the new Special Projects Manager and Mariana White Hammond as a new member, strengthening its capacity to drive meaningful change.

- **Community Awareness and Engagement**: A successful communications campaign has been launched to inform the community about reparations efforts and encourage active participation.

Cultural Affairs

Goals

Streamline Event and Festival Hosting Processes for Community Members:

Develop an efficient and user-friendly system to assist community members in organizing events and festivals, making it easier to celebrate the city's cultural diversity and foster community connections.

Launched a Cultural Affairs Grant Program to Support Cultural Organizations:

Awarded **$225,000** in Community Building Mini Grants to **45 cultural nonprofit organizations,** supporting culturally relevant programs, festivals, and civic engagement initiatives that strengthen Boston's diverse communities.

Community Building Mini Grants:

$225K in Mini Grants

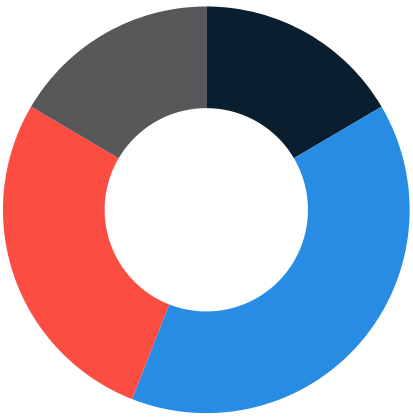
45 cultural nonprofit organizations

Highlights

- **Expanding Cultural Representation:** Hired Boston's first-ever Caribbean Cultural Advisor and raised the Korean Flag for the first time in city history, celebrating diverse cultural identities.
- **Strengthening Department Capacity**: Achieved a full and dynamic team to support the Cultural Affairs Department's mission and goals.
- **Community Empowerment and Youth Support:** Hosted a Special Events Webinar to educate community organizations on event planning and organized a Backpack Drive that provided supplies to over 300 Boston Public School students.
- **Addressing Food Security**: Completed the annual food giveaway for the second year, distributing over 40,000 pounds of food to city residents.
- **Enhancing Cultural Vibrancy:** Awarded grants to 46 cultural nonprofit organizations, enabling community events, festivals, and innovative creative projects across Boston.

Technical Assistance

Stages of Projects Supported by Our Technical Assistance



Initial Brainstorming
16.7%

Planning
39.4%

Implementation
27.5%

Evaluation
16.7%

Embedding Equity and Inclusion Through Technical Assistance

Our technical assistance efforts support City of Boston departments throughout various project stages—from planning to implementation and evaluation—by embedding equity and inclusion principles into each phase.

Key Highlights from This Year:

- 18 instances of technical assistance provided across departments.
- Support at all project stages, including:
  - Ideation: Helping departments identify equity gaps and develop inclusive strategies.
  - Implementation: Providing guidance on executing programs with an equity lens.
  - Evaluation: Assessing impact and recommending improvements.
- Departments leveraged technical assistance to:
  - Address disparities in services and policies.
  - Develop more inclusive programs.
  - Strengthen community engagement efforts

The graph, "Stages of Projects Supported by Our Technical Assistance," shows how departments apply these resources throughout project development. Our goal is to embed equity and inclusion in every decision, ensuring all Boston residents have equitable access to opportunities and resources.

Looking Ahead: 2025 and Beyond

In 2025, the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet will drive key initiatives to advance equity citywide. We will launch a **Language Preservation Program** to support cultural and linguistic diversity, publish the **Reparations Study** to inform next steps in addressing historical injustices, and host a series of **informational workshops** with cultural communities to strengthen engagement and accessibility. Through these efforts, we remain committed to embedding equity in policy, expanding economic inclusion, and ensuring every Boston resident has the opportunity to thrive..