

A Guide for Enhancing Mediator Roster Equity from Concept to Implementation



Purpose

This guide provides community mediation centers with information and resources to enhance the diversity of their volunteer mediator rosters. This guide's recommendations are based on the approaches taken by CCR staff and volunteers in implementing an equity audit of their Mediator Membership Program and Resolution Systems Institute's evaluation of the project.

Barriers to Equity

CCR worked with a DEI consulting partner to uncover barriers to reaching equity in their volunteer roster. They identified a few overarching issues that may be present in your strategies as well:

- A mindset of “selection” when screening applicants
- A “one-size-fits-all” approach to meeting program requirements
- Intensive application forms
- A “blind” approach to applicant assessment
- Use of individual interviewers rather than a team

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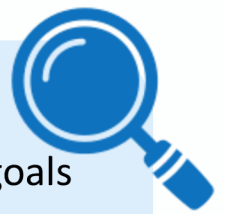
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Strategies for an Equity Project: Insights from CCR



- Engage a DEI partner that aligns with your organization and its goals to help you identify barriers and develop a plan to address them.
- Develop an outreach strategy early to ensure that staff have sufficient time to plan and execute a targeted effort at diversifying your roster.
- Involve staff, board members and volunteers to capture multiple viewpoints and build buy-in for your equity project. Communicate with them throughout the project.
- Provide ample time to ensure that all stakeholders can meaningfully reflect on changes needed and develop effective solutions.
- Sustain long-term change by continually refining any changes you make and creating opportunities to further reflect on future issues.

Approaches to Enhancing Equity: Takeaways from CCR



- Volunteer mediators do not need to go through the exact same process. CCR introduced flexibility to meeting their program time and cost requirements through their new Bartering System.
- Staff do not need a background in DEI to carry out an equity project. CCR worked with consulting partners to effectively train staff and volunteers to carry out new equity-minded program application processes.
- Simple applications invite diverse applicants. By replacing essay submissions with a simple form, CCR reduced language and time-related barriers to submitting an application.
- Activity-based interviews effectively gauge applicants' skills. CCR used Matching Events to screen candidates using a set of activities relevant to mediation practice.
- Community partnerships can take multiple forms. CCR's outreach led to creative new partnerships that strengthened its services.

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