

2021-1 MANSO Anti-Racism Policy for the Settlement Sector

Moved: Abdikheir Ahmed (Aurora Family Therapy Centre)

Whereas: The vast majority of immigrants and refugees arriving to Manitoba for the past 40 years have been racialized newcomers and this pattern shows no signs of changing. Canada will become an increasingly racially diverse country.

Whereas: Our goal as a sector of creating responsive settlement services and welcoming communities is greatly hampered by the realities of individual, institutional and systemic racism. There is ample evidence to indicate that racism and discrimination impact negatively on newcomers' employment options and opportunities, access to housing, access to education and educational outcomes, mental health and physical health, and sense of belonging, to name a few. Racism is a significant challenge to the successful settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada.

Whereas: Settlement organizations in Manitoba are located on Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Territories, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anish-Ininiwak, Dakota, Dene, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk and the homeland of the Métis people. As settlers on these lands, it is our responsibility to identify and dismantle the structures of settler colonialism, white supremacy and racism that result in past and current colonial violence against Indigenous peoples as well as violence against other racialized communities.

Whereas: In 2020, with heightened attention being paid to anti-Black racism by police, society and systems, and in 2021, with a stronger focus on anti-Asian racism, it is clear that there is great opportunity in this moment to support meaningful change. In fact, there is an opportunity to work in solidarity to address the endemic racism that affects Indigenous peoples as well as racialized newcomers.

Whereas: A large number of settlement organizations have recently and publicly affirmed their commitment to anti-Black racism and anti-racism, but few have the organizational resources, skills, expertise and tools to meaningfully address anti-racism. Boards and senior leadership in the sector often lack the representation necessary to guide and inform systemic and meaningful change.

Whereas: The scope of change required must address individual, institutional and systemic racism. Removing individual-level racism from the system, does not end racism. The institutions and systems also must change.

Whereas: There should be a higher level of scrutiny placed on settlement organizations to exemplify anti-racism because of who we serve i.e., racialized communities.

Whereas: MANSO can be the first provincial settlement umbrella organization in Canada to develop an Anti-Racism Policy Framework and Action Plan, providing leadership to settlement organizations across the province, and engaging in its own organizational development alongside member organizations.

Whereas: Language is powerful and terminology is nuanced and difficult to 'pin down' so that everyone relates and understands. We are speaking about immigrants and refugees from ethnic or racial groups who experience racism (and those who identify as coming from those communities, but may be born here). The term "racialized" is also used in this document to reflect the same group.

Be it resolved that: The membership urges MANSO to adopt and implement a multi-year “Anti-Racism Policy Framework and Action **Plan**” that:

1. Is aligned with these principles and approaches:
 - Is action-oriented, not performative
 - Examines concepts such as white supremacy and settler colonialism, and that proposes solutions found in anti-racism, anti-oppression and in Indigenization
 - Focuses on all levels of racism (individual, institutional and systemic)
 - Is strategic and multi-year (i.e., reflected in MANSO’s Strategic Plan)
 - Is accountable to those from racialized immigrant and refugee communities
 - Includes anti-racism education that is always embedded in meaningful systemic change
 - Targets that anti-racism education appropriately
 - Supports mentorship and capacity-building among RACIALIZED staff and participants to help redress systemic barriers
 - Promotes advocacy against individual, institutional and systemic racism
 - Is always inclusive of solidarity efforts to address anti-Indigenous racism
 - Dovetails with and does not duplicate existing related initiatives coordinated by other provincial and/or sector organizations, networks or groups
2. Creates an **Anti-Racism Committee** of MANSO composed of immigrants and refugees from ethnic or racial groups who experience racism (and those who identify as coming from those communities) and allies, within three months of the passing of this resolution, to advise the development and implementation of the **Plan**
3. Supports the Committee to find or develop an **arms-length structure or host to house this Plan** (and or key components of the Plan) with sufficient capacity and expertise in anti-racism
4. Prioritizes the following strategies:
 - Advised by the Anti-Racism Committee of MANSO, **hire a consultant** to develop the overarching Plan
 - Ensure the Plan has **operational goals, objectives, activities, targets and timelines**
 - Create a **MANSO Anti-Racism Policy / Position Statement** as a template for the sector
 - Conduct a **sector-wide equity, diversity and inclusion audit and report**
 - Set goals and timeframes for **improving representation** of racialized newcomer/immigrant/refugee staff, management and board members of settlement organizations
 - Support **sector-wide anti-racism education**, by ensuring a proportion of MANSO’s PD Calendar offers anti-racism themes and capacity-building for/at all levels of settlement organizations
 - Support MANSO to **provide sector leadership by ensuring representation on MANSO’s Board**, as per current by-laws: *MANSO’s Board of Directors shall include a minimum of three Directors who are immigrants or refugees with a racialized background, who have lived experience, and who have faced systemic barriers, including those related to disability, sexual orientation gender identity and expression (SOGIE), or others. If MANSO is unable to fill this position at the AGM, the Board position will remain vacant until it can be filled according to these requirements. If necessary, a Board member who meets these requirements may join at any*

point in the year and will be voted on at the next year's AGM. After a successful vote, that individual would begin their 3 year Board term.

- Work with stakeholders to explore the creation of an **Anti-Racism Accord** or an equivalent change strategy

For purposes of transparency and explanation, the goal of an **Accord** or equivalent change strategy would be to **emphasize institutional and systemic change within organizations and across the settlement sector**. Ideally, it would:

- Strongly incentivize member organizations to sign on
- Support member organizations to gather and collate, analyze and share staff, volunteer and participant self-identification data, upward mobility data, retention data, as examples, on a periodic and ongoing basis
- Provide the assessments/audits, tools, training and additional resources to help member organizations identify strategic and annual anti-racism change goals and progress towards those goals
- Research, review and supports existing initiatives such as the “50-30 Challenge” from the federal government (i.e., 50% gender parity and 30% underrepresented groups as targets for senior leadership and board composition) and the Indigenous Accord by the City of Winnipeg to address specific areas of anti-racism and inclusion
- Ensure organizations closely examine and redress systemic barriers/facilitators (as examples: strategic direction, mission, vision, hiring and retention, diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization, staff anti-racism education, community engagement and voice, representation and consent in communications and outreach, HR and organizational policies and practices ranging from racial harassment to staff complaint policies, resources allocated to advocacy, etc.)
- Hold members accountable through an annual progress reporting process
- Encourage organizations to push for change, by annually highlighting those who have been successful in anti-racist change, and by amplifying best practices to the sector
- Provide an annual opportunity (conference) for face-to-face discussions to build relationships and collaboration between organizations, to share lessons learned, to understand continued inequities experience by racialized staff and participants, and to continuously improve the efficacy of the Accord or equivalent strategy.