

# Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity and Inclusion (AHEAD) in WIC

## Project: Local Agency Grant Projects

### Guidance for Describing Your Emerging or Promising Practices and Policies

#### Introduction

This document includes guidance to prepare your proposal for an NWA Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity and Inclusion (AHEAD) in WIC grant. Applicants should use this document to write a narrative proposal that describes the emerging or promising practice (e.g., program, intervention, or initiative) or policy which will be adopted and implemented by your agency to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the WIC environment. Applicants can select one or a combination of approved EDI policies and practices or propose another EDI practice not included in the list—creative, innovative ideas are welcomed. All projects should be data driven, reasonable in scope for the timeframe and include client/community engagement to capture the voice of the lived experience.

#### What does the term “Practice” mean?

A practice is the implementation of a new activity or the expansion of an existing activity to address a specific EDI issue identified and supported by data. For the purpose of this grant activity, a practice is a project that has an identified start and end date, is evaluated, and, if shown to have a positive impact on EDI in WIC, has a clear plan for sustainability after the grant period. The practices undertaken in the current award can be emerging or promising. To help guide this process, a list of characteristics of an emerging and promising practice are included in Table 1.

**Table 1: Practice Categories with Definitions**

Practice Categories	Definitions
Emerging Practices*	Intervention, program, policy, or initiative that is new, innovative and which holds promise but that has not been adequately evaluated.*
Promising Practices**	Intervention, program, policy, or initiative that shows potential (or ‘promise’) based on evaluation evidence or on a well-established theory of change. Promising practices can be at the earlier stages of implementation, evaluation.**

**Plan**

**Organizational Structure**

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Assessing Organizational Readiness and Capacity related to EDI**	<p>Assessing organizational readiness and capacity related to EDI within your WIC program including reviewing policies and practices to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provide a baseline for current EDI capacity within your organization.</li><li>• identify EDI strengths and areas where capacity could be enhanced.</li><li>• identify areas and opportunities for shifting and sharing power.</li><li>• supporting strategic and operational planning and organizational development.</li><li>• and providing a framework to measure progress and build organizational accountability.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conducting an internal assessment using an equity assessment tool. Examples:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) Equity Assessment <a href="https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-and-publications/cccorgassessment">https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-and-publications/cccorgassessment</a></li><li>○ Coalition Ending Gender-based Violence Demonstrate LGBTQ Assess Organizational Assessment <a href="https://endgv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Organizational-Self-Assessment.pdf">https://endgv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Organizational-Self-Assessment.pdf</a></li><li>○ National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. Learning Together: A guide to assessment tools for organizational health equity <a href="https://www.nccdh.ca/OCI-Knowledge-Product-8-Organizational-Assessments-EN.pdf">OCI-Knowledge-Product-8-Organizational-Assessments-EN.pdf (nccdh.ca)</a></li></ul></li><li>• Using existing data systems and formative research approaches to understand and identify underserved populations and inequities in reach and service provision, staff make-up, and strategies for staff recruitment/retention.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Conducting surveys, assessments, and open dialogues with clients and staff to identify barriers/challenges to and opportunities for accessing WIC services, recruitment, and retention and hiring diverse WIC staff.</li></ul></li></ul>

**Plan** (cont'd)

**Organizational Structure** (cont'd)

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Revising and/or Creating New Policies and Strategic Plans to Support EDI work**	Revising and/or developing new policies and strategic plans to improve the inequitable impact of WIC on under-served, marginalized, and demographically diverse WIC staff and clients, and identify and reduce or eliminate barriers to equity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revising or creating new policies related to inclusion and gender equity.</li><li>• Embedding equity and inclusion into core values by streamlining it into annual reviews, hiring practices, etc.</li><li>• Rewriting job descriptions to include advocacy as a core task.</li><li>• Developing policies and implementation processes to recruit and hire diverse contractors/consultants to support EDI and overall WIC work including providing EDI training, material development and social marketing, and conducting research/evaluation.</li></ul>
Creating a Formal Leadership Infrastructure to Guide EDI work**	Develop the infrastructure to provide the consistency needed to/in addressing the emerging opportunities and barriers to EDI work; as well as the “follow through” to ensure changes are made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing a team that focuses on bringing an equity lens to policies, systems, and procedures.</li><li>• Creating a position for an EDI coordinator, who initiates relevant trainings and assessments, creates tools for monitoring and evaluating progress toward EDI goals, obtains input from relevant internal and external stakeholders to advance EDI work (e.g., conducting focus groups, surveys, etc.) and promotes equity among all WIC staff and clients.</li></ul>

**ACT**

Client Services

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Developing Culturally and Linguistically Inclusive Tools/Materials Representing Diverse Populations**	Creating and evaluating the use of inclusive materials that represent and support underserved, marginalized, and demographically diverse individuals and groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using/Developing diverse and inclusive images on social media platforms, agency websites, posters, brochures, billboards, office décor, etc. that represent diverse abilities, races, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, and languages.</li></ul>
Developing Culturally and Linguistically Inclusive Nutrition Education, Counseling, and Service Delivery Models that Target Demographically Diverse Populations**	Creating and evaluating the use of inclusive nutrition education, counseling, and service delivery models that are tailored to support underserved, marginalized, and demographically diverse individuals and groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing population specific programming, such as: creating WIC events and programming tailored to support, enhance service delivery, and improve WIC outcomes for specific populations. For example, developing cultural support groups, luncheons, and expos; offering nutrition education, counseling, events that reflect diverse languages, abilities, and cultural values, reducing barriers and increasing access/opportunities for people with disabilities.</li></ul>

**ACT** (cont'd)

Client Services (cont'd)

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Tailoring Technology to Support Underserved, Marginalized, and Demographically Diverse Individuals and Groups.**	Since WIC client's access to technology is varied, the purpose of this strategy is to tailor technology to support, communicate and educate underserved, marginalized, and demographically diverse individuals and client groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating and tailoring social media messaging and events, television programs, YouTube and other virtual education spaces (i.e. Zoom) to meet the needs of diverse client populations. Strategically using social media platforms and outlets that have a high traffic volume in targeted communities (Pinterest, FB, Instagram, etc.), to support, enhance service delivery, and improve WIC outcomes.</li></ul>
Reduce Client Barriers to Meet Program Requirements and Access/Utilize WIC Services and Benefits While Creating Opportunities for Maximizing the WIC Experience*	Using human-centered design principles and similar approaches to reduce barriers and identify opportunities for improving client's WIC access and enhancing the WIC experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing a mobile WIC clinic or food market to reach those with little to no transportation, setting up WIC clinics or food markets in remote/off site locations, contracting with small and cultural vendors.</li><li>• Providing transportation resources, and/or bringing WIC to the community ("mobile WIC") to provide support to WIC clients who experience transportation barriers.</li><li>• Enhancing clinic design elements to be inclusive of diverse abilities, races, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, and languages.</li></ul>

**CONNECT**

Outreach and Partnerships

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Building State/Local Coalitions and Partnerships to Reach Underserved, Marginalized, and Demographically Diverse Individuals and Groups.**	Actively building and establishing coalitions and partnerships locally and statewide, to broaden WIC's reach in providing services to these populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishing partnerships with local/state hospitals, schools, homeless shelters, farmer's markets, medical clinics, churches, libraries, pantries, etc.</li><li>• Coordinating/Developing MOUs with culturally targeted coalitions who are focused on infant mortality, breastfeeding, underserved populations, etc.</li></ul>
Tailoring Technology to Reach Underserved, Marginalized, and Demographically Diverse Individuals and Groups.**	Since diverse populations' access to technology is varied, the purpose of this strategy is to tailor technology to reach, advertise and market to underserved, marginalized, and demographically diverse individuals and groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utilizing location-based marketing (e.g., geofencing) to identify anyone who searches for a topic that is related to WIC services/programs.</li><li>• Advertising/marketing through radio, newspaper, billboards, television, brochures, social media, and through other different partner website platforms to reach and engage diverse populations.</li></ul>
Developing Culturally and Linguistically Inclusive Outreach and Recruitment Strategies that Target Demographically Diverse Populations**	Creating and evaluating the use of inclusive outreach and recruitment models that are tailored to support underserved, marginalized, and demographically diverse individuals and groups. The selection of these strategies should be data- and community-driven.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing recruitment and outreach material that represents diverse abilities, races, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, and in various languages to reduce barriers to reach and engagement.</li><li>• Developing recruitment and outreach plans to reach locations that are strategic and specific. For ex. recruiting clients in the zip codes with high infant mortality and low income based on Census data.</li></ul>

**UNDERSTAND**

Training and Competency/Education

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Building Staff Knowledge and Capacity in EDI Through Formal, Research-based, and Culturally Responsive Education and Training**	Providing Professional Development and Training on EDI to WIC Stakeholders including Leadership, Staff, and Vendors.	<p>Practices can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● State/Local Agency Training and Conferences</li><li>● Webinar Series</li><li>● Sending Staff to External Training Programs</li><li>● Developing EDI Training Materials and Curricula for WIC Stakeholder Groups that Could be Broadly Disseminated</li><li>● Leveraging Resources and Partnering to Provide Staff Access to Speaker Series at Local Universities</li></ul> <p>Topics could include, but not limited to:</p> <p>Anti-Racism, Cultural Practices, Institutionalized Racism, White Privilege, Implicit Bias, Trauma-Informed Approach, and those centered around working with demographically diverse populations (Ableism, LGBTQ, etc.),</p> <p>An incentive could be to offer CEUs for each training.</p>
Building Staff Knowledge and Capacity in EDI Through On-going Dialogues and Staff Engagement**	Providing an infrastructure and opportunities for EDI discussions and culture change.	<p>Practices can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● On-going Group Dialogues</li><li>● Book Clubs</li><li>● Racial Equity Challenge</li><li>● Internal Peer Learning Communities and Exchange</li></ul> <p>(See previously mentioned topics)</p>

**HIRE**

Hiring and Promotion

EDI Practices	Description	Examples
Developing and Implementing a Strategic Approach for Hiring Culturally/Linguistically Appropriate Staff (e.g. Underserved Populations, People with the Lived Experience, and Individuals that Reflect the Community)**	Being intentional about hiring qualified, EDI aware/sensitive staff.	Examples of practices could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in all employee job descriptions (i.e., everyone in the unit has responsibility for diversity and inclusiveness).</li><li>● Regularly use progress toward program diversity goals and other workforce data.</li><li>● Active outreach to underrepresented communities.</li><li>● Requiring interview panels and staff to complete implicit bias and EDI training related to hiring.</li></ul>

Key:  
Emerging\*  
Promising\*\*