ASAN Equity Plan

We are the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), a nonprofit advocacy organization run by and for autistic people. Since the beginning of 2020, ASAN has been engaged in an equity process — examining our internal structures and practices, and working to ensure that intersectionality and racial justice are part of everything we do. This equity plan explains our organizational commitments to gather and implement community feedback; hire, retain, and promote staff of color; improve ASAN's internal practices and work culture; and ensure that our work centers the needs, perspectives and leadership of autistic people of color.

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network seeks to advance the principles of the disability rights movement with regard to autism. ASAN believes that the goal of autism advocacy should be a world in which autistic people enjoy equal access, rights, and opportunities. We work to empower autistic people across the world to take control of our own lives and the future of our common community, and seek to organize the autistic community to ensure our voices are heard in the national conversation about us. Nothing About Us, Without Us!

Contents

Community feedback, outreach, and impact

ASAN will develop and implement additional ways to seek input from the community around the impact of ASAN's work, and work to incorporate that feedback into organizational policies and procedures and day-to-day work. This includes:

Surveys

- Beginning in 2021, all staff will use ASAN's annual community survey in new ways to seek input from the community around the impact of ASAN's work, and find ways to incorporate that feedback into all staff's ongoing work.
- ASAN will use our annual survey to analyze which parts of our work are meeting the needs of the whole community and which are not, by:
  - Including questions about how respondents access our programs and resources, and what, if any, barriers they encounter.
  - Including questions about what community needs are not being met by ASAN's current work.
  - Adding demographic information to allow staff to disaggregate survey results by factors like race, gender, and age in order to identify gaps in who has access to our work.
  - Explore options to make the survey available in Spanish in future years.
  - Explore survey dissemination options that do not include responding on the internet, including identifying dissemination partners who can distribute our survey in person, creating a mail-in survey option, etc.
- ASAN will create and implement a feedback tool for our website, toolkits, books and other resources that will allow visitors to our website to leave feedback about how useful a page or resource was to them.

Who benefits? Who are we not reaching?

- ASAN's communications staff will complete a project analyzing who ASAN's work reaches, and addressing the questions: What are the limitations of our online community? How do people find it? Who is left out, and how can we reach them? How can we reach people who may not know they are autistic, or who don't have access to the internet, or face other barriers?
- On a quarterly basis, the policy team will meet to review policy and legal achievements and discuss who benefits. Policy team will review patterns in achievements and will consider recalibrating activities in response to patterns to ensure that our achievements reflect our commitment to center autistic people of color.
- Management will continually and proactively look for opportunities and resources to support outreach to underserved communities, particularly those who have language or internet access barriers and may not be able to use our resources effectively.
- ASAN will align our policy priorities in response to community priorities. On an annual basis, within one month of receiving survey results, the policy team will meet to review the annual grassroots survey and recalibrate policy team activities in response to the results. The policy team will identify concrete policy actions in response to member priorities.

Listening sessions and focus groups

- ASAN will hold a virtual focus group with autistic people of color, aimed at analyzing who benefits from the work and resources of ASAN, & identifying ways our work could better serve autistic people of color. Focus group members will be compensated for their time.
  - Ensure that this focus group includes participants from many races, genders, sexual orientations, and other identities. Ensure that the focus group includes nonspeaking autistics and those with intellectual disabilities.
  - Provide accommodations requested by participants to ensure equitable opportunities to give feedback.
  - The focus group should work to identify opportunities for ASAN to focus on topics specifically impacting autistic people of color in our toolkits, resources, and advocacy campaigns. To do this, we can review toolkits, resources and advocacy campaigns that are in the planning stages at the time of the focus group, as well as recent releases.
  - ASAN will prepare a writeup of our focus group's insights and share this on the ASAN website. This writeup will not include any personal information about focus group members. ASAN will keep focus group members' names and other personal information private unless they want to share them.
  - This will be the first in a series of community focus groups and listening sessions aimed at ensuring that ASAN's work meets the needs of marginalized autistics. We will use insights from each focus group to inform the approach and themes of future focus groups, as well as additional areas to ask about in order to build on our understanding. ASAN will also hold future focus groups to hear specifically from self-advocates with intellectual disabilities and nonspeaking autistics, including autistic people of color in those communities.

Implementing feedback

- In order to ensure that all of ASAN's work at every level reflects this feedback and mindset, beginning in 2021, all staff will review, discuss, and edit existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) & create new SOPs where needed, looking for missed opportunities to add a racial justice lens to our work. This project will continue on an ongoing basis.
- Management will ensure that ASAN prioritizes concrete and proactive actions that advance anti-racism and racial equity throughout all levels of our work, rather than mere platitudes. Therefore, management will work with all staff on an ongoing basis to operationalize community feedback in order to achieve goals that matter to our community members.
  - Following a listening session or other opportunity to receive outside feedback, management will set aside time in a regular all-staff equity meeting to discuss how the feedback we received has been integrated into ASAN's work, whether we have missed any opportunities, and remaining next steps.
  - Management will ensure that ASAN provides a variety of opportunities for community feedback, including small, closed listening sessions as well as larger, open ones. In small listening sessions, which will rely heavily on the labor and knowledge of the participants, management will ensure that all participants are compensated for their time.
- The policy team will work with management to ensure that, where necessary, the team gains the benefit of paid consultation with experts of color on policy team deliverables.
- Monthly policy team check ins will include an agenda item to discuss new input from the community and connect to new policy goals.

Improve community-facing communication and transparency regarding ASAN's work.

Update our grassroots

- At least annually, ASAN will provide a comprehensive update to our grassroots on our racial justice work. This is in addition to smaller updates about our work focusing on racial justice throughout the year.
- ASAN will continue to work to embed a racial justice focus in all of our communications, including newsletters, statements, blog posts, videos, etc.
- ASAN will work to clearly articulate the racial justice aspects of our policy work on an ongoing basis, including work that happens in coalition or behind the scenes.
  - ASAN communications staff will use our toolkits, factsheets, and policy explainers to educate our community on how racial justice is a part of disability policy issues.
  - ASAN will regularly share information about work we are doing with organizational & advocate partners on racial justice issues.
- ASAN will continue to seek out opportunities to share and promote the work and perspectives of disabled advocates of color & increase community conversations about racial justice.

Community Events

- ASAN will continually use our events, including ACI, our annual gala, trainings and briefings, to promote the perspectives and anti-racist work of disabled advocates of color. We will ensure that panels at ASAN events include many perspectives from disabled people of color.
- Live events, webinars, and AMA sessions. The policy team will host webinars, events, live chats, or Ask Me Anything sessions for the community on issues that the policy team is working on, with a focus on centering the experiences of autistic people of color and are topics of community interest (e.g., SSI, restraint and seclusion, JRC, HCBS). At least 1/3 of each session will be devoted to community Q&A and feedback.

Hire, retain, develop, and promote staff of color

- Within 6 months, management will meet to create a framework of skills, competencies and expertise that are necessary for senior and management roles, and identify ways to develop these skills through professional development, including addressing potential disparities in staff development and leadership opportunities.
  - Going forward, in each annual review process, management will work with staff of color to address potential disparities in staff development and leadership opportunities and provide professional development accordingly in order to build a pipeline to senior leadership.
- Management will continually encourage feedback about how decision-making roles and "ownership" of projects are allocated. Management will provide multiple ways for staff to give said feedback, including as an initial part of project planning and as part of the project debrief process.
- On a continual basis, management will holistically implement, evaluate, and refine the different steps identified throughout this document to expand the number of staff of color with decision-making powers and build an equitable pipeline to senior leadership.
- In 2022, management will proactively undertake a formal succession planning process, with an eye towards eliminating barriers and facilitating equitable representation of staff of color at senior levels.
- Management will continue to proactively address potential disparities affecting applicants of color and increase the inclusion of underrepresented groups in outreach and recruitment for all new positions.
  - Management will continually refine ASAN's approach to outreach and recruitment, and explore new tools for reaching underrepresented groups.
  - As ASAN grows as an organization, management will proactively look for opportunities and funding to bring on new staff in mid- and high-level positions, not solely entry-level, prioritizing outreach to applicants of color in order to address potential disparities in recruiting.
- Management will develop formal internship opportunities for both operations and policy, prioritizing outreach to underserved groups who do not traditionally have equitable access to internship opportunities, such as autistics people of color, autistic people with intellectual disabilities, and nonspeaking autistic people.
- ASAN will continue to use ACI as a pathway to bring autistic students with the least access to resources into advocacy, and recruit from this pool for internships, jobs, or other opportunities. ASAN will also strive to serve as a resource to connect autistic people of color to opportunities outside ASAN, including internship and job openings.
- With input from all staff, management will create a plan for addressing potential barriers, aspects of our work culture, or team dynamics that could impact retention.
  - Management will ensure that our listening session with staff members of color, and other ways we gather feedback in 2021 and 2022, directly address potential barriers to retention. After gathering this feedback, management will meet to review it and come up with proposed solutions, which we will then discuss with staff.

Proposing projects

- All teams will continually encourage staff to propose projects that they are interested in and take ownership or management of particular projects or products. This may include changes to check-ins, or our SOPs. A focus of this goal will be to create equitable opportunities for staff members of color to develop leadership and management skills.

Raising questions, concerns and suggestions

- All staff will continually work to increase avenues for staff to raise workplace concerns
  - On an ongoing basis, at a minimum as part of monthly all-staff equity meetings, staff will regularly meet to discuss any barriers or potential barriers that staff, especially staff of color, have encountered or observed in ASAN's culture and how they might be fixed.
  - As part of identifying and fixing barriers that staff of color have encountered, all staff will cultivate a norm of raising concerns when staff suspect other staff or partners may be encountering barriers, microaggressions, structural inequities etc.
- Over time and using the following steps in an interactive process, management will work to cultivate an environment that values communication, questions, and criticism from all staff, so that staff of color feel as comfortable as possible when discussing experiences of racism and barriers they face, including any barriers within ASAN.
  - By the end of 2021, management will hold an internal staff listening session with staff of color to discuss any barriers that staff experience, including barriers to retention, as well as any current or past inequities within ASAN that staff have concerns about. Management will ask staff of color to complete an anonymous survey to indicate what format will work best for this listening session, and implement accordingly. Following the listening session, management will create an action plan to address these barriers and share with all staff.
  - In regular equity meetings, management will encourage staff to ask challenging questions and provide critical feedback to management, and provide organizational and historical information as needed.
  - Management will research and implement further best practices regarding internal transparency in a small nonprofit, sharing organizational and historical information, and facilitating conversations in a way that enables staff of color to share any concerns without fear of having to deal with ignorant or overwhelming responses.
    - As part of this research, management will solicit feedback from staff about what would be helpful, and whether implementation is creating the workplace culture we want to cultivate.
  - Whenever there are management-level decisions made impacting organizational policy or procedure relating to equity, inclusion, or anti-racism, management will communicate to all staff what the decision is and why it was made, and invite feedback.
  - Management will encourage and model a culture where openly discussing our accommodations, and the ways in which our disabilities, identities, stresses etc. affect our work and lives, is normalized, but never required.
  - Management will conduct initial research on and implement best practices to create supportive work environments for staff of color. Management will regularly evaluate the implementation of these practices and continually look for additional research and insights to embed anti-racism within our work culture.
  - Management will prioritize additional steps laid out elsewhere in this document to address inequity and cultivate anti-racism within ASAN.

- Management will create a culture in which feedback and questions are normal and welcome, by expanding opportunities for staff to ask questions about, and have input into, advocacy strategies, statements, and other operations and policy work.
  - Management will deliberately create spaces for questions/raising concerns/listening--in individual and team check-ins, staff meetings, debriefs, and other spaces.
  - By the end of 2021, management will create an explicit avenue for non-policy staff to make policy recommendations, including recommendations related to racial justice, or ask policy staff questions. Management will encourage staff to use this.
  - On an annual basis, management will review ASAN's position statements and strategic plan with staff and seek staff input on any needed updates.
  - When creating a multi-year strategic plan for board approval, management will undertake an interactive process involving all staff.

Continuous learning and discussion

- On an ongoing basis, all staff will explore, collect, and share resources and professional development opportunities together as a staff regarding disability rights, disability justice, self-advocacy, neurodiversity, allyship, white supremacy culture in the workplace, anti-racism, racial equity in different policy areas, and transformative approaches to racial justice.
  - At every monthly all staff equity meeting, staff will have an opportunity to recommend articles and additional resources to other staff members.

As part of ongoing work to create an anti-racist work culture at ASAN, all staff will continually engage in conversations about including intersectional and anti-racist analysis in all deliverables.

- Within six months, all staff will review and map out our workflows, Standard Operating Procedures, debriefs, and other work processes, examining how work is assigned and done collaboratively by the staff; where work processes are actively anti-racist; and where there are barriers or problems for staff to eliminate or improve.
  - For mapping out these work processes, all staff must think especially about how our work can involve highly emotional, difficult topics; how we make sure all staff have the resources we need; and whether or not we are approaching the emotional impact on staff in an intersectional way.
- In regular discussions on an ongoing basis, all staff will review ASAN's work towards centering anti-racism, how it is progressing, and what next steps have arisen through continual monitoring and improvement.

Concrete structures

- Management will create concrete structures to support and maintain a workplace that values open communication and transparency, including;
  - Management will develop a standard onboarding process by the end of 2021, which will include information regarding office norms, staff culture, and encouragement to ask questions.
    - Management will provide any necessary guidance or resources to existing staff members to support them in welcoming new staff and creating the workplace culture we want to create.
  - Management will add material to the employee handbook explaining what questions and feedback look like in a work environment, with concrete examples, to support staffers when they have an issue or question that they want to raise.
  - Management will explore providing a "self-advocacy in the workplace" resource or training for staff, especially regarding raising concerns or questions, allyship in the workplace, and other topics.

- Management will ensure staff have ongoing access to resources, professional development, and a baseline working understanding of concepts like disability rights, disability justice, self-advocacy, neurodiversity, allyship, white supremacy culture in the workplace, anti-racism, racial equity in different policy areas, and transformative approaches to racial justice.
  - As an initial step, management will facilitate development of a shared language document that establishes working definitions for common words and concepts, such as the ones listed above.
- The ASAN employee handbook is updated regularly. Whenever the employee handbook is updated, management will specifically review the handbook for new opportunities to embed anti-racist values and practices.
- Management will develop and implement a procedure for periodically incorporating 360-interviews of managers into annual reviews, including an explicit focus on culture, communication, transparency, and equity.
- Management will annually review with staff the procedures and protections in the staff handbook, including protections against retaliation for raising concerns and procedures and protections for whistleblowers.
- By the end of 2021, management will incorporate into ASAN's offboarding process a procedure for exit interviews, incorporating best practices for an equitable workplace.

Meet regularly to discuss and plan next steps

Staff will meet once a month to discuss the implementation of ASAN's equity plans; how to embed anti-racism throughout ASAN, and how to meet community needs proactively, including in advocacy, campaigns, communications, and all facets of ASAN's work.

- ASAN staff will engage in regular meetings regarding equity as laid out below.
  - All teams will have regular team meetings to discuss ASAN's ongoing equity work.
  - ASAN staff will discuss ASAN's ongoing equity work in dedicated meetings, as well as during our weekly all-staff meetings.
    - ASAN staff will meet in monthly all-staff meetings to report on equity implementation plan progress & talk about new challenges and opportunities.
      - This will include readouts from any recent listening sessions and other opportunities to receive outside feedback, ensuring that all staff can learn the take-aways from work conducted by a subset of staff. Staff can then discuss as a group how to integrate these take-aways into our work going forward.
      - Following a listening session or other opportunity to receive outside feedback, management will set aside time in a regular all-staff equity meeting to discuss how the feedback we received has been integrated into ASAN's work, whether we have missed any opportunities, and remaining next steps.
  - Managers will monitor these conversations to ensure that:
    - White staff don't dominate the conversation.
    - The meetings are not sites of violence or microaggressions.
    - Group norms are followed.
    - Staff of color have equitable opportunities to speak and their input is respected, but there is no unfair expectation that the burden of equity work falls on them.
  - Management will proactively look for patterns or dynamics that may create barriers and inequities in these conversations, and address them privately with staff in need of feedback as well as impacted staff, as necessary.
  - Management will proactively build skills and strategies to effectively address issues in the moment as well as subsequently or in advance.

- Management will hold biweekly meetings, focused on organizational practices, equity, and anti-racism.
- Recurring topics at these meetings should include:
  - Our identified responsibilities/priorities under the equity implementation plan, any challenges or opportunities that have arisen, and next steps.
  - Share results from/reflect as a management team on conversations our individual teams are having, as well as staff-wide conversations, and identify next steps.
  - Development of skills we have identified as necessary priorities for equity purposes, including "book club", trainings, and research projects.
  - Any ongoing hiring processes and how we are ensuring they are equitable and center recruitment of candidates of color.
  - Debriefing and discussing current efforts to make management decisions more equitable and ensure that these decisions center anti-racism.
  - Upcoming work or planning
    - Review any new projects, grant applications, etc., under consideration and the extent to which we have examined whether the project or grant centers, or could be shaped to center, the needs and priorities of autistic people of color, and factor this into decision-making.
    - Review any new policy work, organizational partnerships, advocacy opportunities, or strategic planning under consideration and the extent to which we have examined whether the work centers, or could be shaped to center, the needs and priorities of autistic people of color, and factor this into decision-making.
- At least quarterly, reviewing and making any necessary updates to the "map" of ASAN's work and the extent to which it centers autistic people of color, including discussing possibilities for growth, realignment, increased precision, etc.
- On a quarterly basis, management will review the equity implementation plan, organizational strategic plan, and workplan for the year and evaluate progress, including progress in centering and meeting the needs and priorities of autistic people of color.
- The Operations team will have monthly equity meetings to discuss, review, and plan the process of embedding anti-racism in all of our work. Regular agenda items will include:
  - Reviewing upcoming events, publications or programs to ensure that they proactively address the needs of autistic people of color
  - Looking at upcoming events on the "important dates calendar" to plan times throughout the year to focus our social media and communications on different racial justice issues, especially by sharing the work of autistic people of color.
  - Bringing the team up to date on any relevant collaborations with the policy team
  - Exploring opportunities for ASAN to collaborate with other organizations on anti-racism work
  - Holding space for team members to raise any questions or concerns about ASAN's equity work or the work culture of the Operations team
  - Check in on ongoing projects including our SOPs review and review of ASAN's outreach
- On a monthly basis, the policy team will have team feedback meetings to ensure that our policy advocacy is proactively addressing the needs of autistic people of color. The feedback meeting will include an overview of our activities and discussion of how work is being apportioned in order to identify whether work is being apportioned equitably and in a way that reflects team members' expertise and interest

Engage productively and mindfully with the equity process

On an ongoing basis, all staff will be mindful and ensure staff of color are not overrepresented in who is doing this work, keeping in mind individual preferences, and that all staff are bought-in and doing substantial work. Some measures to assess this will be who is attending meetings, completing tasks related to goals, and engaging with recommendations/feedback.

ASAN will encourage all staff members' ongoing learning and support staff in seeking out and accessing new and additional resources on anti-racism, equity, and related topics (for example, by allotting staff time to this learning, purchasing requested resources, etc.).

- All staff will continually look for opportunities to collaborate, seek input and learn from other staff about their areas of expertise, especially on issues that are particularly complex.

Further embed equity and anti-racism throughout ASAN's daily work

Build coalitions and relationships

Building on our existing work and relationships, all staff will continue to develop and deepen relationships with racial justice organizations, participate in relevant coalitions, and partner in racial justice projects and advocacy in order to more fully integrate community input. This work will continue on an ongoing basis.

- On an ongoing basis, management will proactively look for opportunities to partner and build relationships with organizations led by people of color within the autistic, disability, and larger civil rights communities.
  - Management will develop processes to ensure that ASAN routinely consults with subject matter experts of color on all policy issues regarding the impact of policies on disabled people of color.
- The policy team will build meaningful coalition partnerships with civil rights and racial justice organizations led by people of color, by:
  - On a monthly basis, have a policy team check-in to identify communities existing coalitions who we aren't already currently working with, identify a point person to conduct outreach and discuss strategies for outreach. This may include exploration through existing network contacts. At these check-ins we will also take stock of existing relationships to ensure that we are being responsive to partner organizations and following up on existing commitments.
  - Policy team members will continue to attend existing coalition meetings with an eye toward identifying and developing potential partners
- ASAN's operations team will continue to develop relationships with, and collaborate with, organizations led by people of color on a variety of projects, including by supporting grassroots campaigns, amplifying resources, partnering on events, and jointly developing projects.
- ASAN will increase our work to support emerging advocacy groups, coalitions, and networks, including ASAN affiliate groups, self-advocate groups, and other disability rights & disability justice organizations & coalitions, especially those led by autistic people of color. As well as providing technical assistance and support, we will work to create partnerships, collaborations, and avenues for emerging groups to give input into ASAN's work.

Legal cases

- The Legal team will ensure that it pursues its existing cases in a manner that centers the experiences of autistic people of color. The Legal Team will proactively seek out cases with a significant impact on autistic people of color, through outreach to organizations such as Legal Aid, P&As, and civil rights law firms. The Legal Team will also continue to seek out and join amicus briefs with an explicitly intersectional focus on disability and racial justice.

Integrate racial justice into all of our policy work

- On an ongoing basis, all staff will look for additional areas where racial justice needs to inform our position on an issue. All staff will then raise those issues in coalition, advocacy and communications work.
- On an ongoing basis, all staff will use partnerships and coalitions mentioned above to identify areas where our work connects to racial justice work or is missing a racial justice lens, and partner to address any gaps.
- The Policy Team will ensure that it meets and/or consults at least every 2 months with the offices of individual members of the Congressional Black Caucus, particularly members who are on relevant committees (E&C, HELP, etc.), on disability policy issues that have not traditionally been framed as racial justice issues - e.g., HCBS, Social Security. This may include meetings as part of relevant coalitions such as CCD or LCCHR.
- Beginning immediately, the Policy team will ensure that all written resources address intersectional concerns, not only resources on issues that have traditionally been associated with racial justice.

Ensure ASAN resources and materials reflects our values and commitments

- On an ongoing basis, all staff will integrate feedback collected from the equity process and ongoing community outreach discussed above to publish resources and materials that are demonstrably useful, relevant, and accessible to autistic people of color and a generally more intersectional population of users.
- ASAN will continue our work to expand our capacity for Spanish translation of materials in order to accelerate widening the reach of our advocacy resources.
- ASAN will seek out & implement recommendations from organizational partners, including self-advocate partners who are people of color, on further developing a racial justice lens in our in-progress toolkits, as well as potential new toolkit topics.
- ASAN will continue & prioritize Spanish translation work with significant involvement of Spanish speaking autistics

Establish a strong foundation of equity in ASAN's trainings, technical assistance, and ACI

- Beginning with ACI 2021, implement an anonymous or one-on-one way for ACI alumni to provide additional feedback post-debrief. We will continue to provide additional methods to give feedback each year.
- Operations will continually increase efforts to recruit staff and presenters of color for ACI
- Operations will increase outreach to students of color, and anti-racism focus in ACI recruitment.
    - Continually and especially during each ACI recruitment period, Operations will continue outreach to partner organizations & organizations led by people of color, working to build relationships and deepen organizational ties.
    - In the coming years, beginning with recruitment for ACI 2022, Operations will emphasize outreach to groups not involved with autistic advocacy and the online autism advocacy and trial new methods to recruit.
    - Beginning immediately, Operations will ensure that all ACI recruitment materials clarify that although there is a location requirement, there is no citizenship requirement.
- Operations will continually expand the anti-racism focus in ACI programming.
    - In early 2022, and then on an annual basis, Operations staff will review and update ACI's programming and teachings (including presentations, orientation, advance readings, discussion questions, panels etc.) to reflect an ever-evolving and deepening understanding of what intersectional disability advocacy means
    - Operations staff will increase recruitment of staff of color for ACI, being intentional about how staffing can facilitate leadership development for advocates of color, including ACI alumni.
- Operations will increase our work to provide technical advocacy assistance and training to non-college students, addressing the equity issue in who is able to attend college.
    - In 2022, Operations staff will expand our publicly available resource library for ACI alumni, affiliate group members and other IDD advocates, which will be continually updated.
    - Operations staff will hold public webinars for affiliate groups and other advocates on topics including those covered in ACI.
    - ASAN will continue to seek funding to provide in-depth advocacy trainings similar to ACI for participants who do not currently attend college.
- In an iterative yearly process, Operations will examine ACI logistics, timelines and agenda for ways to make them more intersectional and equitable. Operations will build this step into the SOPs at both the beginning and end (debrief) of ACI.

Ensure standard operating procedures at ASAN reflect principles of equity and racial justice

- As standard operating procedures (both within different departments and for the organization as a whole) are revised or developed, management will ensure that they reflect ASAN's values and goals, including anti-racism.

Management

- Management will ensure that standard operating procedures are followed, and updated as necessary, to reflect ASAN's values and goals, including anti-racism.

Operations

- As part of an ongoing project to review and update the Operations team's Standard Operating Procedures, staff will review, discuss, and edit SOPs & event outlines, looking for missed opportunities to add a racial justice lens to our work. This project will continue through 2022.
    - In an iterative process beginning 2021, Operations staff will examine SOPs and how work tasks are assigned, to ensure that staff of color have equitable opportunities for "ownership" and decision-making authority over projects. At the same time, staff will be mindful of not pressuring staff of color to take on racial justice work disproportionately.
- On an ongoing basis, when planning projects or events, reviewing drafts, creating campaigns, etc., ASAN staff will ask questions to ensure that our work is intersectional and equitable, such as: Are we including information on how racism interacts with this issue? How is this experience different for autistic people of color? Are there more perspectives we should be adding to this event?

Policy

- By the end of 2021, the Policy Team will write Standard Operating Procedures. The following requirements will be spelled out in SOPs:
    - Beginning new projects. Prior to beginning new projects that will require significant staff time, the policy team will discuss whether the project:
        - Centers autistic people of color
        - Is aligned with community feedback, including feedback through our annual survey
    - Principles for taking new positions or starting new campaigns on a policy issue
        - The policy team will build in time to consult with trusted partners, including in organizations led by people of color and organizations working in civil rights, housing, poverty, immigration, etc. as needed.
        - The policy team will consider whether the policy or strategy has intersectional effects on autistic people of color.
    - Discuss principles for determining when ASAN will take lead on a policy issue, and when we will support the leadership of other organizations, including organizations led by people of color.
    - Consistent collaboration with the Communications Team to ensure transparent communications to the community about what the policy team is doing and how it is responding to community feedback.
    - Periodic check ins when writing resources, grant deliverables, etc. to ensure that we are including content that is responsive, useful and relevant to intersectional populations

- Principles for incorporating feedback and intersectional considerations into existing and new policy positions
  - We will include discussion during regular check-ins about whether existing and considered policy positions have intersectional effects on autistic people of color and whether they center autistic people of color
  - Staff are also encouraged at any time to raise concerns, including intersectional effects of policy positions. When concerns are raised we will engage in a collaborative process to decide how the concern will affect our ultimate position or strategy.
- Regular outreach to and consultation with organizations with expertise outside our own (e.g., poverty, housing, racial justice, alternatives to policing), especially when deciding to take a position on a new policy proposal or to start a new campaign
- The policy team will identify specific places to incorporate anti-racism analysis into the policy team's daily work and decision making, including procedures for:
  - Deciding whether to sign on to a letter
  - Deciding whether to support a bill
  - Writing comments
  - Signing amicus briefs and making decisions about which ones to write
  - Reviewing written documents like toolkits
  - Determining issues to be included in our written materials (including sign on letters, amicus briefs, etc) and ensuring that we don't take positions that harm communities of color.
- In developing its SOPs, the policy team will explicitly consider whether workflows, SOPs, debriefs, and other work processes actively promote anti-racism and whether they create barriers for staff of color.

Management

- By the end of the year, the management team will conduct a project to analyze how staff time, funds, and policy and operational priorities are currently allocated, and what percentage of each directly center autistic people of color. This information will be shared with all staff and used as a starting point for conversations to identify areas for further growth and realignment, and to provide initial benchmarks that can be used as a measure going forward.
- Management will ensure that each team consistently uses the standard operating procedures created by the team to center autistic people of color in project planning and day-to-day decision making.
  - When meeting as a management team to discuss strategic planning, grant applications, organizational partnerships, advocacy calendars, or other long-term planning, management will always set aside time to "bake in" intersectionality and equity in our discussion and decision making.
    - When considering new projects, grant applications, etc, management will consider whether the project or grant centers, or could be shaped to center, the needs and priorities of autistic people of color, and factor this into decision-making.
    - When considering new policy work, organizational partnerships, advocacy opportunities, or strategic planning management will consider whether the work centers, or could be shaped to center, the needs and priorities of autistic people of color, and factor this into decision-making.
  - Management will create regular opportunities for each team to share how they are including intersectionality and equity in their planning and decision making, at all-staff equity meetings.
- Whenever an action step regarding equity is identified, management will facilitate the development of workplans, timelines, or other concrete structures to ensure that work proceeds.

Board

- Begin discussions within the board, as well as with staff and community members, around where potential gaps in understanding may be. Proactively encourage difficult discussions about race on an ongoing basis.

- Increase opportunities for staff and board to learn from autistic people of color through events, speaking engagements, and trainings.

- Establish a shared language document each board member can reference for understanding of racial diversity, equity, and inclusion in ASAN's internal work. Include strategies and tips for talking about racial justice, pitfalls to the work, and strategies that are accessible for all.

- Create a formal board recruitment structure with a focus on increasing representation of autistic people of color – including those who are self-identified, who have "left" the autistic community, or who are not yet part of the autistic community.

- Consider the current recruitment strategy for bringing on new board members, and discuss where in the approach inequity can creep in.

- Increase board membership of people of color.

- Increase board members' understanding of equity concepts and principles. Foster a culture within the board of continual engagement with equity concepts and principles, in particular racial justice. Recruit board members with experience in racial justice work.

- Authorize a structure for community advisory task force to provide feedback to the ASAN board, staff, and organization as a whole. Develop a process to compensate advisory committee members for their time. To begin, establish a community advisory task force made up specifically of autistic people of color.

- Engage in board oversight and accountability for equitable representation of people of color at all levels of staff at ASAN, by reviewing the board's equity policy and evaluating the Executive Director's performance with regard to equitable hiring and staffing practices at least once a year.