Resources

Equitable Pathways to Recovery Tool

This worksheet is designed to help you think through how the Equitable Pathways to Recovery Framework could be applied to your specific context as you develop a new small business program or modify an existing program. It can be used to plan within your agency or department, or by multiple stakeholders in a collaborative, or as a roadmap for engaging with a broader set of stakeholders.

The questions are intended to help you give deliberate attention to equity and the practicalities of implementation. The process of working through the questions with colleagues, partners, and stakeholders can foster stronger, more inclusive communication and coordination.
Start with a preliminary program scope in mind, and then consider the questions in the subsequent sections to refine your program.

Your Preliminary Program Scope:
Describe your proposed program, including:

- What is the need or gap you are targeting?

- What segment of BIPOC small businesses are you targeting (by location, population, industry, business size, business stage of development, or some combination of these)?

- What is the timeline of the major components or activities of the program?

- Who could execute each of the program components? Are there additional agencies, departments, or private stakeholders who could be tapped to share resources for developing and/or implementing the program?

- What will be different for your target beneficiaries because of this program? How does the program advance equitable recovery in your town, city, or region?

Being intentional:
Define local small businesses and their needs

- In what ways have the targeted small businesses been affected by the identified need or gap as compared to businesses generally?

- What are the key characteristics of those business owners? In what ways are their needs, gaps, or opportunities distinctive?

- How will they be better off because of the proposed program? How might they be burdened by it? What measures can you take to mitigate or remove burdens or unintended negative consequences?

- How do the voices and perspectives of those most impacted inform your analysis? Where are opportunities to strengthen their leadership and ownership over your proposed intervention?
Being inclusive in strategy development and implementation: Identify and engage planning and implementation partners

- How do the perspectives and experiences of those most impacted by the program inform your planning? What are the specific ways in which this is visible?

- What organizations or groups have experience working with this population on similar or related programs? How do their perspectives and experiences inform the proposed program? What are the specific ways in which this is visible?

- What potentially relevant individuals or groups are not included? What opportunities are there to involve them?

- How will you ensure ongoing communication and coordination with beneficiaries and partners throughout planning, implementation, and evaluation?

- Where are opportunities to strengthen their leadership and ownership over your proposed intervention?

Ensuring program accessibility: Identify and address barriers to access

- What were the obstacles that prevented BIPOC small businesses from accessing similar or related programs in the past?

- What measures can you take to prevent your proposed program from reproducing or perpetuating those barriers?

- What current factors (conditions, practices, policies) might prevent a BIPOC small business from accessing the proposed program's funding or services?

- How are you helping those less able or trusting to navigate the requirements and process for accessing the program? (If you have an application process, how have you designed it so the application process itself is not a barrier?)

- Do the current partners have the skills and relationships to assist participating small businesses? If not, whom else should you involve?
4 Leveling the playing field (identify and account for capacity needs for deployment):

- What resources (e.g., funding, staffing, infrastructure) do you and partners need to successfully execute the program?

- Who will execute each of the activities of your proposed program? What will be their roles/responsibilities? Do they have the capacity (the skills, knowledge, staff, relationships, and budget) to execute them? If not, what partner or resource can you enlist to ensure that each role/responsibility is filled?

- What administrative capabilities do you need to support these activities and coordinate activities among partners?

- How will you ensure ongoing communication and coordination with beneficiaries and partners?

5 Setting up a monitoring process with accountability mechanisms

- What criteria and metrics are you using to measure progress toward your intended results?¹⁰⁵

- How feasible is it to collect and understand the right data? What can you do to impose the least burden possible on those who will be providing and collecting the data?

- How will you use the data to make adjustments to program activities and objectives along the way? What protocols or other mechanisms are you using to hold you accountable to your intended results?

- How will you communicate this progress with program beneficiaries, partners, funders, and other stakeholders?