

# EMBARC Toolkit

## Emerging Museologists Building Anti-Racist Capacity

Kat Pesigan, Em Hall, Kenneth Doult

### Framing

#### Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop a toolkit for emerging museum practitioners who receive power and benefit from dominant culture, for the purpose of addressing barriers to comprehensive anti-racism work in museums.

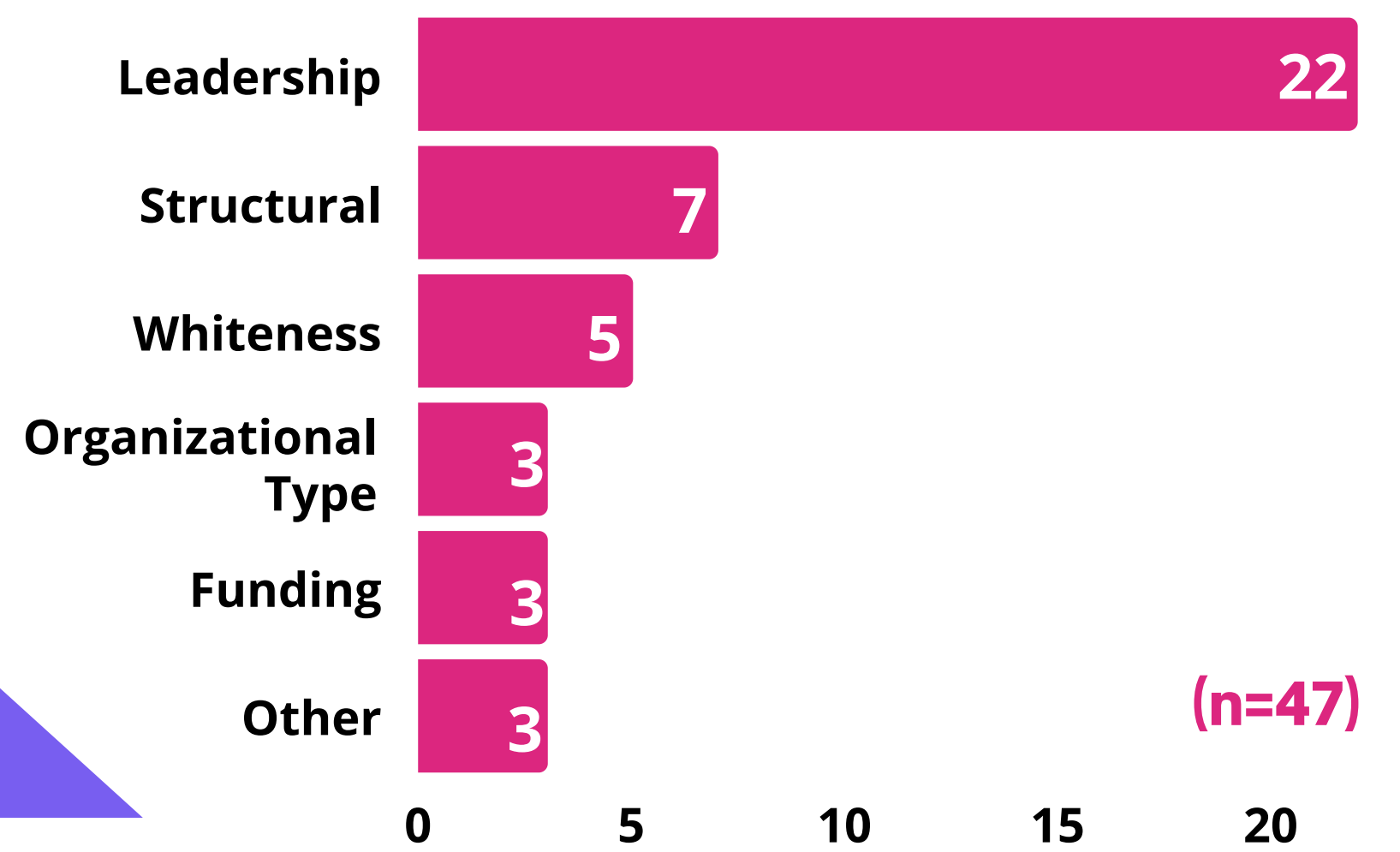
Research, evaluations, anecdotes and personal experiences have documented that many museum staff face barriers in their museums while working toward anti-racist goals. These obstacles largely originate from leadership, museum structures, and the culture of white supremacy. Anti-racism efforts in museums are often reactionary in nature and, thus, ineffective. A participant in the evaluation study for this project noted that "equity focused people in leadership will still actively perpetuate stereotypes and create a toxic workplace for BIPOC museum professionals." Additionally, for those ready to take actionable steps, there is often a lack of skills or knowledge on how to do so. The result is unsustainable efforts leaving museums unable to move forward.

#### Impacts

Emerging museum practitioners will gain:

- Skills to pursue anti-racism efforts in museums
- Deeper knowledge of anti-racism theory and how to put it into practice
- Motivation to impact change through anti-racist action

#### Alumni Barriers to Anti-racism Work in Museums



### Process

#### Advisory Groups

To inform the content and development of our toolkit, we formed an advisory board of experts in the field. We met twice as a whole group and consulted individually with several members. Additionally, we held a student focus group to advise us on content relevance. Participation was compensated.

#### Reflections

Throughout the development of this toolkit we had opportunities to reflect on our own lived experiences and practices and how those have informed our anti-racist goals. We were able to grow individually and as a group as we explored our relationships with white supremacy culture, including much discussion around how we can best use our positionalities to dismantle this structure. Specifically because of this, there are many ways that this work could be developed and improved upon. We created this toolkit as a public, living document which we will continue to update as others contribute to these practices and inform anti-racism work in museums. Understanding of how to effectively create change is an ever-growing process.

### The Toolkit

The Toolkit is a 279 page document that consists of seven chapters and an appendix.

- 1 Framing the Toolkit**  
Processes that guided the development of the toolkit
- 2 Reading an Institution**  
Ways to assess current or prospective institution
- 3 Interpersonal Interactions**  
Anti-racist action at a person-to-person level
- 4 Institutional Interactions**  
Ways to engage with leaders and propose institutional change
- 5 Proposing Projects**  
Reference for identifying and building a project
- 6 Internal Considerations**  
Focus on self-care and internal examination
- 7 Closing Thoughts**  
Further reflection on the toolkit and actions to take

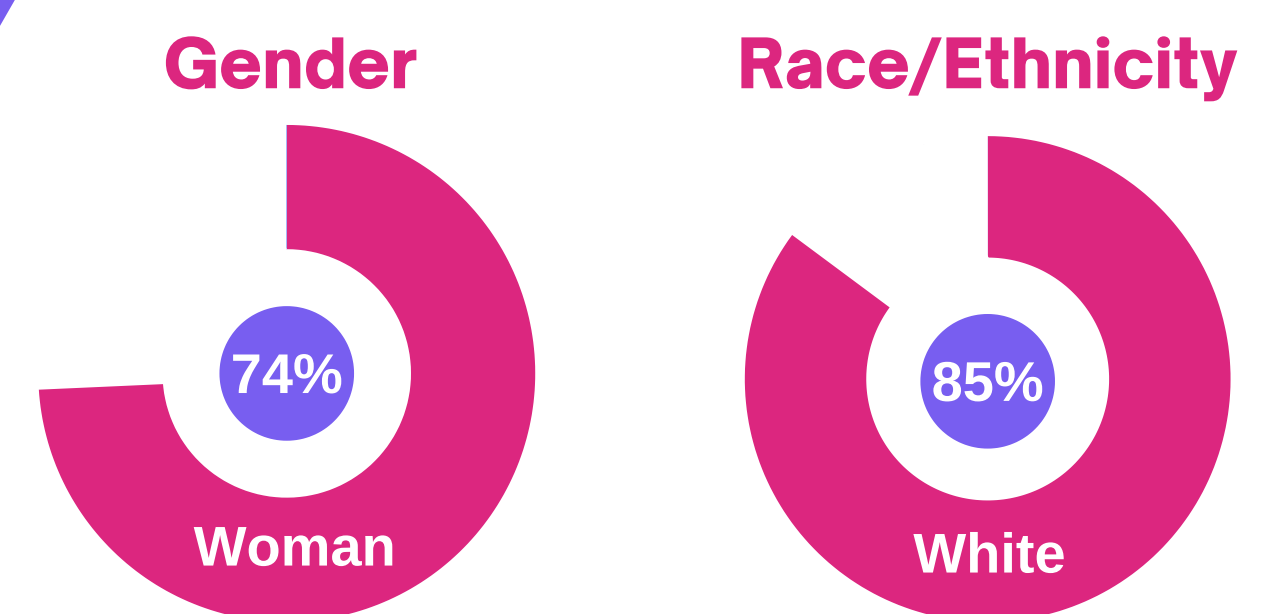
#### Front End Evaluation

We evaluated student needs and in-field barriers to inform the toolkit by grouping questions into three categories:

- The barriers to knowledge of and engagement with anti-racism
- The extent that people knew and engaged with anti-racism
- Ways people are interested in organizing and/or learning

#### Survey Participants

Alumni: 78, Current Students: 41



#### References

Ng, W., Ware, S. M., & Greenberg, A. (2017). Activating Diversity and Inclusion: A Blueprint for Museum Educators as Allies and Change Makers. "Journal of Museum Education", 42(2), 142-154.

Community Centric Fundraising (2021, March 01). "CCF Principles". Retrieved May 16, 2021 from <https://communitycentricfundraising.org/ccf-principles/>

Indian Arts Research Center. (2019). Guidelines for Collaboration [website]. Facilitated by Landis Smith, Cynthia Chavez Lamar, and Brian Vallo. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research. <https://guidelinesforcollaboration.info/>

### Acknowledgements

We are endlessly, heartily grateful for so many people who guided us through the development of this project. Thank you to our committee, Meena Selvakumar, Priya Frank, and Jessica Luke, for your support and direction. Thank you to our Advisory Board, Kyana Wheeler, Andrea Arenas, Anna Rebecca Lopez, Becky Emmert and Katie Sullivan, for your questions and encouragement. Finally, thank you to our cohort for all of their time and energy. Thank you all. Your support has meant more than words can say.