## Introduction

## This focus group is about your experiences with *[choose and insert -- all organizations / a specific organization / a grouping of organizations]*. Please keep them top of mind with each question we discuss. We want to understand how each of you feels about these groups — whether they listen to you, keep their promises, and work well with your community. We will talk openly, share experiences, and ask follow-up questions to better understand your views. Your participation will help community groups improve how they work with people like you. Everything you share will be kept private, and your name will not be connected to your responses.

## Focus Group Guide Table

| Key Behavior | Focus Group Question | Follow-Up Prompts |
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| Respect and Responsibility | Can someone share a time when an organization(s) in your community engaged you in dialogue as an equal and not as if they were giving you a lesson? | * What made that experience feel like a true two-way conversation?
* Does anyone have something different to share? Similar?
* Did you feel welcomed to share your ideas or experiences openly?
* What’s the difference in how people respond when they feel talked with versus talked at?
* Can anyone share an example of when an organization has taken responsibility for its behavior?
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| Humility | How do organizations in your community incorporate community expertise into the work they are doing? | * How do organizations invite or gather input from the community?
* Do you feel like community expertise is respected as much as outside or professional knowledge?
* What happens when organizations truly use community expertise in their work?
* What could organizations do differently to better include and act on community expertise?
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| Authenticity | What are some of the actions and behaviors of organizations in your community that are consistent with their promises? | * Can someone share a specific example of something an organization said it would do —and did it?
* How did they communicate their promise, and how did they follow through?
* What do organizations do that shows you they’re serious about keeping their word?
* Have they consistently followed through on their commitments, or was it a onetime experience?
* What makes you believe a promise is or is not going to be kept?
* What impact did their follow-through have on your trust in them?
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| Commitment | How do the organizations in your community use their available resources to accomplish what they say they will do? | * What kinds of resources are you thinking of? Are they funding, staff, volunteers, space, or partnerships?
* Are the organizations using those resources in ways that support their promises?
* Can someone share about a time when an organization clearly used its resources to deliver on a commitment?
* Are organizations open with the community about what resources they have?
* How does it affect your view of them when you see resources used well — or poorly?
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| Diversity of Thought | In what ways do organizations in your community include the views of a diverse set of people when planning their work? | * Who would like to share an example of when an organization made an effort to hear from different kinds of people in your community? Who was involved, and how did they gather those views?
* What difference did it make to have those diverse views included?
* Who do you usually see included in these planning processes? Who’s missing?
* How do organizations make it easier — or harder — for people to share their views?
* What would it look like if all voices in your community were truly included in the planning process?
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| Intersectionality | How do the organizations in your community consider representation in ways beyond just race and ethnicity?  | * What does “representation” mean to you in this context? What kinds of representation matters most in your community (e.g., age, disability, gender, culture, lived experience, income, etc.)?
* What types of representation do you think organizations should consider beyond race and ethnicity (e.g., age, disability, income, education, language, sexual orientation, lived experience, etc.)?
* Who do you think is often overlooked when organizations talk about representation?
* Why do you think it’s important for organizations to take this broader view of representation?
* How does this broader view of representation affect the programs or services the organizations offer?
* What more could organizations do to include all kinds of people in your community?
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| Relationship Building | In what ways do organizations in your community meaningfully engage people where they live, work, or socialize? | * Can you describe a time when an organization met people in their own spaces (such as neighborhoods, workplaces, or gathering places)?
* What made that engagement feel meaningful to you or others?
* How do organizations build trust or show respect in those spaces?
* Are there places or groups that organizations tend to miss? What would it take to involve these places or engage with these groups better?
* Do you have an example of an organization in your community that’s building a relationship without wanting something out of it? How did that impact trust?
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| Transparency | What happens when organizations in your community are up-front when working with community members (about things like goals, processes, resources, and outcomes, etc.)? | * Can you share an example of when an organization was really clear — or not clear — about what it was doing?
* How do organizations usually communicate their goals and expectations?
* How does being up-front — or not — affect how much you trust or want to work with an organization?
* What would being fully transparent look like to you?
* Does transparency help your community hold organizations accountable? How?
* What kind of information do you wish they shared more often?
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| Intentionality | How do organizations in your community take time to support collaboration by fostering relationships with local community members? | * Can you give an example of how an organization built a strong relationship with the community?
* What kinds of things do organizations do to show they value relationships, not just outcomes?
* Do you feel they invest enough time in getting to know people before starting a project? Why or why not?
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| Maintaining the Relationship | What would it look like if the organizations in your community had a plan in place to engage the community even after a project has ended? | * What kinds of activities or communication would you expect to see?
* What would tell you that their involvement is ongoing and not just tied to funding?
* What role could community members play in helping shape that plan?
* How would having a long-term engagement plan affect your trust in that organization?
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