



## **NASTAD's Racial Equity Collaborative for Drug User Health**

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. When is the application deadline?
  - a. The deadline is June 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:00 PM ET. Applicants can expect to receive a decision by June 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM ET.
  
2. What is the expected time commitment for this cohort program?
  - a. Participants are expected to commit to weekly virtual meetings on Tuesdays from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM ET, from July 13<sup>th</sup> through September 14<sup>th</sup>, for a total of 10 meetings. Participants are also expected to spend time outside of facilitated sessions engaging with a mentor and working on an individual project.
  
3. What if I cannot attend because of my job/something else?
  - a. When applying, you must confirm availability for the weekly sessions; limited availability may affect acceptance into the program. Once accepted, scheduling conflicts should be discussed with the program facilitators.
  
4. Do I need to represent an organization to apply, and does my employer need to approve my participation in this program?
  - a. You do not need to represent an organization to apply. We do not require that individuals have the support of their organization to participate, although it is encouraged given that the time commitment may overlap with working hours.
  
5. What if I'm doing harm reduction work but am not currently employed?
  - a. Traditional employment is not a requirement for applicants to this program. The Collaborative is intended to support a cross-generational and cross-career cohort of individuals working in the harm reduction and drug user health fields, and we are making intentional efforts to assemble a diverse cohort. This may include people based in state or local health departments, independent or grassroots community-based harm reduction organizations, drug policy advocates, volunteers, and/or those engaged in public health research focused on drug use.

6. Is there a fee for participation?
  - a. There is no fee for participation in the Collaborative.
  
7. What makes an ideal candidate for this program?
  - a. An ideal candidate is someone who has experienced racialized oppression (including indigenous people who may not identify as persons of color) and is looking to navigate those experiences in their work supporting the health and safety of people who use drugs, inside and outside of the public health system. We are looking for BIPOC\* individuals who have previous or current work experience in harm reduction or drug user health. The cohort is intended to bring together practitioners with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, and career levels; we anticipate that this will mean a mix of different sectors, racial and gender identities, and geographic locations. We are prioritizing applicants who are actively working to integrate racial justice and equity into their work.
  
8. What does the mentorship component entail?
  - a. Participants will be matched with mentors who have experience in the drug user health and harm reduction fields and can aid in fostering professional growth, development, and support. Mentors may be a peer or someone with more experience, depending on mentee preferences and the available pool of mentors. Participants can expect to meet three times with a mentor throughout the program.
  
9. Will this program meet in-person or involve travel?
  - a. The Collaborative will meet virtually via Zoom for a series of 10 facilitated sessions and 3 mentor/mentee meetings. Facilitators will also offer virtual “office hours” for additional support. As COVID-19 travel guidance evolves and as funding allows, we will assess the opportunity for future in-person meetings among cohort members.
  
10. What can participants expect to gain from participation in the Collaborative?
  - a. Participants will receive a supportive space to build their capacity to advance racial justice and equity in harm reduction/drug user health among a network of co-conspirators, as well as financial resources to complete an individual project. Participants will be connected with mentors that provide individualized support. NASTAD will champion cohort members through promotion of the Collaborative to our membership and broader public health networks, and by connecting applicants with networking and career advancement opportunities.

*\*The term BIPOC was developed to prioritize Black and Indigenous people when responding to the harms that all people targeted by structural racism face. It is imperfect in both its description and its politics. We encourage all people from communities who are targeted by structural racism to apply to this cohort.*