



To: California Racial Equity Commissioners

From: Racial Equity Commission Staff

Re: Joint Data and Budget Equity Committee Meeting Report – April 17, 2025

Commissioners in Attendance (Remote): Candis Bowles, John Kim, Gabriel Maldonado, and Jolie Onodera, Traco Matthews, Dr. Manuel Pastor.

Committee Recap

- The Data and Budget Equity Committees held a joint meeting on April 17, 2025.
- Commissioners received presentations and remarks from The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell (Los Angeles County Supervisor, District 2), Executive Director Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza (Racial Equity, Los Angeles County), and Chief Data Officer Jason Lally (Office of Data and Innovation).

Key Takeaways

The Budget Equity and Data Committees listened to a presentation and discussion from Supervisor Mitchell and Dr. Scorza on how data can inform budget allocations to be more equitable and effective. The highlights of the discussion included:

Supervisor Holly provided statements on building buy in, "it's going to take collective bold leadership. Follow the data and infrastructure that was built to figure out a way to stand firm. There needs to be resourceful and authentic allyship to identify unique opportunities. Hold political officials accountable for the future and now and form the expectation to operationalize and make equity a part of the funding priority."

Dr. Scorza and his team at the Los Angeles County's Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion ([ARDI](#)) Initiative were charged to develop an [anti racist policy agenda](#), and identify best practices to support systems change in the advancement of racial equity. Under the direction of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, ARDI informed the use of [American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\)](#) funds to address the needs of those who were suffering from disproportionate economic and health impacts from COVID (see figure 1). Some of their approaches included focusing on immigrants, gender diversity and intersex demographics, language access services, and opportunities to strengthen resource access.

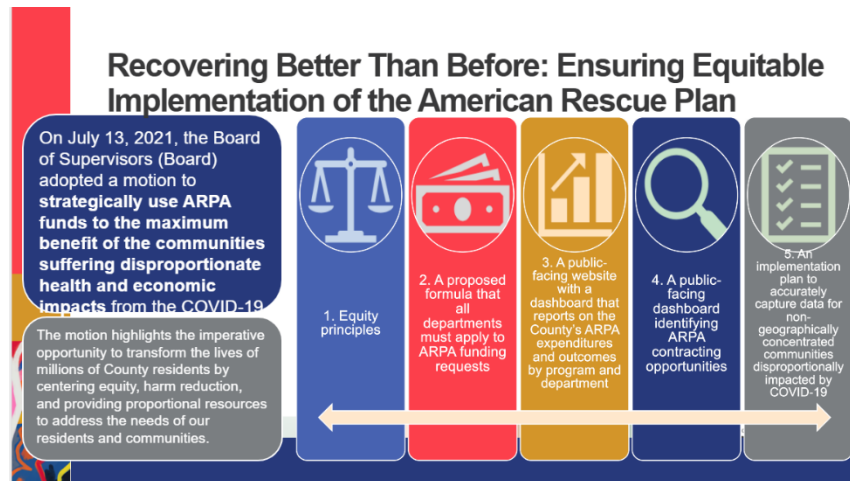


Figure 1 LA County's Anti Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) ARPA Fund Distribution

ARDI ranked areas with the highest to lowest need and [mapped](#) those needs to different geographies in LA county. This centralized information on where programs can have the most impact in neighborhoods and design programs that can be adapted to specific areas. A locator tool was also designed to connect communities to resources. ARDI developed a [design process](#) for departments to build in strategies, principles, goals, outcomes, metrics, and evaluation to properly assess departments commitments to equity and how funds were being used.

ARDI also developed an application process to centralized language services funds, dashboards, and grant opportunities. This expedited and produced a contracting process by minimizing contract requirements in order streamline the procurement process for individuals to have more contracting opportunity. ARDI developed a [Master Service Agreement](#) contract to increase access to contractual opportunities.

The Committees also listened to how racial equity can be incorporated into data practices and standards to be more inclusive of diverse populations from Jason Lally, Chief Data Officer, Office of Data and Innovation.

The [Office of Data and Innovation](#) developed recommended State [Data Standards](#) based on [SPD 15](#) (Statistical Policy Directive) and the [Census](#). ODI engaged community to help refine data questions which led to providing additional options for detailed Native American groups, statistical testing, and interviews with Afro Latinos to be more representative (see Figure 2.)



The recommended State Data Standards contained four changes to data collection:

- Simplify the data standard for ethnicity related questions, to be one question not a two-part question
- Allow the selection of multiple options and categories
- Added details to categories to increase response rate and include existing requirements for certain categories.
- The Office of Data and Innovation continues to collaborate with state agencies to identify challenges and continue testing of question framing

The discussion also highlighted the practice of not giving away data for harmful purposes and the impacts of disappearing data which makes it difficult to reach communities. However, data practices such as analysis on existing data and survey redesign can still be done on a smaller scale. When state agencies and departments learn from data it informs system changes.

The Committee transitioned to discussion about Dr. Estes report to hear about key themes that emerged from previous Budget Equity and Data committee meetings (see figure 3).

Recommend themes to be incorporated based on earlier discussion include:

- a. Narrative
- b. Infrastructure
- c. Radical transparency
- d. Geography

Commissioners suggested these themes be considered pillars. Dr. Estes explained that many of the pillars or themes have been captured in the proposed [Model for Transformation](#).

Example

What is your race and/or ethnicity?

Select all that apply AND enter additional details in the spaces below.
Note: you may report more than one detailed category.

<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Black-foot Tribe of the Black Indian Reservation of Montana, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Aztec, Maya, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Individuals with origins in any of the original peoples of Central or East Asia, Southeast Asia, or South Asia, including, for example, Chinese, Asian Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese. <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian <input type="checkbox"/> Laotian Another group not listed (for example, Taiwanese, Hmong, Pakistani)
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American Individuals with origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa, including, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, and Somali. <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Nigerian <input type="checkbox"/> Jamaican <input type="checkbox"/> Ethiopian <input type="checkbox"/> Haitian <input type="checkbox"/> South African Another group not listed (for example, Eritrean, Ghanaian, Kenyan)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino Includes individuals of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, Dominican, Guatemalan, and other Central or South American or Spanish culture or origin. <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Salvadoran <input type="checkbox"/> Guatemalan <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Spaniard <input type="checkbox"/> Peruvian Another group not listed (for example, Nicaraguan, Honduran, Cuban)

Figure 2 Example of a Data Standard for Ethnicity from the Office of Data and Innovation



Commissioner Matthews noted concerns with the length and that the Commission must be mindful of what it can achieve.

Key themes from Committees

- Accountability - oversight and implementation of Framework, policy directive
- Transparency - ensuring plain language and accessibility, role of technology
- Prioritization - Identifying community needs by geography, validating community priorities
- Input and Engagement - understanding what decisionmakers need to inform policy proposals, ensuring agency engagement, and consistent community engagement
- Technical Assistance

Figure 3 Key Themes for the Framework

Next Steps

For the Commission to consider how to synthesize their learnings and best practices on data standards and equitable budget allocations to inform the outline of Framework. Staff will host a Commission meeting on June 26 to focus on a workshop and discussion to further refine content for the proposed Racial Equity Framework. The Commission will continue narrowing down key elements and focus areas of the Framework so staff can have concrete guidance and support the building stages of the Framework.

Intersection with the Framework and Commission Strategy

After the Commission fleshes out the key element and focus areas of the Framework it will inform staff on the drafting stages of the Framework.

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