



# Organizational Equity Practice OEP

A Program of Trinity Boston Connects



## 2017 -2023 Report Our Theory of Change On Its Feet

ANALYSIS AND REPORT BY  SEED IMPACT

**Organizational Equity Practice (OEP)** supports organizations and their leaders as they strive to incorporate racial equity, restorative justice and trauma inclusion community practices into the fabric of their respective organizational lives. As a program of Trinity Boston Connects (TBC), OEP was originally conceived to help nonprofit leaders and organizations cultivate racial equity and now has integrated in the other two community practices to create “healing” spaces to promote and sustain equity within their organizations.

## Our Approach

OEP provides spaces for creating relationships that allow people to take risks and be vulnerable with one another. This foundation of trust is essential for any organizational system committed to building and maintaining racial equity culture in the workplace.

Three central design principles:

- relationship building
- trust
- systems thinking

Authentic relationships based on trust are crucial elements that enable deeper learning. As a result of working with OEP in cohort-based workshops, community and organizational training:

- Individuals and teams engage in courageous conversations required for deep change work to take hold and sustain itself in organizational cultures.
- Youth-serving nonprofits become racially equitable organizations.



I am working on clarity and slowing down a bit to make sure voices are heard and included in decision-making. I have people who hold me accountable.

- *Emerging Leader, 2023 cohort*

## Our History, in Brief

OEP began unofficially in 2016 with an event known as RELC (Racial Equity Learning Community). In 2017, RELC emerged as a quarterly event. The value was increasingly apparent in bringing people together to discuss challenges for organizations to become more equitable and share strengths and resources. Through RELC, we began to provide racial equity-focused consulting services to The Steppingstone Foundation.

This work became the basis for OEP's clinically-centered consultation services within organizations.

As TBC defined three essential community practices with the intention to use them in all its programming, these were made more explicit as integral to OEP's approach:

Over time, three Essential Community Practices (ECP's) were defined by Trinity Boston Connects, and became integral to OEP's approach:



**Racial  
Equity**



**Restorative  
Justice**



**Trauma  
Inclusion**

In March 2020, COVID-19 bore down upon us. OEP's first virtual learning session was conducted when a pre-scheduled OEP Senior Leaders Learning Circle (one of our signature offerings) would otherwise have been canceled. In that session, we learned that people appreciated the consistency provided, as leaders made many decisions in the face of constantly changing information.

Our work became even more essential in May 2020, when the murder of George Floyd catapulted this country into a new era of 'racial reckoning,' causing many nonprofit leaders to see with fresh eyes how their organizations and leadership practices were perpetuating inequity, oppression, and trauma.

Learning and adapting over time, OEP has continued virtual and in-person offerings, and begun to infuse somatic practices in programming.

Our commitment to helping nonprofits center healing and build equitable communities has not changed. The stakes have always been high and continue to be so as we consider how our organizations are microcosms of society steeped in white supremacy.



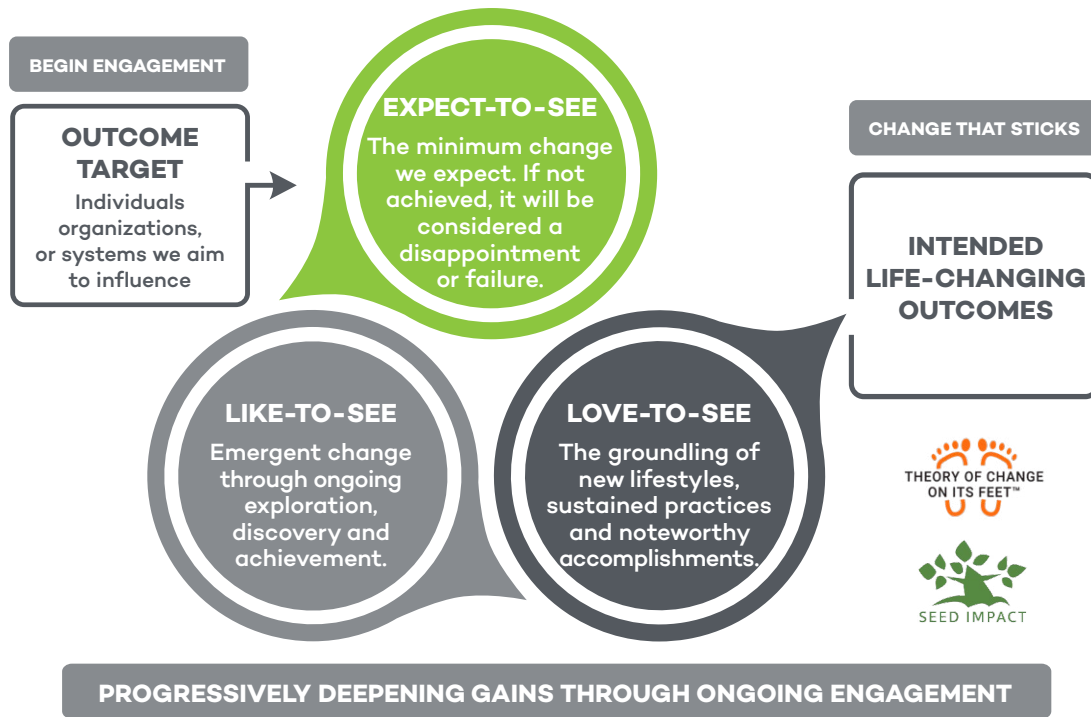
I want to continue to learn how to lead in a way that enables others to feel fully valued, know their voices are heard, and see their strengths shine.

- Senior Leader, 2022 cohort

# Our Theory of Change

The cumulative data presented below were compiled using SEED Impact's Theory of Change on Its Feet™.

## Theory of Change on Its Feet™



This framework guides our visioning, goal-setting and ongoing assessment of OEP impact. We track both the quantity and depth of our work each year:

- **Quantity:** number of leaders or organizations impacted
- **Depth:** intensity of actions to promote racial healing

By engaging more leaders and organizations at deeper levels annually, OEP dramatically increases the likelihood of sustained, life-changing and systems-changing results.

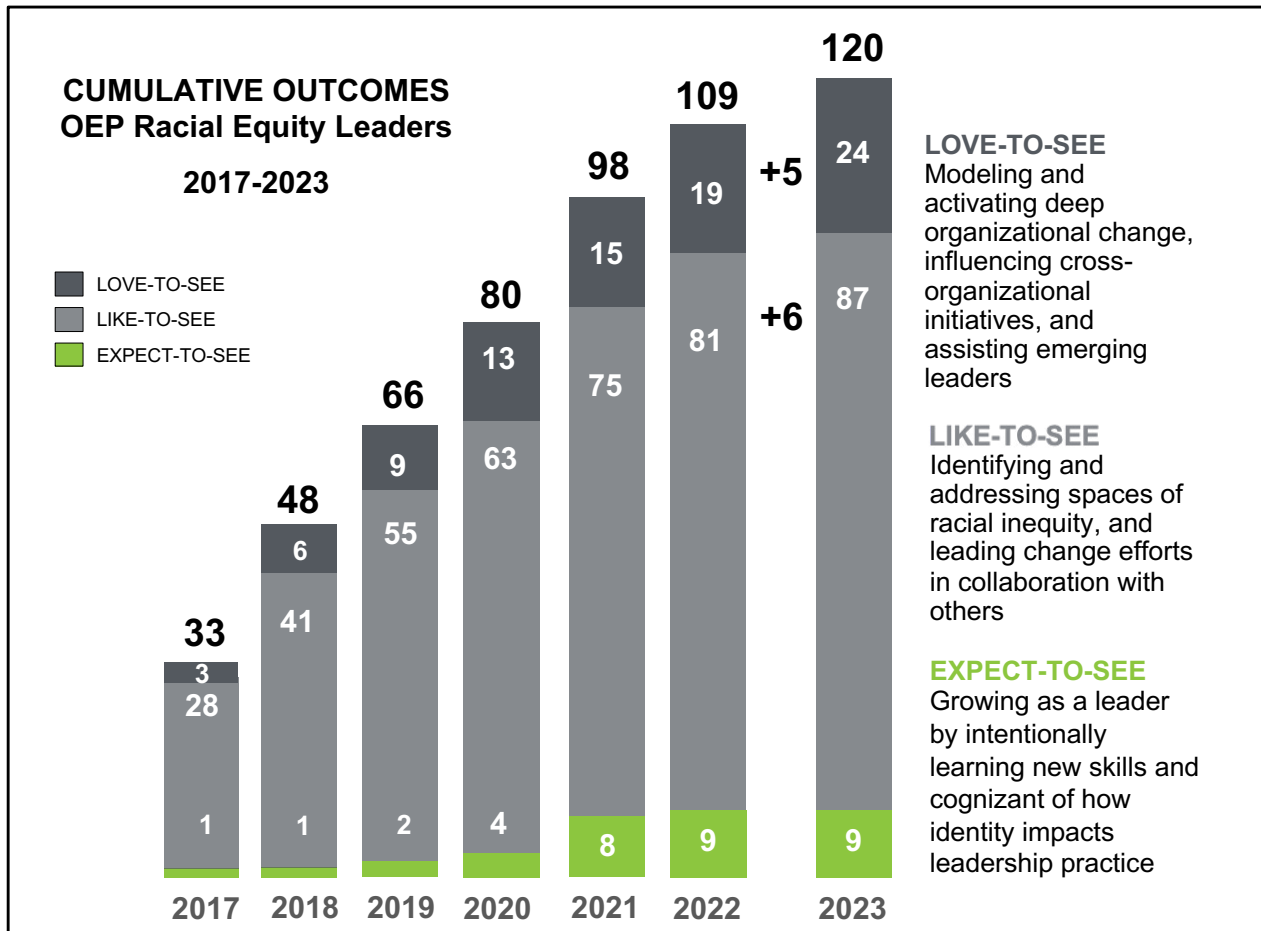
Our programming supports three progressive levels of change (Expect-to-See, Like-to-See and Love-to-See) for two outcome targets:

- **Racial Equity Leaders** - Senior and mid-level leaders who unite, form community and deepen their identity as values-driven leaders to create and drive a vision for racial equity in their organizations
- **Organizations** - Groups large and small, in Boston and beyond, working with OEP often over multiple years, building capacity to co-create and sustain healthy, safe and supportive environments for their staff and the people they serve



# 1. Results with Individual Leaders

The cumulative data presented below were compiled using SEED Impact’s Theory of Change on Its Feet™.

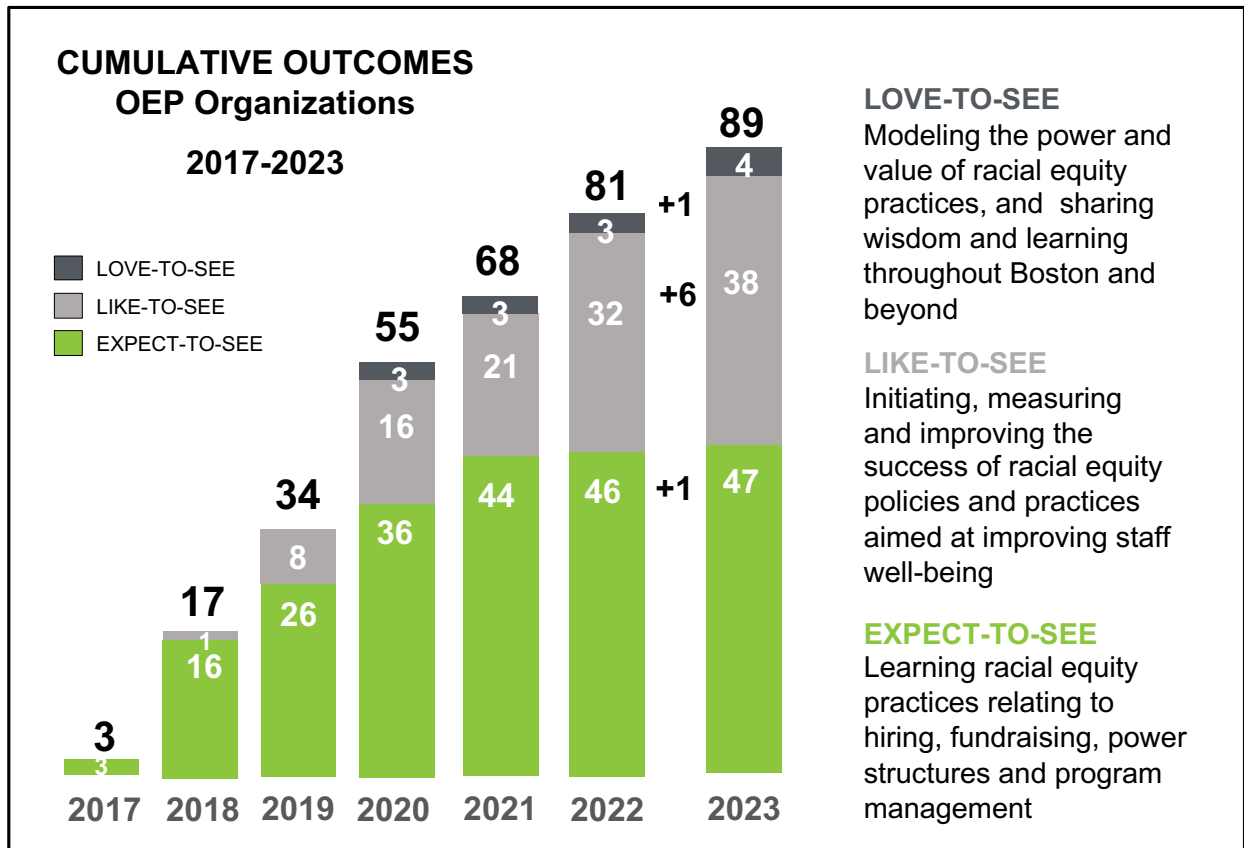


As shown above (far right column), **OEP engaged 120 individuals in annual leadership circles or mentoring** over the six years from 2017 to 2023.

- **8%** skill-building - **9 leaders achieved Expect-to-See outcomes**
- **72%** co-leading change in their organizations - **87 leaders progressed to Like-to-See**
- **20%** further began modeling deep change, leading cross-organizational initiatives and assisting emerging leaders - **24 leaders reaching the Love-to-See level**

Senior-leader cohorts meet for ten monthly sessions. Mid-level leader cohorts meet for six monthly sessions. OEP facilitates peer learning and coaching spaces for leadership cohorts. Leaders come together as a peer learning community and deepen their identity as values-driven leaders who can create and drive a vision for racial equity in their organizations.

## 2. Results with Organizations



As shown, from 2017-2023:

- **47 organizations achieved Expect-to-See outcomes**
- **38 organizations advanced further to Like-to-See**, integrating new practices in their work culture
- **4 organizations reached Love-to-See**. They are now modeling and widely sharing racial equity practices

OEP services for organizations include leadership coaching, equity and caucus team support, community building, capacity building, team building, consulting and crisis responses.

Ongoing relationships are maintained with participating organizations to gauge and deepen their capacity to incorporate racial equity, restorative justice and trauma inclusion into the fabric of their work.

# Voices from Our Field of Engaged Organizations



The challenge to design a project has helped us ... start a conversation around racial equity and the manifestation of white supremacy in the way we operate.

OEP has helped us carve a space for a few of us to take the lead on implementing the work at our organization. In the busyness of work, it has been delayed too many times. The intentionality of this time and my work with my coworkers has been great.

I gained hope and optimism hearing from other organizations that they had previously been at a similar place as us, and their key learnings to get to the state they're currently in.

The tools that we have received from this will greatly benefit us. I have already applied several in my work with our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion council and our strategic planning for DEI initiatives.

Really helpful to hear how other organizations have started this work, to be able to borrow existing tools and strategies, and know that we have the participants in the group to reach out to for questions as we move ahead.

For a younger, smaller organization, this was a great opportunity to have a structured format to learn, network with peers, and connect to resources that might take us a while to find on our own.

Connecting with other executive directors about this topic was incredibly helpful. We rarely get the opportunity to connect with others with the same struggles. I wanted more time in that space!

Trinity Boston Connects is grateful to The Boston Foundation and the Beker Foundation for their belief in our Organizational Equity Practice with both financial and thought partnership support. Their visionary support along with generous individual donors and contractual partners makes this work—and these results—possible.