

Summary of Department Budget for FY26-27 Proposed Budget

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) department leads Metro’s work to advance racial equity outcomes within the agency and across the region. The department’s programs focus on embedding racial equity in Metro’s policies, programs and investments, equipping staff with tools and resources to deliver equitable outcomes, fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring its facilities, services and activities are accessible to everyone.

As a central service, the DEI department is budgeted within the General Fund and is funded by assessments on external departments through a cost allocation methodology. The majority of DEI’s budget covers personnel services costs for the 9.5 FTE within the department. The FY26-27 budget also includes \$880 thousand for materials and services, of which \$425 thousand is allocated for Civic Engagement Capacity Building Grants.

In FY 2025-26 the DEI department lead a process to align key stakeholders and decision makers on a unified framework for Metro’s racial equity strategy. This work will provide the foundation for the update of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The department ensured compliance of requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through the development of a new policy for service animals and supported the implementation of Metro’s first employee resource group employee policy. DEI continues to equip employees with tools and learning opportunities to advance racial equity including the Equity & Belonging Training Guide and Racial Equity Framework.

The DEI department, along with the agency, will continue to advance programs and strategies that support Metro in living its values in the face of a challenging federal context. This context, creates further emphasis for DEI’s existing programs and opportunities for responsiveness, including:

Elevating community voice: DEI will ensure the Committee on Racial Equity and the Committee on Disability Inclusion are well supported and situated to effectively advise decision makers. Additionally, the Civic Engagement Capacity Building Grant Program will continue to support the development of new generations of civic leaders in every corner of the region and the growth of organizations.

Shared economic opportunity: DEI continues to invest capacity and resources in the implementation of Construction Career Pathways at Metro and across the region. With uncertainty surrounding federally funded infrastructure projects it is essential that locally funded projects deliver a full scope of benefits and shared economic opportunity, particularly for underrepresented communities, contractors and workers. Building on the success of one of the first multi-jurisdictional workforce agreements in the country, the proposed budget includes one-time funding to support the update of the Regional Workforce Equity Agreement.

Proposed Budget - Department Overview

FY2026-27



Metro
600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), April 2026

Fostering a sense of belonging: Employee Resource Groups continue to serve as an important space for connection and community building. The DEI Department will maintain and monitor a budget that supports employee-led events that connect employees with shared life experience to network, share resources to advance equity and inclusion in the workplace. Additionally, DEI has reallocated funding for employee-led cultural heritage and awareness events that recognize the histories, contributions and diversity of various communities.

Updating the Strategic Plan: In partnership with the Office of the COO and Metro Council, the department will conclude its effort to determine a unifying framework that will guide the next iteration of the Strategic Plan to strengthen the agency's approach and impact, internally and across the region. In the coming year, the Department will utilize the research and framework as the foundation to begin the update process.

Ongoing Department Growth and/or Reductions included in FY26-27 Proposed Budget

DEI does not have significant growth or reductions in the FY27 proposed budget. The FY25-26 budget was increased to account for one-time carryover for unspent grants from the prior year.

Highlighted Significant Changes from FY25-26 Budget

The budget proposal includes \$60,000 in one-time-only resources to support the update of the Construction Career Pathways Regional Workforce Equity Agreement, which is set to expire in Spring 2027. The City of Portland, Multnomah County, and Metro are collaborating on funding for legal, research, and engagement consultants to support the update. The DEI department will also dedicate staff capacity to play a lead role in managing the negotiation process, in addition to coordinating ongoing internal and regional implementation. The updated agreement will fulfill policy commitments made through each agency's adoption of Construction Career Pathways.

Any Other Overall Impacts that Require Council Direction and/or Attention

None