

Proposed Budget - Department Overview

FY 2025-26

DEI Department, 3/14/25



Summary of Department Budget for FY26 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 funded through the General Fund with a total budget of \$2.9 million for FY 25/26. The budget includes 9 FTE and \$880,000 in M&S. \$425,000 of the M&S is allocated for Civic Engagement Capacity Building Grants; in light of the reduced federal funding that many non-profit and community groups are facing across the nation, these dollars help organizations build internal infrastructure and continue their work even amid funding fluctuations.

In FY 24-25 the DEI department completed Metro's first comprehensive Impact Report on advancing racial equity, diversity and inclusion. In preparation for the update of Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion this report provides a shared understanding the progress, impacts and learnings from the implementation of the plan across Metro's work.

FY26 MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS:

The DEI department, along with the agency, is navigating a challenging federal context that creates significant impacts and uncertainty for communities and employees. Additionally, reductions in capacity and resources across Metro will impact employees and how they experience working at the agency. 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 as the agency navigates the evolving federal and internal context. Additionally this context puts greater importance on the Civic Engagement Capacity Building Grant Program which supports the development of new generations of civic leaders in every corner of the region and the growth of organizations.

Growing 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.

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Fostering a sense of belonging: As employees navigate workplace reductions, Employee Resource Groups will serve as an important space for connection and community building. The DEI Department will continue to have funding to plan and host events that connect employees with shared life experience to network, share resources to advance equity and inclusion in the workplace.

Updating the Strategic Plan: The DEI department is preparing for the update of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In partnership with the Office of the COO and Metro Council, the department will focus on defining the framework that will guide the next iteration of the plan in an effort to strengthen the agency's approach and impact, internally and across the region. \$250k has been earmarked in the Office of COO budget to support this phase of the work.

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

The FY 2025-26 budget includes an M&S reduction of \$16,859 and the elimination of two FTEs that provide administrative and program capacity. Centralized administrative capacity is being developed to support the DEI department along with other central services.

Highlighted Significant Changes from FY25 Budget

The DEI FY 25/26 budget focuses on stabilizing one-time funding requests from the previous year and maintaining resources that advance racial equity, inclusion and accessibility. Along with many other central service departments, the DEI proposed budget includes a small M&S reduction and the elimination of two FTEs.

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

N/A

Attachments:

Org Chart

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION DEPARTMENT
Organizational Chart

