In collaboration with community partners, the Anti-Racism Strategy (report CS00872) presented to Community and Public Services committee on February 14, 2022 defined anti-racism as "the active, ongoing strategy and process that seeks to identify and eliminate racism by changing systems, institutions, policies and attitudes that perpetuate racism."

Anti-racism is an ongoing, lifelong learning journey that is based on self-reflection and action toward addressing systemic racism for community and City staff.

Defining Systemic Racism

Systemic Racism refers to cultural norms and institutional policies that routinely result in and uphold racially inequitable outcomes, often unintentionally. It involves interconnected levels (interpersonal, institutional, and structural) perpetuating unequal power dynamics and privileges.

These levels include:

Interpersonal Racism (within interactions between people): involves negative attitudes towards others, expressed through conscious/unconscious actions like microaggressions, racial bullying, discrimination, and hate crimes
Example: Public expressions of racism, often involving slurs, biases, or hateful words or actions.

Institutional Racism (within institutions and systems of power) is when organizations like schools or workplaces have rules and policies that unfairly benefit the dominant group over equity-deserving communities. This can lead to unequal results and advantages for the dominant group, even though these policies may not explicitly mention race.
Example: Indigenous people represent only 5% of Canada's adult population but account for 30% of inmates in federal penitentiaries. Additionally, Black individuals in Toronto, despite being 8.8% of the population, are targeted in a quarter of police actions and subjected to force in 40% of these cases.
https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/systemic-racism
https://www.nccih.ca/docs/determinants/FS-Racism2-Racism-Impacts-EN.pdf

Structural or Societal Racism (among institutional and across society) - refers to deep-rooted societal inequities that privilege certain groups while disadvantaging others based on race, affecting various social institutions and outcomes.
Example: Stereotypes of racialized people as criminals in mainstream movies and media. (From Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture - Talking About Race.)

Defining Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a way of thinking about how various parts of a person's identity (like race, gender, religion, socio-economic status and class) can overlap and impact the discrimination or privilege they might experience. It acknowledges that individuals can face different forms of discrimination or advantage based on how these aspects of their identity intersect.

"Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes [from] and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem, and a class or LBGTQ problem there. That framework often erases what happens to people subject to all of these things." (Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 2017).

Organizational Composition

Category 1: Organizations/Institutions Indigenous, Black or Racialized Individuals led*. This category covers institutions or organizations that are led (Definition below) (Executive Director, Board of Directors, senior management or leadership positions) by Indigenous, Black, or People of Colour and targets Indigenous or Racialized individuals. It also includes organizations/institutions with a clear mandate, mission statement, or strategic priorities to end racism.

Category 2: Organizations/Institutions that offer programs and services targeting equity-deserving individuals or communities may or may not have Indigenous or racialized individuals in core leadership positions. This category covers institutions/organizations not led by Indigenous people, black people, or people of colour but focus on serving Indigenous or racialized persons or other equity-deserving groups (e.g.newcomers). As a result, they have short-term or one-off Anti-racism projects to meet the immediate needs of the equity-deserving persons and communities they serve.

Category 3: Organizations/Institutions that provide programs or services to the public. This category also includes organizations/institutions that support other organizations that directly target equity-deserving individuals or communities.

*We define such organizations as 'led' if at least 50% of the members of the senior leadership (management level or within the board) are from Indigenous, Black or other racialized communities. Other racialized communities include ethnic groups and religious communities.

Definitions are courtesy of work done by EndpovertyEdmonton (2024)