

Race, Equity and Leadership Initiative (REAL)

In the wake of the 2014 unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, the National League of Cities created the REAL initiative to strengthen local leaders' knowledge and capacity to eliminate racial disparities, heal racial divisions and build more equitable communities. Through training and various resources, REAL helps local elected leaders build safe places where people from all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds thrive socially, economically, academically and physically.

Here are some of the services we can offer your city:

Training

We offer a host of training opportunities to empower and equip local officials with the tools needed to address racial disparities in their communities.

- Leadership Trainings through NLC University
- Customized leadership training opportunities for cities, regions and state leagues

Technical Assistance

Every community's challenges are unique. We are also on the ground working in cities with local leaders to find local solutions and develop custom tailored plans to help counter structural racism.

- Learning Community for Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation
- Community Conversations on Race Relations, Equity and Justice Technical Assistance
- Boys and Men of Color Technical Assistance

By the Numbers

30

Cities currently receiving training
from REAL

MN MD CA PA



FL KS VA TX

8 State leagues working with
REAL

100+

Number of community
conversations facilitated or
supported by REAL



Network Building

NLC connects a network of thousands of local elected officials from across the nation who represent cities both small and large. We use this immense network to build a coalition dedicated to advancing racial equity, through community conversations and our learning communities.

- National REAL Network
- NLC's Council for Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL Council)
- National Municipal Learning Community for Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation
- Community Conversations Network on Race Relation, Equity and Justice
- My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge Learning Community

Highlighting Racial Equity Efforts of Local Leaders

We document the stories of cities moving the needle on racial equity in order to highlight their positive work, and to share best practices for other cities to learn and grow.

- REAL Action: A How-To Guide for Local Elected Officials
- City Profiles
- MBK Action Guide

Work with Special Populations

We are building on the focus we have had on boys and men of color to include other special populations that provide opportunities to apply a racial equity lens in analyzing broader policy issues such as infrastructure, housing and the economy in order to better serve all communities.

To Learn More

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