



ANTI-RACISM GUIDE



Anti-Racism Is An Action:

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A Guide for Cannabusiness

*This material is intended for white businesses, because simply put:
ending racism is white people's business.



Not racist is Not enough

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- The regulated Cannabis Industry is paved with lives, families, and communities. Cannabis **prohibition was weaponized to disempower Black and brown people, and anti-war activists**. The War on Drugs continues in the collateral damage of these policies (housing, education, etc.). As cannabis professionals, **it is our business** to be actively anti-racist.
- There's a myth that racism happens when white people say mean things or commit violence against people of color. In truth, **racism is built into every facet (and system) of our society, and it thrives without examination and intervention**.
- *Bigger truth* -- **racism isn't** just what happens between two people. It's what happens when **systems, policies, and business structures maintain and keep power from others, over generations**.
- **It's complex but it is changeable**, with clear eyes, courageous action, and accountability.



Racism = Race-based Oppression

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In this guide we cover race-based oppression and the [cannabis connection](#). Still, there's more to the picture. Discrimination is “intersectional.” All oppression is connected.

The Four I's of Oppression



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Ideological

A widely spread and shared belief or set of ideas.

(Why we think what we do.)

Institutional

All the systems that govern our society; criminal/legal, educational, housing, public health, etc.,

Interpersonal

Violent, dominating, discriminatory behavior between groups based on the ideology that one group is superior to the other.

Internalized

Self-deprecating physical, psychological, and emotional effects on BIPOC in reaction to systemic anti-Black policy, institutions, and rhetoric. Check out [this video](#) for a visual example.



- “We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be against the war (Vietnam) or Black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and the Blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities...Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.” - John Erlichman, advisor to President Richard Nixon, 1971
- **Black Americans are incarcerated across the country at 5 times the rate of whites, and Latinx people are 1.3 times as likely to be incarcerated than non-Latinx whites.**
- [A study conducted by American Marijuana](#) shows 85% of black people in the marijuana industry have felt racial discrimination while at work. 40% of those polled rated the severity of discrimination at a 4 on a scale of 1-5.
- “It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.”- W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folks (1989 [1903]:3)



Anti-racism is Good for Business

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Being actively anti-racist wins licenses, allows for expansion to new markets, builds loyalty and sells products, reduces employee turnover, diverse BODs produce higher returns. ESGs Environmental Social & Governance metrics emerging as requirements for investors beyond revenue only. Anti-racism, reducing inequality is a social metric.





Commit Your Cannabusiness To Racial Equity

Step 1
Commit: dismantle racism in your company. Shame Resilience Required.

Step 2
Educate & Assess: Determine where racism and inequities exist in your company's operations.

Btw: *Cannabis Doing Good* has a Racial Equity Self Assessment for companies to see where they are.

The Rinse and Repeat of Anti-Racism

Step 3
Implement: Create a strategy and plan. Track and use your metrics to see what has changed. Re-commit to making improvements. Check out Time's Up AR at the Workplace Guide



Getting Started: Company Commitments

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Has your company committed to being anti-racist; gathering baseline information, developing a strategy with goals, metrics, and a timeline to hold your business accountable?

Feel overwhelmed? Remember, dismantling racism is a journey, not a destination.

First things first. Set your sights on a business strategy that prioritizes anti-racism and equity in every department and pillar of the business. Attach metrics to desired outcomes and monitor the impact. Rinse and repeat.

91%

**of Millenials would switch
from a product they typically
buy, to a new product from a
Purpose-driven company,
66% of baby boomers, gen x
would.**

40%

**of purpose driven
companies have higher
workforce retention
rates than their
competitors.**

Deloitte insights 2020 global marketing trends



Racial Equity = Purpose & Purpose Benefits your Business

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Brands Recognized for high commitment to Purpose have grown at more than twice the rate of others

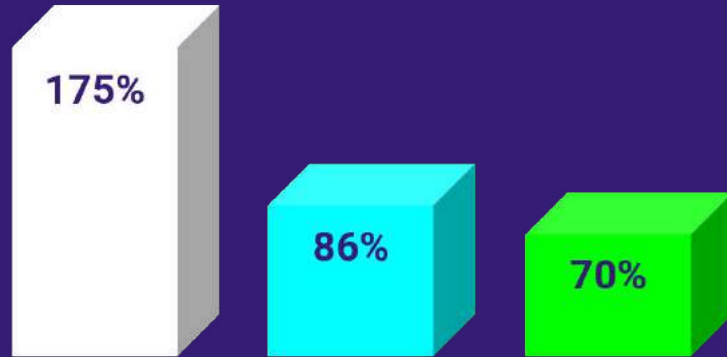
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High Perceived
Positive Impact

Medium Perceived
Positive Impact

Low Perceived
Positive Impact

SEE FULL KANTAR PURPOSE 2020
12 YEAR STUDY

- Start talking. Is your leadership team committed to racial equity?
- How is anti-racism represented as a company value?
- Is it in your mission statement? Do you also have an AR statement?
- Develop an Investment Budget that aligns with your Racial Equity Goals and Strategic Plan. (If it's not in your budget, you don't care about it)
- How can you invest your time, business skills, digital platforms, and your resources into racial equity?
- Do you have a commitment to supporting BIPOC vendors, service providers, etc.,?

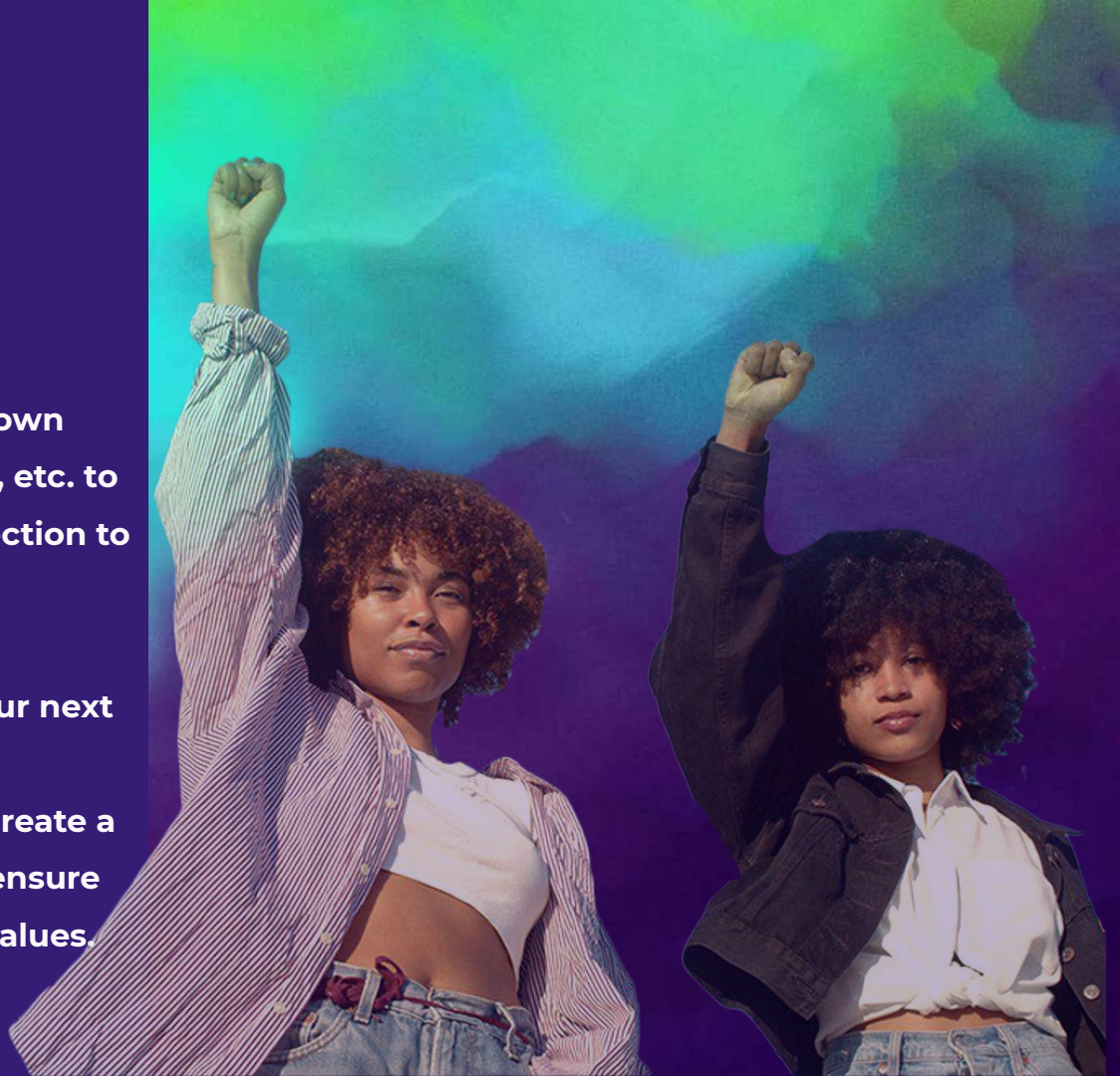


Getting Started: Marketing

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Have you committed to not using Black, brown and Indigenous culture(s), music, personas, etc. to sell your brand without an authentic connection to the culture?

No one likes a vulture. Before launching your next campaign check to make sure you haven't hijacked BIPOC culture for financial gain. Create a set of criteria for your marketing teams to ensure your messaging is in alignment with your values.



Getting Started: Marketing



Don't Culture Vulture:

- Do you have genuine connection, knowledge, or relationship with the culture you are representing visually?
- Is your decision to use BIPOC culture founded in financial gain? If so, reassess to ensure authenticity.
- Do you employ a diverse demographic of employees?
- If so, do your BIPOC employees have input on your marketing material?
- **Do you use your brand to support and uplift BIPOC movements, organization, and leaders?**
- **Check in before you Speak.** An equity rider is a company wide agreement (bonus if it's written down and distributed to all staff) not to speak on panels without diverse representation. i.e **"We do not speak on panels that do not also have BIPOC, women, or LGBTQIA+ panelists."**
- **Break Bread-further the equity** by asking if there is an honorarium or payment for panelists. **Oftentimes BIPOC folks are not paid for their expertise.**

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61%

Of Americans believe diversity in marketing is crucial.

research report conducted by Adobe in 2019

31%

of consumers are more inclined to trust brands that effectively embrace diversity in their advertising.

research report conducted by Adobe in 2019

88%

of marketers feel that using more diversity in advertising images would help the brand's reputation

according to Newscred.



Getting Started: Hiring & Recruiting

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What are your current staff demographics? Who comprises your leadership team?

Are you working to include an anti-racist framework throughout the hiring process; job creation, posting, and interviewing?

Having some hiring challenges? Your challenges are more common than you think. With industry, regulatory, and consumer expectations changing, so should your approaches to hiring and recruiting.



4.3%

Of owners and stakeholders are Black while 81% are white.

16%

Of the 40% POC population held Fortune 500 board seats.

5%

**Of Black Americans hold manager positions in the 80 Fortune 500 companies.
Latinos/Hispanics held just 6% of manager positions.**



Getting Started: Hiring & Recruiting

- Do you intend to increase staff diversity to end up hiring the most “Qualified” candidate, who is often white?
- Does your company send out job descriptions and only white people apply?
- Is the only BIPOC Manager or Director in your company currently holding a CSR or DEI position?
- Have you created a culture of power-sharing within the company to ensure diverse voices and perspectives are heard and then incorporated? P/L decisions; who makes those?
- Do BIPOC Managers or Directors have influence or over how money is spent or allocated? (Hint: the crux of power sharing is ensuring diverse perspectives have input over how money is deployed within the company)

Getting Started: Community Engagement

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Does your company commit time, talent, or treasure to BIPOC or racial justice organizations?

White saviorism hasn't been sexy...well...ever. First things first. Assume Nothing. Ask Questions. And be open to learning. As Audre Lorde says, "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."



10x

The median white household has a net worth 10 times that of the median Black household. The total racial wealth gap, therefore, is \$10.14 trillion.

77%

the rate of diagnosed diabetes is 77% higher among African-Americans

\$175 Billion

Is the estimated lost life years cost due to racial health disparities

Getting Started: Community Engagement



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- Do you currently have a line item in your CSR or marketing budget that is dedicated to racial equity?
- Have you built relationships with and curated mutually beneficial partnerships with BIPOC thought leaders, power brokers, and community activists?
- How does your community engagement address health inequities and support BIPOC communities? Consider that health equity is fundamental to racial equity. Read: access to healthcare, healthy food, education, and housing, etc.
- Have your gathered employee, customer, and/or vendor feedback in your community engagement initiatives?
Saying it again for those in the back: Equitable process yields equitable outcomes. Involve multiple perspectives in outreach efforts.
- When is the last time you were invited to or sat at BIPOC community table? It is our privilege to share resources with BIPOC communities. Put away the cape, you're not a hero but can be an accomplice.

Humbly learn, rinse, and repeat.



Getting Started: Policy & Advocacy

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Is your company involved in advocacy, activism, or community affairs to benefit racial justice for the broader community?

Wanna throw your hat in the policy ring but feeling overwhelmed by the political jargon, potential pushback, and misinformation? Start here.

900%

The U.S. prison population grew by **900%** due to the War on Drugs and the Rockefeller Laws (3 strikes), which forced judges to hand out mandatory life sentences.

1.5 Million

Drug arrests took place in **2014** and half were for cannabis.

3.37x

Cannabis use is roughly equal among Blacks and whites, yet Blacks are **3.73** times as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession.

Ethan Nadelmann: Why we need to end the War on Drugs.
Aclu.Org Study

Getting Started: Policy & Advocacy



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- Are your company commitments reflected in your advocacy and in the policies you support or oppose?
- At the local, state, federal level which policies are your representatives pushing for/or opposing that align with your purpose?
- Do you have a Racial Equity or Anti-Racism committee that can lead the charge on policy and share this information with stakeholders?
- Can you collaborate with community partners to inform stakeholders and general public about needed policy (housing, transportation, criminal/legal) reform?
- How we think and talk about drugs has contributed to politicians believing that they could prosecute a racialized drug war for over 100 years; time to think and do differently folks. (hint: we now say “cannabis” instead of “marijuana” and “legacy market” instead of “black market”)

Racial Inequities Cost the US Trillions



PSAs

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You haven't undone roughly 400 years of racism in America by reading this guide. But nothing changes unless we do. Don't go back to the regularly scheduled programming and don't place the labor of deconstructing racism in your workplace on your BIPOC staff.

Cannabis history is something that we should all know and today's actions create tomorrow's history. Our industry didn't invent anti-Black racism, but we benefit from it (that ain't cool). Whole communities & families are still impacted by the collateral damage of the War on Drugs. We are complicit participants unless we activate.

Keep learning. "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." -James Baldwin



The Anti-Racism Guide is brought to you in collaboration with **Cannabis Impact Fund**. We're encouraging those who enjoy this guide to **donate** to Cannabis Impact Fund. Your donation supports the movement for Black lives, the fight for justice, and the ongoing efforts for true equity.

This is big work and we are not experts except curiosity and racial justice actors. We will follow our own guidance, we are open to your feedback and ideas. We will rinse and repeat. Please share them here **info@cannabisdoinggood.com**.

This guide is part of a series created by the **Cannabis Creative Movement**, a joint effort fueled by **PufCreativ** and **The 9th Block** agencies.

*This guide is imperfect and an attempt to provide a brief overview of becoming an anti-racist company--not a small task. This guide is a baby step. We want to thank some of the folks we learn from regularly: **Hood Incubator**, **Minorities for Medical Marijuana**, **MCBA**, **Regan Byrd**, **Zoe Williams**, and **others**. The mistakes are ours, credit is shared. We will be shame resilient and rinse and repeat to continuously improve. **Join us.**