



Racial Equity Leadership Academy Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Achieving the Dream partnering with the USC Race and Equity Center?

Achieving the Dream expects colleges to scrutinize structural barriers to equity and invest in equity-minded policies, practices, and behaviors that will lead to success for all students. The USC Race and Equity Center is a leader in the field and their strength largely resides in the interdisciplinary network of faculty affiliates. They unite more than 100 professors across academic schools at USC who are experts on race and racism, people of color, immigration, and other important dimensions of equity. These scholars work together on research, as well as on the development of useful tools and resources.

Dismantling an issue as big as racism requires a robust interdisciplinary network of expert scholars, as well as a wide range of strategies, tools, partnerships, and resources.

Why is Achieving the Dream starting with an Academy on Racial Equity?

ATD's [Statement on Equity](#) approaches equity broadly and highlights the expectation that colleges dismantle structural barriers. Through our work with the USC Race and Equity Center, ATD is focusing on one component of equity, race, because we believe it is important to prepare administrators, faculty, and staff with content, tools, and strategies to achieve racial equity on campus. Today, racial inequities are persistent and pervasive in P-12 schools, colleges and universities, workplace settings, and our larger society.

Few people know how to talk comfortably about race. Even fewer know what to do when racial tensions arise, when data show racial disparities, and when frustrated citizens demand accountability and racial justice.

In ATD's new strategy roll out, we heard feedback from our network that they wanted to go deeper in equity. With the creation of the Racial Equity Leadership Academy, we will dig deeper into one aspect of equity. In the near future, we plan to provide resources and tools for colleges to dismantle the intersectionality of the other components of equity.

Who should apply?

The application process is open to Achieving the Dream Institutions in good standing who have demonstrated progress toward identified equity goals. Preference will be given to Achieving the Dream Leader Colleges and Leader Colleges of Distinction.



Our institution just started equity focused work. Should we apply?

The Racial Equity Academy is for institutions who are mature in their equity solution journey. Colleges that are just beginning campus wide equity reforms or have started internal conversations around equity should attend ATD's Annual Equity Institute prior to the DREAM conference where they will engage in peer to peer learning around multiple components of equity.

When is the Academy?

The Academy takes place from July 2020 – February 2021 with the Summer Session running July 16-18, 2020.

What are the expectations of a college team?

By the end of the Academy, college teams will have confirmed their racial equity change effort, participated in coaching engagements, developed a new vision for their campus' racial equity work, and launched the rollout of their racial equity change effort with a comprehensive, prioritized action plan. The identified effort and action plan should align with each college's Student Success Action Plan and strategic plan. The overall expected outcomes are an increase in student persistence and completion through an intentional design to eliminate structural barriers to equity.

Colleges will present progress made toward their racial equity change effort at DREAM 2021.

Who should be included on my team?

Each participating institution team will be comprised of the president or chancellor, an influential faculty member, a cabinet-level student affairs officer/diversity officer, and a cabinet-level academic leader (e.g. provost, vice provost). All members of the team **must** be present at the Summer Session in July 2020.

Colleges are allowed to bring **one** additional team member whose role supports the institution's racial equity change effort. The additional team member must be essential to **decision-making**.

Is there any prework associated with the Academy?

Selected institutions will be asked to familiarize the team with any data associated with current equity work implemented on campus. For example, if your campus has participated in a campus climate study, created an equity and inclusion strategic plan, has advanced specific diversity and inclusion goals, etc., it is valuable for your team to review, analyze and discuss prior to the start of the Academy. It is important to set a baseline of understanding among the team members. Teams will also be asked to share their relevant data with ATD at the start of the Academy.



How many coach visits do I get?

Participating colleges will receive one on-site visit and one virtual visit. Additionally, colleges will receive monthly one-hour touch points with an ATD Coach and USC Coach.

What will I learn by participating?

Teams will be introduced to topics, frameworks, evidence-based readings, books, and practical tools on racial equity. They will also participate in honest dialogue about racial topics with their peers and experts in the field of racial equity. By the end of the Academy, teams will have developed an action plan for implementing their unique racial equity change effort. To do this, teams will be provided with resource materials that facilitate their change effort plans, including design, implementation, resourcing, accountability, assessment, communication, sustainability, and institutionalization.