



Interactive elements



# Equity guiding questions

Practical Guidance for Embodying Equity in Implementation Part II

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# The Center for Implementation

## About us

Founded in 2018, The Center for Implementation (TCI) is a social enterprise with a mission and moral imperative to train, support, and empower professionals in using evidence-informed approaches to maximize their impact.

Our vision is to see millions of changemakers worldwide actively applying best practices in implementation science to their initiatives.

In working towards this vision, we prioritize an entrepreneurial and values-based approach that embraces equity, empathy, creativity, and collaboration. [Learn more about us and what we do.](#)

## Our services

We provide expert guidance and deliver practical solutions to organizations across multiple fields. We develop customized implementation support packages, partner on large-scale initiatives, and design professional development workshops tailored to specific contexts. [Learn more about our services.](#)

For teams and individuals, we offer comprehensive [online training](#), Implementation Support Specialist [certification](#), and the Implementing Change [Community](#) — a unique online space for changemakers to share knowledge and connect with each other.

## Citation information

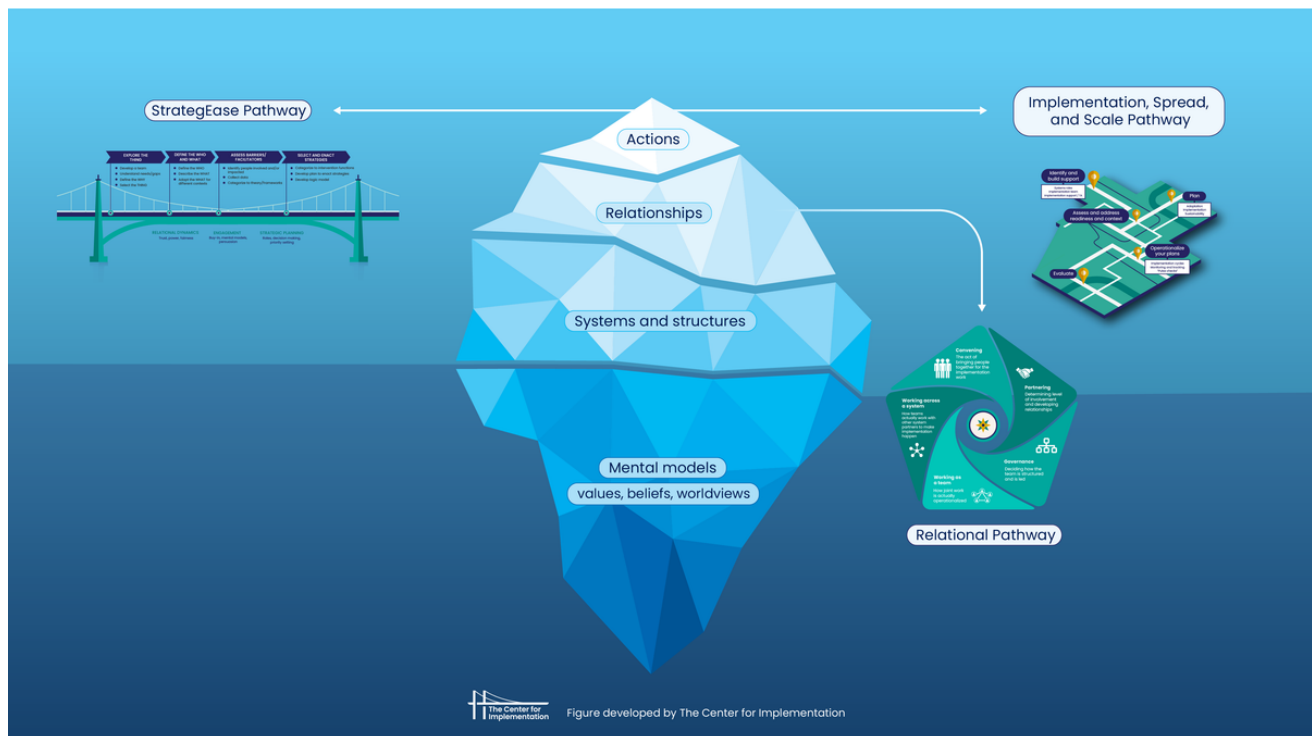
We ask that you provide citations in writing (not just verbally).

If using this resource in a publication, please include this citation:

Khan, S., & Moore, J. E. (2023). Equity Guiding Questions. The Center for Implementation: Ontario, Canada.

For a presentation or any other grey literature, include “pulled from The Center for Implementation” or “adapted from The Center for Implementation” on each item (e.g., every slide that references our content).

# The Equity Iceberg and the Pathways



*Equity Iceberg.* To see figure in full resolution, visit our [Toolbox](#).

- Equity is both a process and an outcome.
- It is about actions; relationships; systems and structures; and mental models.
- The processes that dictate our actions when we are implementing an initiative are described by the StrategEase Pathway (designing an initiative for implementation) and the Implementation, Spread, and Scale Pathway (actually implementing the initiative either locally or at scale).
- Relational processes specific to implementation are described by the Relational Pathway.
- The systems and structures component of the Equity Iceberg refers to reflecting on whether we are fostering more equitable and just conditions in our policies, fields of interest, and organizations.
- The mental models component refers to exploring if we understand and approach the world in an equitable and just way.

# Equity questions relevant to every step

## Have you considered how the evidence might:

- Be biased?
- Be based on constructs (of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, etc.) prevalent at the time of the study?
- Not include other valuable forms of knowledge (e.g., storytelling, patient engagement, etc.)?

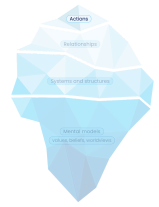
## Have you considered if your teams and partnerships:

- Are inclusive (including those being asked to change and those impacted by the problem)?
- Understand and are working to mitigate power dynamics (including historical/societal factors and positions of privilege)?
- Allow for people to have a role and say in the process that is meaningful to them?
- Allow for different people's needs to be met and consider what the benefit is for them to be involved?
- Can identify implicit or explicit values, beliefs, and biases that might support or hinder implementation?

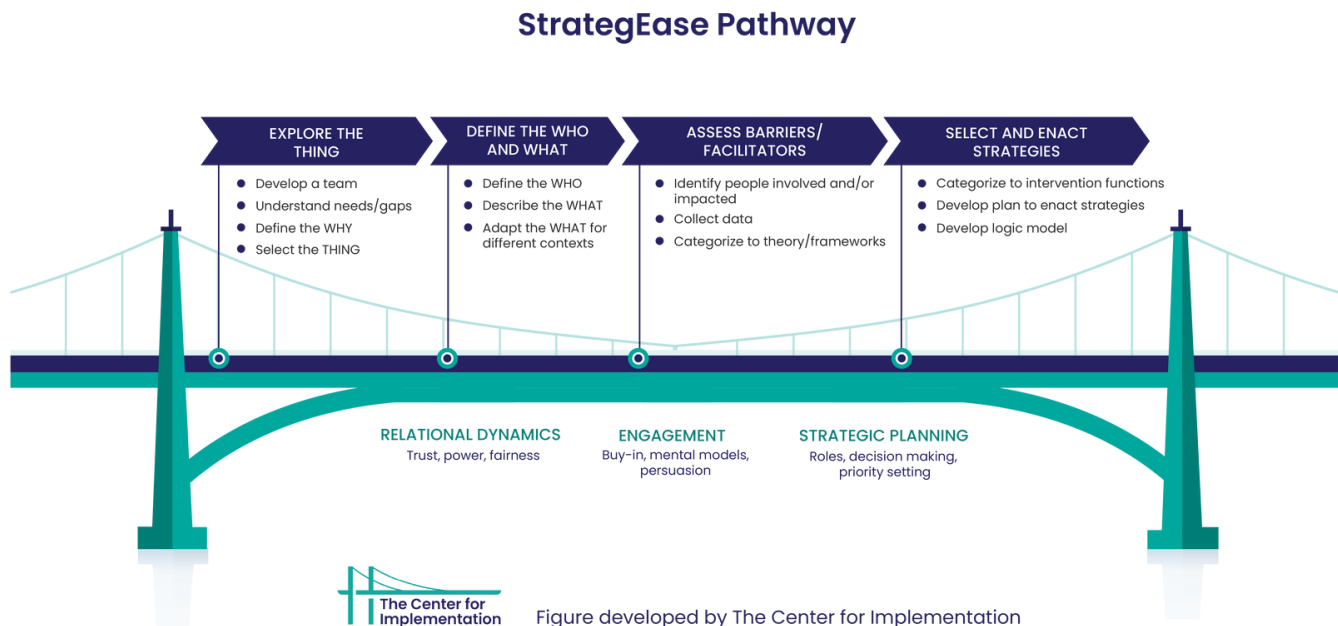
## At any decision point, have you considered:

- Who benefits and who loses?
- Whether the consequences and magnitude of the losses are different for some people versus others?

# StrategEase Pathway



## Equity questions for each step of the pathway



StrategEase Pathway. To see figure in full resolution, visit our [Toolbox](#).

## Explore the THING

- Who is informing the nature of the problem? Is the problem being assessed from an upstream perspective?
- Were the right people involved in selecting the THING to solve the problem (e.g., were those impacted by the problem included)?
- What are the outcomes you want the THING to achieve and who do those outcomes matter to?

## Define the WHO and WHAT

- Have you defined the WHATs with people (versus *for* people)?
- What current and historical power dynamics exist between the WHOs that might impact the WHATs?
- Are the WHATs feasible, acceptable, useful, accessible, effective, and safe for the people who are expected to perform the WHATs?
- Have you considered adaptations to the WHATs for different populations?

## Assess barriers/facilitators

- Are you capturing barriers and facilitators that different populations are facing?
- Are you linking individual barriers with organizational and systemic barriers to understand why individual barriers may exist?
- Are you seeking to understand the WHY for each barrier?
- Have you considered intersectionality?
- Have you asked people directly about their barriers using inclusive approaches (e.g., that mitigate power dynamics to avoid assumptions)?

## Select and enact strategies

- Are you including people making the change and impacted by the problem in selecting HOWs to ensure they are feasible, appropriate, acceptable, and safe?
- Have you considered different HOWs (or adaptations of the HOWs) for people who experience different barriers related to factors such as:
  - Accessibility
  - Ease of participation (time to travel, work schedules, etc.)
  - Cultural competency
  - Historical power dynamics

# Implementation, Spread, and Scale Pathway



## Equity questions for each step of the pathway

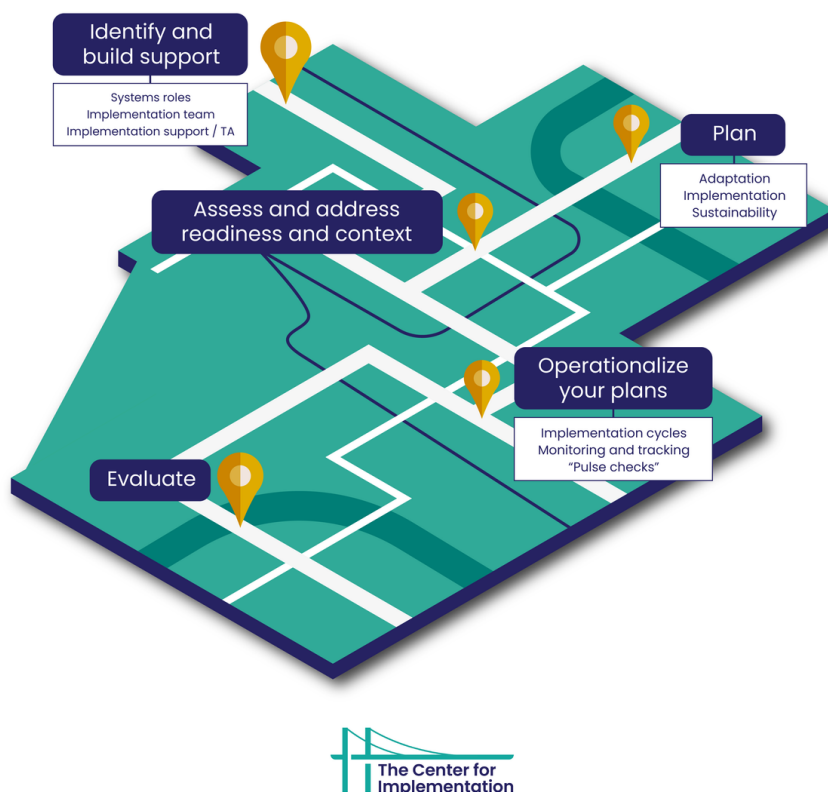


Figure developed by The Center for Implementation

*Implementation, Spread, and Scale Pathway. To see figure in full resolution, visit our [Toolbox](#).*

## Identify and build support

- Who is involved, who is not, and why (i.e., are there historical, structural, social, and political determinants that determine who is involved)?
- How did you determine roles (considering visible, hidden, and invisible power)?
- What are the perspectives, experiences, values, beliefs, and biases of the support system?



- Is the support system is providing knowledge that is inclusive of different types of knowledge?
- Is the support system willing to adapt their knowledge and the way they provide support to suit different needs?
- What can be done differently to improve the connections between system supports and historically marginalized people to make their involvement easier?

## **Assess and address readiness and context**

- Who is deciding who is “ready” or not?
- Have you considered the equity-related impacts of deciding not to move forward with settings that are considered “not ready” by your standards?
- Have you considered shifting from a “ready or not” mindset to “meeting people where they are at” if they are unready?
- Does the readiness/context assessment consider factors that impact how people equitably engage with the initiative?
- Is the initiative appropriate for the intended participants and context, or is an adaptation or different initiative required?

## **Plan**

- Is decision making an equitable process that mitigates power dynamics?
- How are we considering the different needs of different people? Are we planning for adaptations to our WHATs and HOWs based on equitable processes and outcomes?
- What financial and human resources are available to ensure that the WHATs and HOWs of the initiative are equitable?
- Have we incorporated different viewpoints into our definition of sustainability?

## Operationalize your plans

- Who is delivering the initiative? How equitable is the delivery of tasks and burden of work?
- How can we promote communication and collaboration among team members and those involved in the initiative?
- Do we have monitoring and tracking checks to ensure that we are meeting our equity goals as we implement?
- Who will be involved in ongoing adaptations that might be needed during implementation?

## Evaluate

- Have we considered an evaluation design that aligns with our equity goals (e.g., participatory, adaptive, realist)?
- Do our evaluation questions reflect equity? Are the right people helping us create these questions?
- Is there an inclusive process to define our measures of success?
- What types of data are we using to determine whether we meet our measures of success? Are we prioritizing certain types of data (e.g., quantitative) over others? Why?
- What activities and processes can we use to reflect and evaluate on the initiative?
- How can we use the knowledge gained to determine whether any further action(s) can be taken to help counter the inequities that were identified?

# Relational Pathway

## Equity questions for each step of the pathway

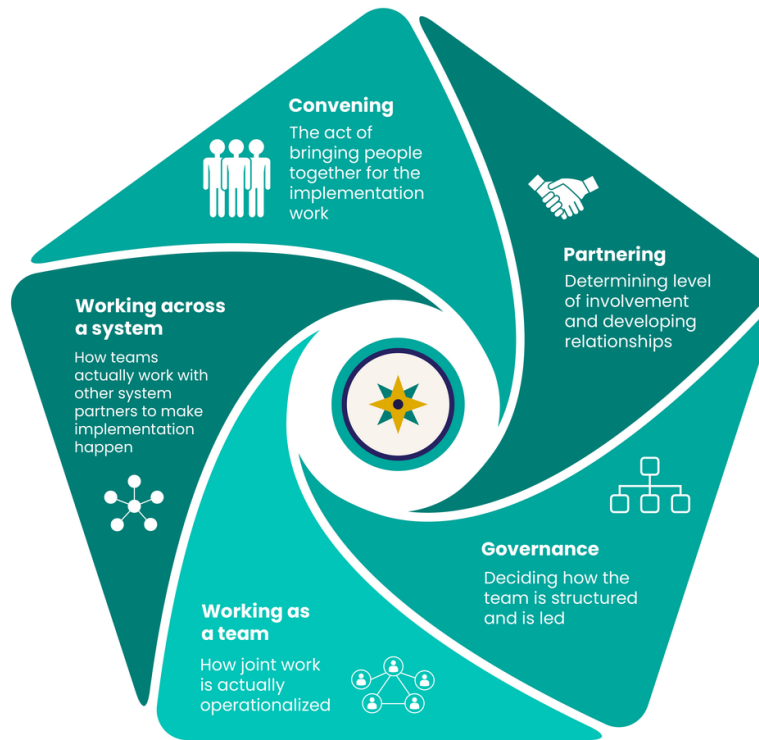
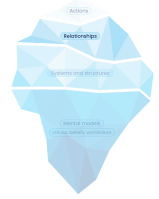


Figure developed by The Center for Implementation



*Relational Pathway.* To see figure in full resolution, visit our [Toolbox](#).

## Convening

- How did the “convener” come to adopt the role of “convener” and what impact does this person or group have on equity?
- What types of spaces are people being convened in to promote equitable participation?

## Partnering

- Who is at the table, who is not at the table, and why?
- What historical, structural, social, and political determinants might impact people's willingness or ability to engage fully on the team?
- Do partners have the power and voice to determine how they wish to contribute?

## Governance

- What types of power, values, beliefs and biases do the leaders have?
- What is the transparency of decision-making?
- Is decision-making and conflict resolution as equitable as possible, so that certain people aren't favored over others?

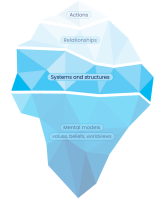
## Working as a team

- How is trust (or mistrust) being built based on interpersonal, historical, structural, social, and political factors?
- Do your communication channels and methods ensure that partners understand what is happening and can contribute meaningfully?
- Are there changes in power dynamics as roles and partners shift over time?

## Working across a system

- Who is at the table, who is not at the table, and why?
- Have you considered "implementing with" and not "intervening on" particular populations and communities?
- Do the communication and collaboration strategies in place enable you to "meet them where they are"?

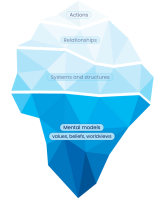
# Systems and structures



## Equity questions

- Are we willing to admit there is a problem, and to be honest about what the problem is?
- Do we have a good understanding of our organization/institute/system in terms of:
  - The history of why we exist and why policies were implemented?
  - The experiences that certain populations have had in the past when interacting with us?
- Have we considered the past and current social, structural, and political determinants that may lead to injustice and inequity in outcomes? Do we have a process for defining and reflecting on these?
- Are we considering different types and sources of knowledge to inform our work?
- Do we have an equitable process to identify systems and structures that uphold inequities?
- Do we have a process in place that involves a diversity of people and viewpoints to help address problems?
- How are we creating psychologically safe spaces and redistributing power to ensure that progress is made?
- Do we have the courage to reimagine, reshape, or abolish the systems and structures that contribute to inequity? If we don't, what work needs to be done to foster the courage to do so?

# Mental models



## Equity questions

- What are our core values (as individuals, as organizations, as a community, etc.)? What informs these core values? Why do we have these core values?

Consider race, gender, sexuality, disability, or any other construct in the following questions:

- What beliefs and biases do we have about x?
  - Where do we think the construct of x came from? Why do we think the construct of x exists?
  - What do we know about the experience of x? What informs that knowledge?
  - Do we think that experiencing x makes people different? If yes, in what ways?
  - Do we believe that people experiencing x experience the world differently than others do? If yes, in what ways?
  - What do we think happens when the experiences of x intersect with other experiences (race, sexuality, gender, etc.)?
- How fundamental are these beliefs about x to who we are?
  - Are we willing to challenge our beliefs about x? What do we think will happen if we challenge these beliefs?
  - Are we willing to decenter ourselves to center other voices?
  - Do we believe that for someone to gain (status, power, etc.), someone has to lose (status, power, etc.)? Why?
- How important is it to maintain our values and beliefs? What needs to be done to either uphold or change these values and beliefs?

# Readings and resources

## From the scoping review

- [A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health. Social Determinants of Health Discussion Paper 2 \(Policy and Practice\)](#) by Solar O., & Irwin, A.
- [Adapting strategies to promote implementation reach and equity \(ASPIRE\) in school mental health services](#) by Gaias, L. M., Arnold, K. T., Liu, F. F., Pullmann, M. D., Duong, M. T., & Lyon, A. R.
- [Advancing health equity through CTSA programs: Opportunities for interaction between health equity, dissemination and implementation, and translational science](#) by Yousefi Nooraie, R., Kwan, B. M., Cohn, E., AuYoung, M., Clarke Roberts, M., Adsul, P., & Shelton, R. C.
- [Applying an equity lens to interventions: using PROGRESS ensures consideration of socially stratifying factors to illuminate inequities in health](#) by O'Neill, J., Tabish, H., Welch, V., Petticrew, M., Pottie, K., Clarke, M., Evans, T., Pardo Pardo, J., Waters, E., White, H., & Tugwell, P.
- [Conceptual framework of equity-focused implementation research for health programs \(EquiR\)](#) by Eslava-Schmalbach, J., Garzón-Orjuela, N., Elias, V. et al.
- [Critical Race Theory, race equity, and public health: toward antiracism praxis](#) by Ford, C. L., & Airhihenbuwa, C. O.
- [Dimensionality and R4P: A Health Equity Framework for Research Planning and Evaluation in African American Populations](#) by Hogan, V., Rowley, D. L., White, S. B. et al.
- [Equitable Evaluation Framework](#) by Equitable Evaluation Initiative
- [Intersectionality and Knowledge Translation: Intersectionality Guide](#) by Knowledge Translation Program
- [NIMHD Research Framework](#) by National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities
- [The BELE Framework](#) by Building Equitable Learning Environments Network

# Readings and resources

## From the scoping review

- [Reframing implementation science to address inequities in healthcare delivery](#) by Baumann, A. A., & Cabassa, L. J.
- [The ConNECT Framework: a model for advancing behavioral medicine science and practice to foster health equity](#) by Alcaraz, K. I., Sly, J., Ashing, K. et al.
- [The Health Equity Framework: A Science- and Justice-Based Model for Public Health Researchers and Practitioners](#) by Peterson, A., Charles, V., Yeung, D., & Coyle, K.
- [The health equity implementation framework: proposal and preliminary study of hepatitis C virus treatment](#) by Woodward, E. N., Matthieu, M. M., Uchendu, U. S. et al.
- [The health equity measurement framework: a comprehensive model to measure social inequities in health](#) by Dover, D. C., & Belon, A. P.
- [The public health critical race methodology: praxis for antiracism research](#) by Ford, C. L., & Airhihenbuwa, C. O.
- [Transcreation: an implementation science framework for community-engaged behavioral interventions to reduce health disparities](#) by Nápoles, A. M., & Stewart, A. L.



## Additional resources from The Center for Implementation

- [Equity Guiding Questions](#) (online version) by The Center for Implementation
- [The EQUIP Equity Action Kit](#) by Dr. Jonathan A. Caballero
- [Equitable implementation: Weaving equity into selecting change strategies](#) by Dr. Sobia Khan
- [Data Equity Framework and We All Count tools](#) by Dr. Jonathan A. Caballero
- [Embedding Equity into Implementation: The Equity Iceberg](#) by Dr. Sobia Khan
- [Reflections on equity and justice in implementation science and practice](#) by Dr. Sobia Khan

## Additional resources from other sources

- [How a Values-Based Approach Advances DEI](#) by Anselm A. Beach and Albert H. Segars
- [What Are the Societal Values That Need to Be Considered When Making Decisions about Trade-Offs between Equity and Efficiency?](#) by the NICE Citizens Council
- [Let's Talk Values and Health Equality](#) by the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health
- [Change and Implementation in Practice: Considerations for Advancing Racial Equity Through Problem Exploration](#) by the Capacity Building Center for States