<u>Shape of Trust Community of Practice Storytelling Circle/Focus Group Guide</u> (2020-21)

Introduction and Purpose
Thank you all for taking time to be here today and participate in this Storytellng Circle or focus group. A Storytelling Circle is a small discussion group (up to 12 people) brought together to share thoughts on a specific topic, allowing free flowing, creative dialog between participants, gently guided by questions, and emphasizing the power of stories to elevate truth, elucidate complexity, and foster interconnection.

The purpose of Storytelling Circle is to discuss your experiences in the Shape of Trust Community of Practice offered at the City of Seattle over the last year (for supervisors, managers, and HR advisors). We would also like to invite open discussion about the organizational culture of equity and anti-racism at the City--how it has been, where it currently stands, and what you hope or expect it might become in the future. We would like your honest feedback about what went well, what did not go well, what has surprised you, and any changes you have seen in yourself or others, so we can understand the impacts of the Community of Practice and improve future group learning spaces to build capacity for transformational, anti-racist organizing at the City.

I invite you to participate to the level they feel comfortable. It is possible that sensitive or uncomfortable topics may come up. Please only share what you feel comfortable sharing. You may choose not to answer any question and you may choose to stop participating at any time. In addition, any information you share will be kept confidential and any identifying information that could connect you to your comments will be removed from any notes or summaries of information.

Finally, we would like to audio record this conversation. The recording is used to create transcripts (a typed version of what was said) for analysis. Do you consent to being audio recorded? [*Verify that all participants consent*] If you prefer, I can take hand written notes only and skip the audio recording.

This Storytelling Circle should last about one hour. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Check in / Ripple share: We ask that each person share (1) a word or phrase describing how they're arriving today. (2) Also, if you have any accommodations you'd like to name--e.g., may need to step away to attend to caregiving duties--please let us/me know. (3) When you've finished, please call on another person who hasn't spoken yet, giving your kind attention to the person speaking as often as possible.

Grounding activity: I invite you to turn your cameras off for this brief grounding exercise (secular mindfulness) that will involve noticing the breath and the body, and visualizing becoming grounded and connected. and will prompt you to turn them back on at the end of the exercise. We begin by finding a comfortable seat or stand… An invitation to uncross the legs if they are crossed and plant the feet firmly on the ground. Feel the places your body makes contact with the chair, the floor… Let us pause to take three of the longest, deepest breaths we've taken all day--at your own pace, no rush. Slowing down and tuning in. Notice what it feels like to be breathing together. Bring your attention to your jaw; if you find any tension, gently invite relaxation and loosening--perhaps wiggling the jaw or allowing the root of the tongue to grow soft… Gently scan down the rest of the body, noticing places of tension or ease. Invite relaxation to tense places. Draw your attention to the soles of your feet… Feel your feet supported by the ground. Imagine roots growing down from your legs and feet into the ground, connecting you to the ground, loved ones, mentors, ancestors, communities you serve, and this Story Circle, despite distance.

We remember that so many of our ancestors shared stories in circles, coming together to pass down knowledge and wisdom. I now invite everyone to turn their cameras back on to begin our discussion.

Associations with and past involvement in equity work

1. **[Optional:] What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words "trust and belonging"?** It might be an image, a song, a word or phrase, a color… Please share your answer in the "Chat", and I'll ask a couple folx to speak to their answer. Please notice and resist the urge to change your answer, if that happens, and notice the variety and diversity of responses and voices as they are shared.

2. **I now invite you to scan through your memories of any work involving equity at the City, as if viewing a movie: you can play, pause, rewind, and fast forward. Prior to the Shape of Trust Community of Practice, what has your past involvement been in racial equity, social justice and/or anti-racism work at the City?**
   a. Follow-on questions:
      i. To what degree have you been interested in equity work?
      ii. What has (dis)interested you about equity work?
      iii. Has anyone had a similar or different experience?

Reasons for joining the Learning Labs

3. **Can you remember the moment you learned about the Shape of Trust Community of Practice? How did you find out about it? How did you choose to become involved? What factors did you weigh as you filled out your application?**
   a. Follow-on question: What did you hope to learn, experience, or gain?

4. [MAY SKIP IN INTEREST OF TIME] **What is the most memorable experience you have had during the Shape of Trust Community of practice?**

5. **How did things shift for you over the course of the year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, racial uprisings, wild fires, election, insurrection, shifted focuses or work workloads, or other factors affecting society at large?**

Short-term changes: knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions

6. **How has your knowledge or understanding of or wisdom around racial equity, social justice and anti-racism been influenced by the Shape of Trust Community of Practice Pilot Cohort, if at all?** (Alternately: What do you feel you've learned in the Community of Practices, if anything?)
   a. **What areas do you feel your understanding has changed the least? The most? And, why do you think that is?**

Mid-term changes: behaviors and practices

7. **Have you noticed any changes in how you do things--that you've adopted new behaviors or practices--that have been influenced by the Shape of Trust Community of Practice?** Please provide specific examples, remembering that all shifts, even those that seem small or subtle, are important and can have profound impacts.
   a. **Follow-on questions:**
      i. Has your commitment to anti-racist work changed?
      ii. Has your communication changed?

         iii.   Has the way you make decisions--such as lenses you use, values you focus on, or the way you engage people--changed?

         iv.   Has the language you use changed?

         v.   Has the way you collaborate changed?

    b. **Do you feel you do anything differently now as a leader and/or supervisor as a result of the training? If so, how so? If not, what do you make of that?**

8. **Have you noticed any changes in how others in the Community of Practice do things--new behaviors or practices--that have been influenced by the Shape of Trust?**

Most/least useful tools, ideas, or practices

9. **What specific tools, ideas, or practices from the Community of Practice have been…**
   a. <u>most</u> useful?
   b. <u>least</u> useful?

Learning Lab design and delivery, including class environment, teachers, barriers and supports, and frequency and duration

10. **How would you describe the Shape of Trust Community of Practice virtual classroom environment?**

11. **How effective were the facilitators at instructing and guiding you and the others in the Community of Practice?**
    a. **How would you describe the way the facilitators interacted with the Ccommunity of Ppractice?**
    b. **How did this make you feel, or shape your learning experience?**

12. **What barriers did you face while participating in the Shape of Trust Ccommunity of Ppractice?**
    a. **Did you feel you could ask for supports? Why or why not?**
    b. **What additional supports might have been helpful?**

13. **How satisfied were you with:**
    a. **The frequency of the sessions (how often you met)**
    b. **The amount of time spent in each session (e.g., too little, too much, just right)**
    c. **The amount of time spent learning about racial equity, social justice and anti-racism versus applying that knowledge and skills/practices to your work experiences**
    d. **The amount and types of assignments given**

quality: comparison to other racial equity, social justice and/or anti-racism learning environments you've been in and suggested changes

14. **How useful has the Ccommunity of Ppractice experience been compared to other racial equity, social justice and/or anti-racism learning environments you've taken?**

15. **Do you have suggestions for improving the Shape of Trust Community of Practice?**

Final thoughts

16. **Do you have any other comments to share? Or, is there anything else you wish I would have asked the group?**