

## Black Women's Experience Project FAQs

### **Q: What is the Black Women's Experience Project?**

The Black Women's Experience (BWE) Project is an employee-led project sponsored by the Black/African Women's Affinity Group. The purpose of the Black Women's Experience Project is to understand the current state of Black women employed at King County so that we may provide recommendations to address any potential inequities that may emerge and promote a healthy workplace culture that supports Black/African women and therefore all people employed at King County. A consultant will produce the report, which includes collecting and analyzing County-wide employment data, a survey to all King County employees, and the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, resulting in a final report with recommendations to address any potential inequities experienced by King County employees, with a focus on Black women.

### **Q. Why is King County focusing on the experience of Black women employees?**

The Black/African Women's Affinity Group provides a brave space for Black/African employees who identify as women to network, support one another, and address workplace issues that are unique to the Black women's experience. Over time, within recurring affinity group meetings, common themes emerged, relating to experiences that are not in alignment with King County values related to areas such as career advancement and a sense of being valued and belonging in the organization as well as others.

Some of these recurring themes are reflective of the reported experiences of Black women nationally. According to a [Gallup 2020 survey](#) of Black women in the workforce, Black women are the least likely to feel valued, or treated with respect or to experience work as having a climate of fair treatment among coworkers. That data also shows that Black women are the least likely to report that they have the same opportunities for advancement as others.

King County is a microcosm of the broader society and this project will help us understand how King County's work environment mirrors or differs from what has been reported nationally.

### **Q. If King County is centering the experiences of Black women, why is the consultant surveying all employees?**

The goal of the project is to identify potential inequities in King County's system broadly, and specifically with a focus on Black women.

All employees should have equitable opportunities to succeed at the county. All employees should experience a daily workplace culture where they are treated with respect, dignity, feel engaged and supported to perform their work well. We hope that the Black Women's Experience Project will help to identify and better understand the root causes of any issues that lead to an unhealthy workplace culture for Black women and ultimately all employees.



**Q. How will this survey differ from information collected through the annual King County Employee Engagement Survey?**

The [King County Employee Engagement Survey](#) also covers workplace culture issues including measuring the employee experiences related to development, belonging and wellbeing.

However, becoming pro-equity and anti-racist often involves taking additional steps to understand the specific experiences of historically marginalized groups, particularly those where marginalized experiences intersect (in this case race and gender identification).

The survey questions focus on employee experiences related to microaggressions, mentoring, preparation for advancement, professional development, workload, hiring practices, education and career experience, retention, job classifications, tenure, rate of promotion, and employment types.

Similar to the engagement survey, the Black Women's Experience Project survey will also be anonymous. Survey results will be collected directly by the consultant, and they will own the data provided by survey responses.