

# Putting Racism on the Table

## Discussion Guide

We encourage you to watch the videos in the *Putting Racism on the Table* series with your colleagues and to then use these discussion questions to facilitate conversation and action. For more information and links to the videos, visit [www.washingtongrantmakers.org](http://www.washingtongrantmakers.org).



### Session One

#### Topic: Structural Racism

#### Speaker: John A. Powell

Professor of Law and Professor of African American & Ethnic Studies,  
University of California, Berkeley

- How is structural racism different from racism? Why is that difference important when determining what intervention should be undertaken to address structural racism versus racism?
- There is a great deal of data on the impact of structural racism on education, healthcare, access to housing, and relationships with law enforcement, yet people continue to deny that it exists. Why? What, if anything, can be done to influence those people?
- Professor Powell suggests that our economic and political systems are deeply racialized, attributing some of this to a profoundly growing “white anxiety.” What are some ways that you have either witnessed or personally experienced the anxiety he speaks about? What are some ways that we can bring this anxiety out into the open and begin the work of addressing it?
- Professor Powell talks about structural marginalization as something that happens, not only with blacks, but also with women, people with disabilities, immigrants, etc. Have you seen and/or experienced structural marginalization? What are some ways that we can identify and interrupt structural marginalization?
- Professor Powell states that the “philanthropic community has a unique role to play” in addressing structural racism. What role is your foundation currently playing? What other roles could you see your foundation playing? What supports might be needed for your foundation to assume a more proactive role in addressing structural racism? What specific barriers or challenges would need to be addressed?

*While this discussion guide was developed for the philanthropic community, please adapt it for use with your community/sector.*