

Jewish Community Action Racial Justice Working Group Issue Selection Criteria

The work of the J.C.A. Racial Justice Working Group is constructed under the umbrella of the R.J.W.G. mission statement: *To create an ever-growing cadre of knowledgeable Jewish leaders personally committed to taking action to end racism and to organize the JCA membership, other Jews and Jewish organizations to join such efforts. In pursuing action, we build alliances and work closely with communities of color and anti-racist organizations in the greater community. All issues selected must help us in pursuing this mission.*

In addition, there are five basic criteria areas that we should examine in pursuing the selection of an issue:

- Does it meet anti-racist criteria?
- Does it meet community organizing issue criteria?
- Is it important to have a Jewish presence on this issue?
- Does it build Jewish Community Action (and the Racial Justice Working Group as a part of JCA) as an organization?
- Do we have the resources as an organization to be involved in this issue?

These criteria are not listed in priority order. All must be addressed in selecting an issue.

The following are some questions and ideas to help in the determination whether each basic criteria area is addressed when selecting an issue.

Does it meet anti-racist criteria?

- Explain how this campaign gives us the ability to raise the concepts of:
 - racism
 - classism
 - white privilege
 - the need for racial justice.
- Has this issue been raised by people of color as important to their community?
- Is the leadership on this issue by people of color?
- Will this campaign benefit people of color and how?
- What approaches and solutions are being proposed?
- What kinds of strategies and activities are already underway?
- How will work on this issue help us to build alliances with communities of color?
- How will work on this issue help us to build alliances with anti-racist organizations?
- Are these allies actively seeking support from other groups? From JCA and the RJWG?
- If so, what are they asking JCA/RJWG and others to do?
- Are there longer term approaches and solutions being addressed in this campaign that can have a significant impact on racism in the institution or system being targeted?

Does it meet community organizing issue criteria?

- Is it immediate? Immediate refers to an issue that is current and that we can work on today.
- Is it specific? Specific means defining an issue concretely and with a definite target of focus.
- Is it realizable? Realizable refers to issues where we can win and our goals can actually be accomplished.
- Is it actionable? Actionable means that there are definite actions that can be taken towards achieving the goal.

Is it important to have a Jewish presence on this issue?

- Outline the Jewish values that support our efforts around this issue.
- Describe the "Jewish" role on this issue.
- Are there other Jewish organizations involved with this issue, and if so, how is the RJWG's role different or complementary.
- If not, why is Jewish participation on this issue critical?
- What type of Jewish community education might be part of such a campaign?
- What are the problems or challenges that might arise during this campaign within the Jewish community?

Does it build Jewish Community Action (and the Racial Justice Working Group as a part of JCA) as an organization?

- Explain how this campaign would help to build JCA/RJWG as an organization, for example:
 - bring in new members
 - gain good media coverage
 - build more and deeper alliances
- Explain why this is an especially important issue for the RJWG to work on at this point in time.
- Why is this a good use of our "political capital"?
- Give examples of specific activities in which RJWG members and other JCA members could engage.
- What might the involvement be for people who are interested in being active on a regular basis?
- For people interested in a one-time event?
- What are the problems or challenges that might arise during this campaign within our membership?

Do we have the resources as an organization to be involved in this issue?

- Describe the intended level of RJWG involvement.
- Is there interest by RJWG members to be actively involved in this campaign and to take leadership for JCA on this issue?
- Will members commit to this level of involvement today?
- Does JCA staff have time to devote to this issue?
- Does JCA have the necessary financial resources to devote to this issue?