



ANTI-RACISM FOR ACTIVISTS

– Methods for working with

inclusion in RFSL's branches



ANTI-RACISM FOR ACTIVISTS

– Methods for working with

inclusion in RFSL's branches

TEXT Kristina Ullgren and Carlos Díaz

PROJECT LEADER Kristina Ullgren

TRANSLATION Sharon Wagiella

GRAPHICS Graphera

ISBN 978-91-519-5742-5

RFSL 2020

www.rfsl.se

This publication has been produced with the support of the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society(MUCF), but the contents only reflect the view of its authors. MUCF cannot be held responsible for the information in the publication or how it may be used. RFSL is solely responsible for the contents.

Preface

HELLO RFSL ACTIVIST!

According to our statutes, RFSL has been an anti-racist organisation since 2018¹. In the same year, an anti-racist policy was developed for the entire organization. This requires everybody at RFSL to work actively with inclusion and anti-racist perspectives.

This material presupposes that you already have some knowledge about anti-racism and contains tips and tools for practical anti-racism work in your branch.

The branches form one of the most important actors in the work with recruitment and care for members. The branches are largely responsible for creating an including organisation where many different experiences and competencies are put to use. The branches are responsible for:

- Counteracting internal discrimination.
- Reaching out to different target groups as potential members.
- Working with increasing competency and have an on-going discussion about power structures from an anti racist perspective.
- Achieving a broad representation in the board, nominating committee, member groups and members when it comes to ethnicity, origin, culture, skin colour and other power structures.

(From: Goal and orientation for the anti-racism work 2018–2020 established by RFSL's congress May 11-13 2018)

¹ The policy is called "Goal and orientation for the anti-racism work 2018-2020", established by RFSL's congress 11-13 May 2018. The policy is also being updated by the federal board for 2021. Make sure that your branch has read the policy at the intranet for branches.

This material consists of four parts. The first part “**Where do I begin?**” is a self-report questionnaire to guide you in how to start the anti-racism work. In the second part, we go through “**Common mistakes**”. In the third part, we provide **tips about methods, and activities** that you can use, and in the fourth part, we list available trainings, **methodological materials** and literature for a more in-depth study.

This material was produced within RFSL’s project “**Projekt Q – Överlevnadsstrategier och verktyg för att hantera rasism i vardagen 2019-2020**”, funded by MUCF. The contents of this material have been inspired by workshops performed during 2020 with RFSL’s branches and separatist anti-racist member network (ARMN). Among other things, the project has also produced a podcast series called **Q-Studio** with study materials **www.rfsl.se/verksamhet/q-studion-en-podd-av-rfsl**

Table of contents

PREFACE	4
Where should I start?	7
Common mistakes	11
Methods for inclusion	13
Tips on methodological material and literature	21



Where do I begin?

Starting to work with anti-racism may sound difficult, but it's all about preparation. Here are some questions and encouragement to get the thoughts going!

The questions are formulated based on self-reporting so that you can get a clearer image of your preconditions. Are there many noes in your answers? How can you change that? Then start by addressing one issue or area at a time.

1. I have taken time to do anti-racism work.

Yes No

2. We have formed an anti-racism workgroup.

Yes No

3. Anti-racism issues are anchored in the branch/ organisation.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, very well anchored

0 1 2 3 4 5

4. We have a clear goal of what we want to achieve in working with anti-racism in our branch.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, we have a clearly formulated goal

0 1 2 3 4 5

5. Is the goal realistic?

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, very

0 1 2 3 4 5

6. Have you decided in which area to start?

Yes No

If yes, which?

7. There may be many areas in which to work. Which will you prioritise? (Maximum of 5, prioritise 1-5)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal and external activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Competency building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting places |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors | <input type="checkbox"/> Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> External actors | <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the branch's activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Premises | <input type="checkbox"/> Reception |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication (social media, website, info etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Pedagogy/ education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Projects and campaigns | <input type="checkbox"/> Methods |
-

8. Are there people with anti-racism competency in the branch who can help you to critically examine the work?

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, many competent people

0 1 2 3 4 5

9. Have you informed everybody about your anti-racism work?

Yes No

If yes, how?

.....

.....

Take a moment to look at your answers! Are there many noes among your answers? Is your score low? Why is that? How can you change that? Then start with one issue or area at a time.



Common mistakes

We have listed some common mistakes and suggest what you can do to avoid them.

Checked and done?

Racism and power structures aren't boxes that can be checked. Therefore, be critical of check-lists. They might inspire and give examples, but there's a risk that we contend ourselves by checking a box. The best tools are the ones we ourselves produce and work with on an ongoing basis. The work is never finished. Make an inventory of what you do and pass it on so that others can build on it.

Fear of criticism

Remember to always scrutinise and re-think your work. A relaxed approach is a precondition for getting started. Be open to criticism. You can't know everything or do everything right from the beginning!

Speed up

Be process-oriented, development work takes time – let it.

Withholding information

Make sure to provide information about your anti-racism work! The expectations within the organisation and from external sources may motivate everybody to make a real difference!

The lone wolf

Don't work alone with anti-racism. The work is then tied to the person working with it and easily gets lost when they quit. Form a workgroup with others from the branch!

Focus on ethnicity and culture

Beware of excessive focus on ethnicity and avoid explanatory models that focus on "cultural differences".

Denial and shame

If you are not subjected to racism and have white privileges – beware of denials of racism and white guilt or norm-critical shame, as they might hinder or delay work.

The White Saviour

If you are not subjected to racism and have white privileges – Offer support to separatist groups, but be careful not to take over.



Methods for inclusion

Working with anti-racism is a process. Start simple, for example by informing others that you have started work. Begin by looking at your own branch, for example the board, and set your sights on a reasonable goal. Remember that someone else will develop and build on your work after you.

Here's a self-reporting questionnaire and tips that can help you in these processes.

Representation and nomination

- 1. We examine the processes where the organisation chooses representatives for participation in the national office's activities (for example, the congress and national conferences).**

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, always

0 1 2 3 4 5

- 2. When the nominating committee calls a meeting for its work, they provide information about the branch's anti-racism work and possible needs to broaden representation.**

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, every time

0 1 2 3 4 5

- 3. The nominating committee is offered the training in anti-racism that the national office provides².**

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, every time

0 1 2 3 4 5

² See part 4 "Tips on methodological materials and literature". Also contact avdelningsstod@rfsi.se for more information.

4. We have an ongoing discussion about representation, about the composition within the branch and analyse who our visitors, and those we come in contact with, are.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, often

0 1 2 3 4 5

5. I examine my own organisational network and think about how I can develop it.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, often

0 1 2 3 4 5

6. We encourage activists in our branch to pay attention to anti-racism issues.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, often

0 1 2 3 4 5

7. When we organise or partake in seminars or panel discussions (for example, during Pride) we reflect on the composition of speakers and panellists.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, always

0 1 2 3 4 5

Tips!

When you are invited to participate in a panel, take the opportunity to ask about the composition of the panel.

8. We think about having a broad representation when we staff tables at a fair and exhibition tents.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, every time

0 1 2 3 4 5

Remember class!

When you plan activities that should be inclusive to all, you need to consider class and economic preconditions. Racism leads to lower living-standards and also affects people's economy.

Materials

1. Examine your educational materials – is there an awareness of racism and an anti-racism perspective?

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, in all materials

0 1 2 3 4 5

Inclusive communication

1. We make conscious choices when we choose images and decide on language use in our communication.

Scale 0-5 0 – No, not at all 5 – Yes, always

0 1 2 3 4 5

Tips!

Choose a language that addresses everybody at the website, in printed materials, on social media etc. Examine your communication and update it.

Take a moment to look at your answers! Are there many noes in your answers? Is your score low? Why is that? How can you change that? Then start with one issue or area at a time.

Inclusive and equal treatment

When it comes to equal treatment, it can be useful to think about the subject as consisting of two parts: reception or equal treatment that promotes inclusion and equal treatment that helps you handle situations where racism is present and occur.

Equal treatment that promotes inclusion

In the same way as language use is an important tool in the work for equality and LGBTQI issues, language use is important in an anti-racism strategy.

Reflect on your language use and how you speak in your RFSL context. Words and expressions to watch out for are those that creates an “us” and “them” and stereotypes. For example “people of another ethnicity” or too much “them”. It might be other markers of difference and unnecessary categorisations based on skin-color or ethnicity, nationality or similar expressions used to differentiate when they don’t serve an important purpose.

A clear example of when language use doesn’t fit in with the anti-racism work is when a well-meaning person uses phrases such as “racism is about fear of what is different and unknown”. Then, the person has established that racialized people are different and unknown.

- Critically examine your language use
- Beware of exotification or “positive prejudice”, as it is also called.
- When there is a problem or conflict and racialized people are a part of the conflict, beware not to focus too much on ethnicity. The problem might be culture-related, have some connection to culture, or not have anything to do with ethnicity.
- Get knowledgeable about anti-racism and use the knowledge.
- Spread the information that RFSL is an anti-racist organisation.

Equal treatment – when racism occurs

When racism occurs and you are to intervene, be clear about what you want to focus on: Is it on the individual, i.e. who is the racist? Do you want to focus on what is a racist behaviour, or do you want to focus on racism as a dominating thought structure?

- If you are a trustee or manage a workgroup or activity: Show clarity in your leadership, act consistently when racism occurs.
- Dare to use the word racism. Some don't dare to and instead use words like xenophobia. It can be interpreted as if you are reducing power structures to individual occurrences.
- Racialized people can encounter racism from other racialized people. There are no specific solutions that work in all situations. Don't relativize racism.
- Just as there is internalised homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, there's internalised racism. It's important that a person with internalised racism gets the opportunity to process it, but not at the expense of others. Everybody should feel safe in RFSL's meeting places.

Activities

Maybe your branch already has activities that only need a little tweaking to make them more inclusive? If you are organising a quiz about LGBTQI rights, for example, you may add questions connected to anti-racism.

Tips about other activities:

- **Book club** with LGBTQI literature with an anti-racism perspective. Or why not a pod club where the members discuss an episode of Q-Studion? Methodological materials may be found here: www.rfsl.se/verksamhet/q-studion-en-podd-av-rfsl
- **Look at a movie** with racialized LGBTQI characters and discuss it afterwards.
- **Panel discussion** about anti-racism. Think about how you moderate discussions, agree on who should participate in the discussion.

- **Know important international dates** (Tips: Order the “Mångkulturella almanackan” <https://mkcentrum.se/om-mkc/mangkulturella-almanackan/>.)
- **Cooperate** with other anti-racism organisations and organisations for ethnic minorities.
- RFSL can support and help organise anti-racism **demonstrations**.
- **Invite** people to talk about racism.
- Start, acknowledge and/or support **internal organising**, for example separatist events or smaller workgroups.



Tips of methodological material and literature

We have made a list of methodological materials, trainings and literature for those who want more tips of methods. This list was made during autumn 2020 and may soon be outdated. Therefore, make sure to always look for updated information online.

Trainings and methodological material on anti-racism within RFSL:

Antirasism för aktivister – Webinar from RFSL's anti-racism project 2020 (with English subtitles) <https://youtu.be/S5EF6SIXp04>

Antirasistisk hivprevention – from RFSU Göteborg (in cooperation with RFSL Göteborg) <https://www.rfsu.se/vad-vi-gor/nara-dig/lokalforeningar/rfsu-goteborg/om-rfsu-goteborg/vara-projekt/anti-rasistisk-hivprevention/>

“Dejting & rasism” in *Sexperternas Dejtingbok* from RFSL Stockholm (pages 210 – 214) from 2019 <https://sexperterna.org/dejtingboken/>

Q-Studio – a podcast from RFSL with study circle material from 2019-2020 <https://www.rfsl.se/verksamhet/q-studion-en-podd-av-rfsl/>

Tips!

Start a study circle with Q-Studio's material in your branch – perfect activity for you who want to get more participants into an anti-racist working group! Can also be done digitally!

Download the study circle materials as a pdf:

Season 1 https://www.rfsl.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/RFSL_Q-studion_sasong-1_digitalt_enstaka-sidor_final-1.pdf

Season 2 https://www.rfsl.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/RFSL_Q-studion_sasong-2_digitalt_enstaka-sidor_final-1.pdf

Use Q-Studio's videos as a basis for discussion and for your social media – Available via RFSL's youtube channel

- *Tre saker queers berättar om asylprocessen* – Q-Studio 2019 <https://youtu.be/I5-5XigKkAM>
- *Shit vita säger till rasifierade queers* – Q-Studio 2019 <https://youtu.be/LSo4YI3ePSY>
- *Stonewall – Från ett uppror till en rörelse* – Q-Studio 2019 <https://youtu.be/g0CuAjZfz0w>

Kort om rasismen i Sverige – material from RFSL Ungdom

<https://rfslungdom.se/produkt/kort-om-rasism-i-sverige/>

Also keep an eye out for Rainbow academy – an internal education portal within RFSL that will be launched in 2021!

Other methodological material on anti-racism

Vit-lcke-Vit–LSU’s methodological material from 2019

<https://vitickevit.lsu.se/>

<https://vitickevit.lsu.se/snacka-antirasism-samtalskort/>

VIT SVART eller BRUN – Handbok om aktiva åtgärder kopplat till hudfärg – Vidga normen – the county administrative board of Stockholm’s methodological material 2019 <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/download/18.5e83a30f169d90292df17384/1556108150165/Rapport%202019-08%20Vit%20svart%20eller%20brun%20Handbok%20aktiva%20åtgärder%20hudfärg.pdf>

Prata rasism – training, methodological material and podcast series from Forum för levande historia 2019-2020

<https://www.levandehistoria.se/fakta-fordjupning/rasism-0>

Antirasistiska blickar – an exhibition about the power and meaning of images <https://www.antirasistiskablickar.se/?fbclid=IwAR3gd5y0-lqKn4q1DcVuEm88zR-2h7z-z4BHAyx6siR7jYq7GkMZtCIBsNk>

Rekrytera rätt – methodological material from Interfem

<https://www.interfem.se/rekrytera-ratt-2/>

BlatteQueers i Film – project by Interfem from 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/BlatteQueers-i-film-1530729303808265/?fref=ts>

Mångkulturella almanackan – from Mångkulturellt centrum 2020

<https://mkcentrum.se/om-mkc/mangkulturella-almanackan/>

Methodological material from Mångkulturellt centrum

<https://mkcentrum.se/oka-din-kunskap-om-rasism/>

Literature:

Afrofobirapporten from Mångkulturellt centrum from 2014

<https://mkcentrum.se/samma-land-men-olika-villkor/>

Vita privilegier under lupp, article by Annika Hamrud for Expo 2020

<https://expo.se/2020/09/vita-privilegier-under-lupp>

Whitness Swedish Style, article by Ylva Habel 2008 https://feministisktinitiativ.se/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Whitness_Swedish_Style_Ylva_Habel-libre.pdf

Thank you and good luck to your work on anti-racism!



HELLO RFSL ACTIVIST!

According to our statutes, RFSL has been an anti-racist organisation since 2018. In the same year, an anti-racist policy was developed for the entire organization . This requires everybody at RFSL to work actively with inclusion and anti-racist perspectives.

This material presupposes that you already have some knowledge about anti-racism and contains tips and tools for practical anti-racism work in your branch.

