

# Ideas for lowering racial barriers in our Meetings

## Moving the Meeting forward

1. Recruit a small group within the Meeting that is willing to focus on efforts to move the Meeting to becoming more multicultural. See <https://tinyurl.com/Changegroup>.
2. Conduct regular antiracism audits of Meeting.
3. Conduct a Listening Project within the Meeting on diversity and outreach.
4. Seek feedback from people of color and take it seriously.
5. Designate a person or small committee to listen to anyone who has experienced behavior in the Meeting that makes them feel disrespected and less than a full member of the community.

## Outreach

1. Let people know we exist in ways other than “word of mouth” such as print, broadcast and online media.
2. Make sure information about the Meeting shows up in communities of color and in media read by those communities.
3. Become actively involved in local community social justice work that is led by people of color.
4. Develop joint youth program with a multicultural or mostly people of color congregation.

## Educating Friends

1. Conduct workshops on...
  - a. how racism affects both whites and people of color
  - b. understanding microaggressions
  - c. white fragility
2. Learn how congregations composed mostly of people of color support their membership and consider using similar approaches in the Meeting.
3. Learn from denominations that have been trying to be more multicultural (e.g. UU, UCC and Episcopal Church).
4. Learn from local congregations that have been successfully multicultural (less than 80% of any one race) for many years.
5. Look for resources in the “Black Studies” department of the local university.
6. Create a fund so people who make their living helping communities address diversity issues can be paid for helping the Meeting.
7. Conduct several sessions of age-appropriate antiracism training for the First Day School and then ask children to report what they learned at the Rise of Meeting.
8. Create a fund to support members or attenders in attending training programs on racial issues.

### **Individual actions**

1. Encourage white Friends to get to know individual people of color.
2. Encourage Friends not to let their fears of interracial missteps--no matter how well founded those fears are--keep them from engaging with people of other ethnicities.

### **Meeting the needs of everyone**

1. Conduct First Day programs that assume the presence of children of color and work to meet the needs of all children.
2. Increase emphasis on pastoral care.
3. Work with the BYM camping program.
4. Provide meals rather than snacks at Meeting events.
5. Reduce costs of attending Meeting events either through Meeting subsidies or scholarships or through reliance on free-will offerings.
6. Insure that photos and graphic art used in Meeting activities include people of color.
7. Use bilingual Spanish/English signage in the meeting house.
8. Advertise that a half hour before the scheduled start of Meeting for Worship early arrivals can either enter the Meeting Room for worship or take part in a welcoming "coffee hour."

### **Specific support for Friends of color**

1. Be alert to specific barriers individual people of color may encounter in becoming involved and work to overcome them.
2. Make sure any people of color involved in Meeting activities are heard when they speak.
3. Help individual people of color who show up several times to become more involved in Meeting work.
4. Let Friends know about the activities of the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent in the Meeting newsletter or email list.
5. Have one or more white Friends known by Friends of color who are willing to speak up on their behalf, if requested, concerning race-related problems in the Meeting.