

THE 2021 CEO BLUEPRINT FOR RACIAL EQUITY: COMPANY PROFILE

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WITHIN THE COMPANY

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

WITHIN SOCIETY



Newark, New Jersey Community Involvement

Prudential Financial is steadfastly committed to removing barriers to social and economic mobility and closing the financial divide at its headquarter's city of Newark, New Jersey – a commitment that deepened as Covid-19 exacerbated inequities for Black and Latinx communities in Newark. In 2020, Prudential released its [Commitments to Advance Racial Equity](#), a set of nine pledges across three pillars – people, products, and society – to eliminate the structural barriers that for generations have prevented communities of color from attaining financial security. These commitments include ramping up internal inclusion and diversity efforts to ensure equal opportunity and provide greater transparency to employees. Simultaneously, Prudential is tailoring its products and services to improve racial equity outcomes outside the company, as well as offering grants and capital investments to Black-supporting nonprofits and small businesses working to tackle structural barriers.

One particular area that stands out in Prudential's work is its role within the Newark community. The company's approach to community engagement is driven by its vision for a thriving community: providing solutions for the financially challenged and, as a result, stimulating economic development and prosperity. Prudential is intentionally thinking about how to create economic impact and build an inclusive community with the purpose of bringing systemic solutions to systemic issues.

How Prudential is taking action

Becoming an anchor institution. As an anchor institution, Prudential has made a strong commitment to maintain its headquarters in Newark. It has invested more than one billion dollars in the last decade alone to support public education, workforce development, public safety, small businesses, the arts, and community development. Prudential is part of the Newark Anchor Collaborative, which comprises 12 local anchor education, medical, and cultural organizations. Together, these companies are investing resources to hire more Newark locals, produce more locally, and incentivize employees to live in Newark. Prudential is also focused on building a stronger small business ecosystem through increased capital, technical assistance, and inclusive procurement contracts. Every year, employees provide pro-bono consulting support to social enterprises and social impact organizations to stimulate the small business ecosystem. The company also has plans to launch an advisory council of employee stakeholders in Newark to maintain momentum and help other institutions to think of themselves as anchor institutions.

Establishing a foundation of trust. Years of working in Newark has highlighted the importance of building trust, especially in communities that have experienced decades of oppression and disinvestment. Prudential has engaged various approaches to incorporating community voice in its initiatives, including taking a fully collaborative approach and co-creating solutions with community stakeholders. Even when leveraging solutions originating in other communities, Prudential invests in extensive community engagement to ensure that initiatives have community support and alignment in addressing the most pressing social challenges. By engaging deeply in the community over time, Prudential has been able to build trust and gain knowledge of how to work effectively, making recommendations for state, national, and even international programs based on what it has learned locally.

Focusing on the root problems. In addition to its direct investments in the community, Prudential is intentional about leading with purpose and taking a vocal position on social justice issues. For example, Prudential has spoken out recently on topics like the death of George Floyd, the January 2021 violence at the Capitol, anti-Asian violence, and voter suppression. Prudential aspires to be a fully inclusive company for its employees, customers, and the communities in which it operates and knows that it has a role to play in helping to close the financial divide by bringing all of its corporate resources to bear.

As Sarah Keh, vice president of inclusive solutions, shares, “Companies can drive greater inclusive economic growth when they serve as anchor institutions and invest deeply in the communities in which they are based, similar to our work in Newark.” Prudential’s approach to Newark serves as a blueprint for other companies to engage in cross-sector and cross-community partnerships to achieve a vision of racial equity. Over time, as companies deepen their understanding of the communities in which they operate, in-depth and long-term commitments can result in immense impact.

PolicyLink

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