

Embedding an equity lens in education evaluations



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Enter in the Chat:

Option 1: What does using an equity lens in evaluation mean to you?


Option 2: What are you most excited about learning today?



Outcomes for today's session



**Learn about tools you
can apply to five
dimensions of equity
approach to research**



**Feel empowered to
make meaningful,
yet small,
incremental
changes for impact**



What Is Required in Transformation of Each Element

RESEARCH CONTENT

Focus on systems
Incorporation of context

RESEARCHER

Values & beliefs
Knowledge

Acknowledgement of
social identity and bias

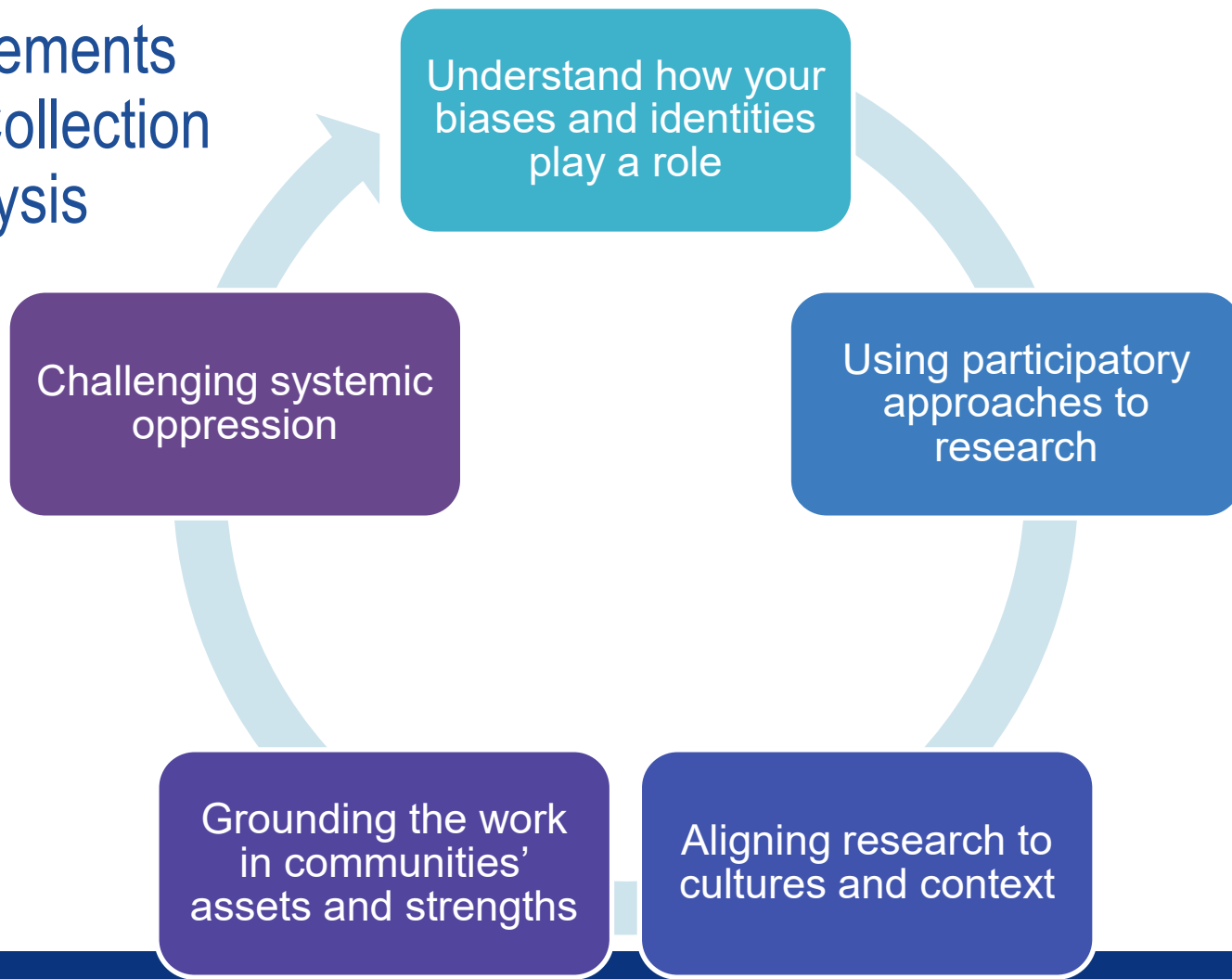


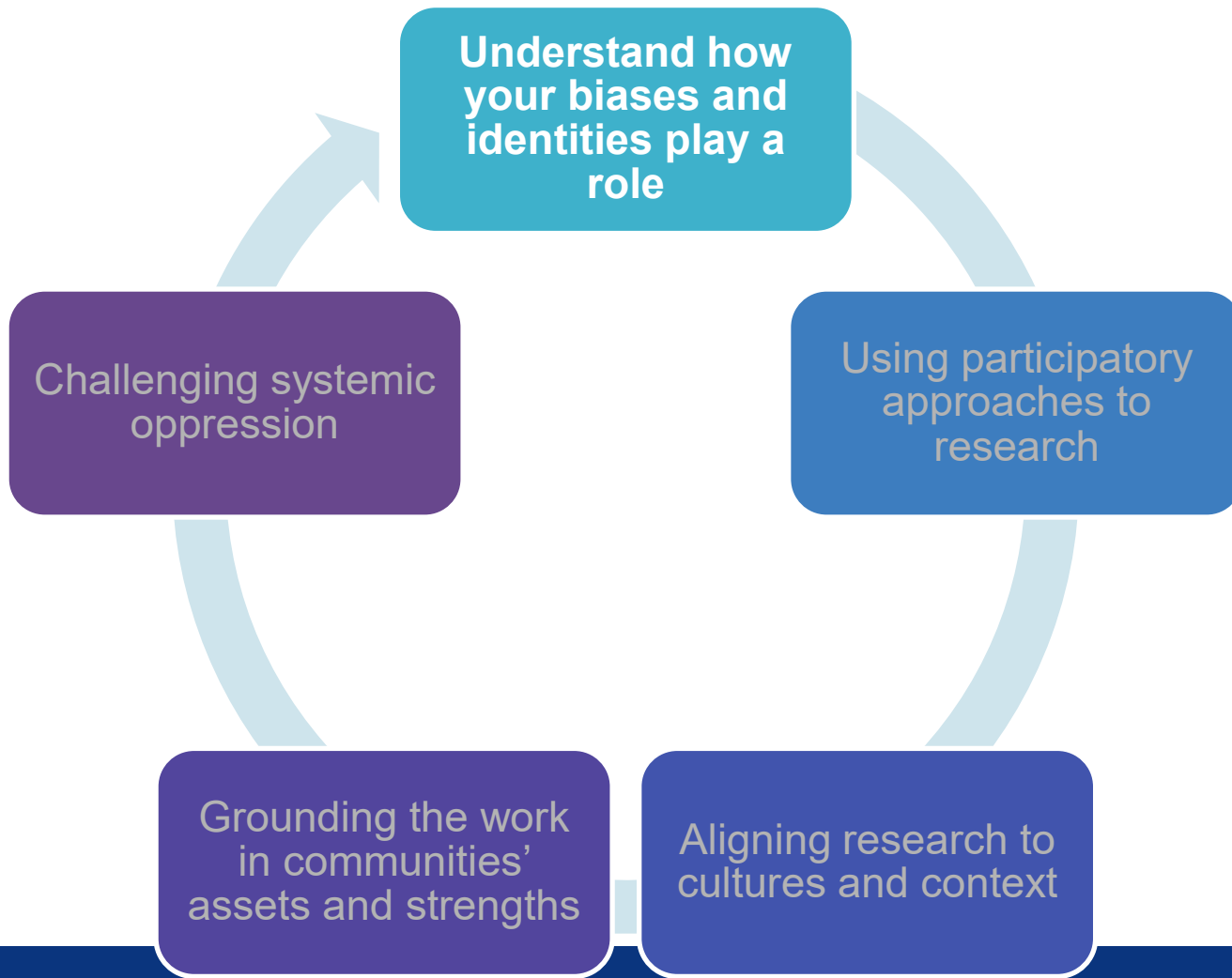
RESEARCH PROCESS

Whose perspectives and
worldviews are centered in
the work

Rethinking metrics, data
collection and analysis
approaches

Equity Elements in Data Collection and Analysis





There are different aspects of power in social identities

Dominant group: A group with systematic power, privileges and social status within a society. Does not imply "majority."

- Are seen as the "default" or characterized as "normal"
- Define reality or standard
- Have inherent sense of belonging
- Are unaware of group membership advantages

Non-dominant groups: Societal groups that have been traditionally/historically oppressed, excluded, or disadvantaged in society. Does not imply "minority."

- Are seen as "different" or deviant from the "norm"
- Are expected to assimilate into reality as defined by dominant groups
- Are seen as "outsiders" or "imposters"
- Are aware of group membership advantages

Tatum, B. D. (2000). The complexity of identity: "Who am I?." In Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W. J., Hackman, H. W., Zuniga, X., Peters, M. L. (Eds.), Readings for diversity and social justice: An anthology on racism, sexism, antisemitism, heterosexism, classism and ableism (pp. 9-14). New York: Routledge.



- Mitigate bias in your research
- Improve validity of your research
- Ensures findings are used, translated
- **Center the perspectives that are most impacted by the work so that results benefits them**

Community Engagement as a Continuum

Outreach (inform)



- Some community involvement
- Provides community with information

Consult



- More community involvement
- Gets information or feedback from community

Collaborate



- Community involvement
- Forms partnerships with community on each aspect from development to solution

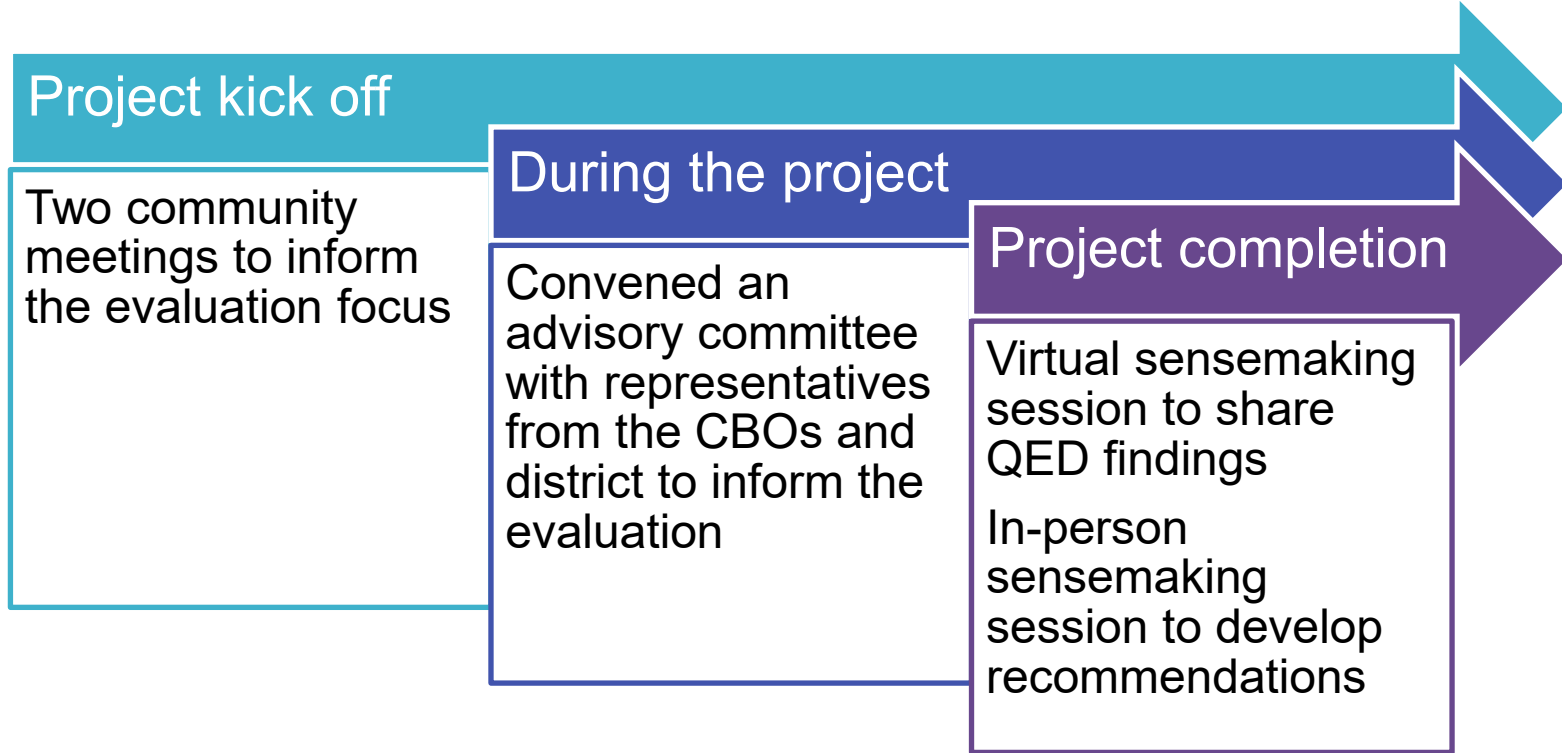
Shared Leadership



- Strong bidirectional relationship
- Final decision making is at community level

Power in Participation

Example: Hartford Community Schools Evaluation



Self Reflection

Set intentions and actions:

What do you hope to do differently? What are some strategies you could use to shift power to communities?

Take 2 minutes to write down some thoughts.



Learn about the Culture and Context of the community

How?

- Assemble a diverse evaluation team
- Seek help from researchers or CBOs who have done historical work in this community
- Cultural bridge
- Background research



Example 1:
Hartford
Community
Schools
Evaluation
background
interviews

What
we
asked

Who is involved
with Community
School
Implementation?

How does
implementation
happen?

What are
challenges with
implementation?

What
we
should
have
asked

What policies at the
city or district level
help or hinder
provision of
equitable education
to all Hartford
students?

Why were
Community
Schools created?
Under what political
and social
conditions?

Align to data collection approach cultures and contexts

Data Collection and Analysis

- Validated instruments
- Frameworks or theories
- Ensure data collection approaches are accessible and preferences are incorporated

Example 2: Inclusive survey design for VRI study



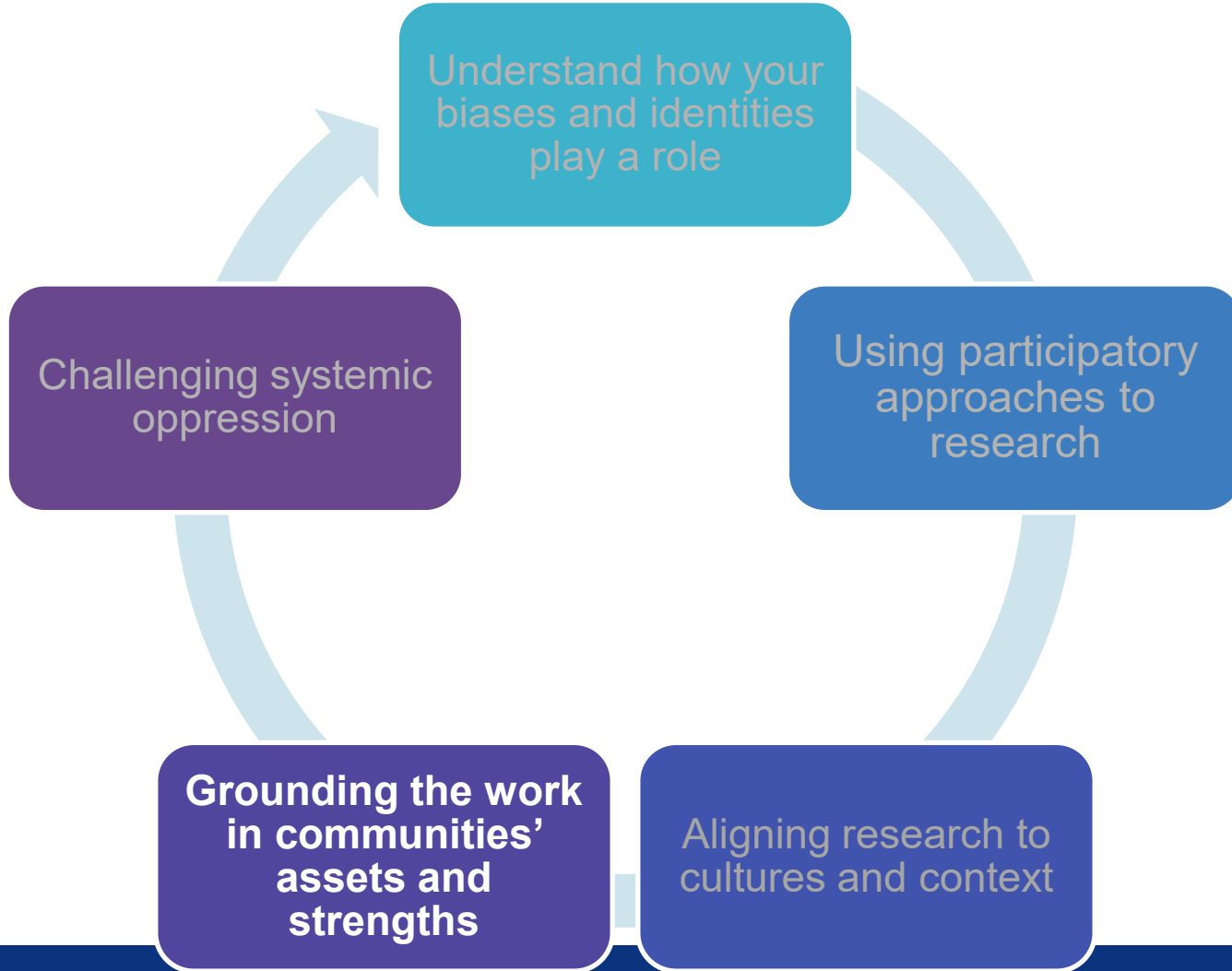
- Examine the potential scaling of Video Remote Interpretation
- Gather feedback from Deaf or hard of hearing students across the state through surveys
- Best practice guidance on surveys was not aligned to recommendations from Advisory group

Example 2: Inclusive survey design for VRI study

- 1 Devised survey questions and received feedback from advisory group
- 2 Found interpreter: Used Certified Deaf Interpreter
- 3 Filmed videos in American Sign Language
- 4 Survey revisions based on interpreter feedback

Example 2: Inclusive survey design for VRI study





Asset-based evaluation approaches

Focus on community assets, aspirations, and community cultural wealth: Knowledge, skills, abilities and connections to survive and resist oppression.

(Yosso, 2005)





Deficit or Damage Centered Research



Research that operates, even benevolently, from a theory of change that establishes harm or injury in order to achieve reparation. (Tuck, 2009)

How to frame research questions

Caveat!!! Do not to use the bootstrap narrative either! Need to call out systems that impact communities.

Deficit-based questions

Why do so few students of color pursue STEM majors?

Why do so few continue on to graduate degree programs in STEM?

Asset-based questions

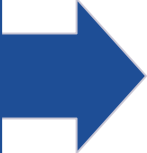
What stimulates and sustains students' interest in attaining degrees in STEM fields?

What are common aspects of students' pathways from high school completion through doctoral degree attainment in STEM fields?

Harper, S. R. (2010). An anti-deficit achievement framework for research on students of color in STEM. New Directions for Institutional Research, 2010(148), 63-74.

Students with Disabilities: State Longitudinal Study

What are the malleable high school and postsecondary school factors related to postsecondary school success (perseverance and completion) for postsecondary students with disabilities overall and at 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges/universities, and career /technical education (CTE) schools?



Research questions with an asset frame:

- What are common factors that facilitated students with disabilities' successful navigation from high school to post-secondary completion?
- What resources proved most effective in helping students with disabilities persevere and complete their post-secondary degree?
- What resources do they perceive as most useful for their needs?

Your Turn!

What are the academic experiences of college SWD (e.g., majors, grade point average; enrollment in remedial courses; recognitions for academic excellence, etc.)



What are the academic experiences that college SWD found most meaningful?

Start from communities' strengths and assets, not deficits

Data collection

Frame **questions** to focus on assets of the participants

Choose **asset-focused indicators** or metrics that **emphasize community strengths**

Data Analysis

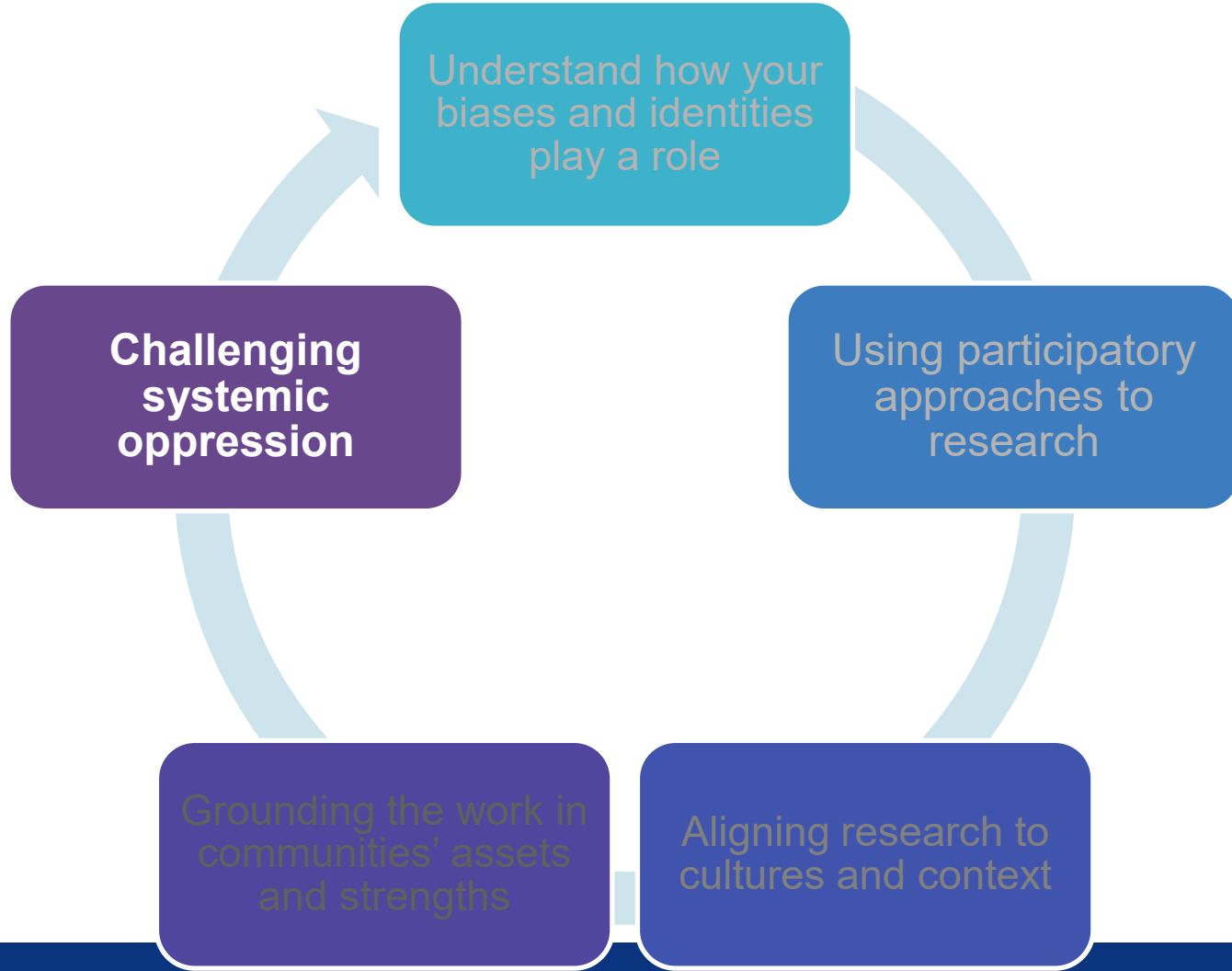
Use **theories or frameworks** that do not pathologize communities of color but gives them agency and highlights their strengths.

Shift analysis to focus on participants who are exemplary, instead of only focusing on deficits.

Example: College Completion Time

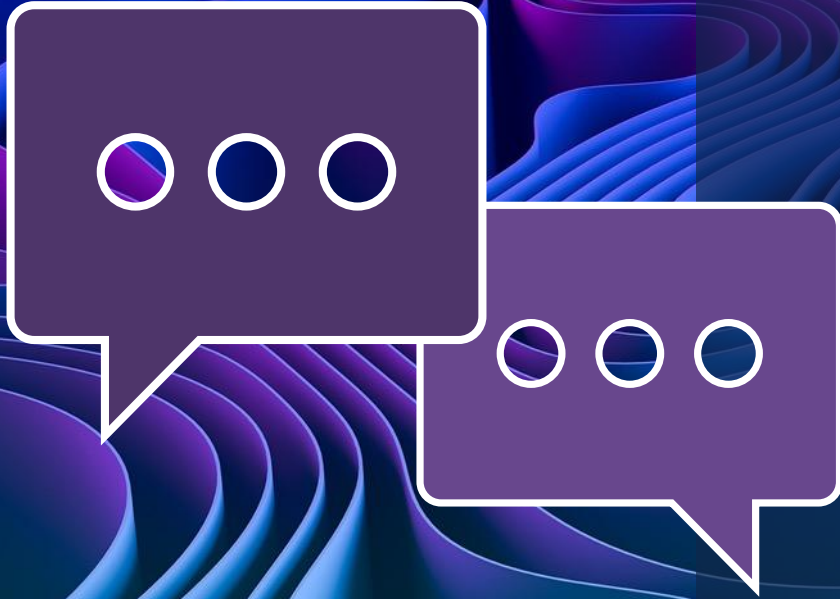
Traditional measures
of college completion
time: **150% of
expected time**

How can we rethink
this metric to
recognize the
realities of rural
communities?



Challenging systemic oppression: Research Focus

Shifting the focus of the research on
**systemic factors to understand
individual outcomes**



Research Questions With a Systems Focus: Who Is Expected to Change?

Do LGBTQ+ students feel better about school?



Has the school environment become less hostile
to LGBTQ+ students?

<https://weallcount.com/2020/05/22/framing-research-questions-that-reflect-who-is-expected-to-change/>

Collecting data on systemic barriers

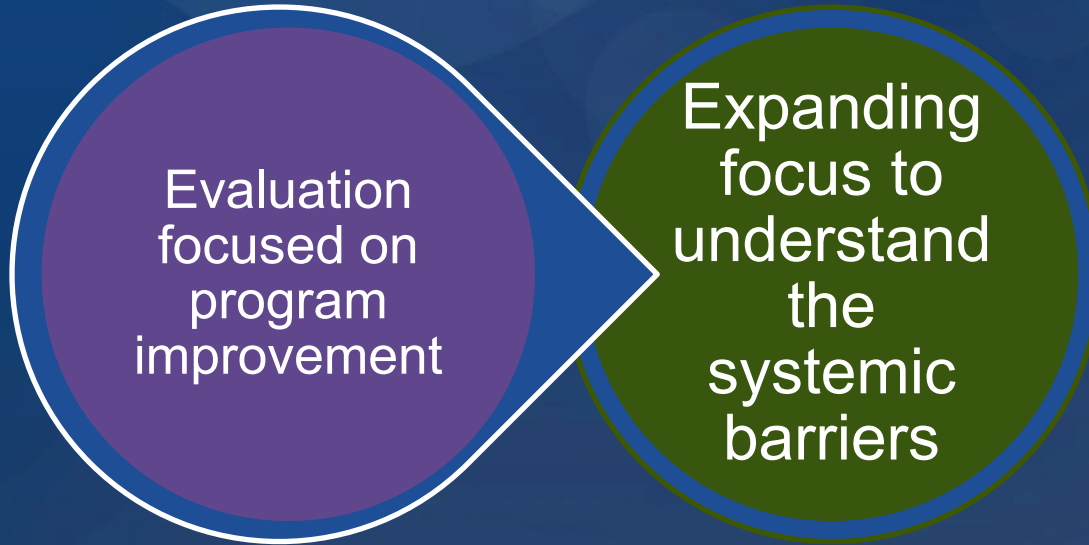
Nonprofit addressing barriers
by providing services to
support persistence for:

Racial and
ethnic groups
historically
marginalized
from accessing
equitable
education

Students who
are first
in their family to
attend college

Students from
families with
lower incomes

Collecting data on systemic barriers: Survey Questions



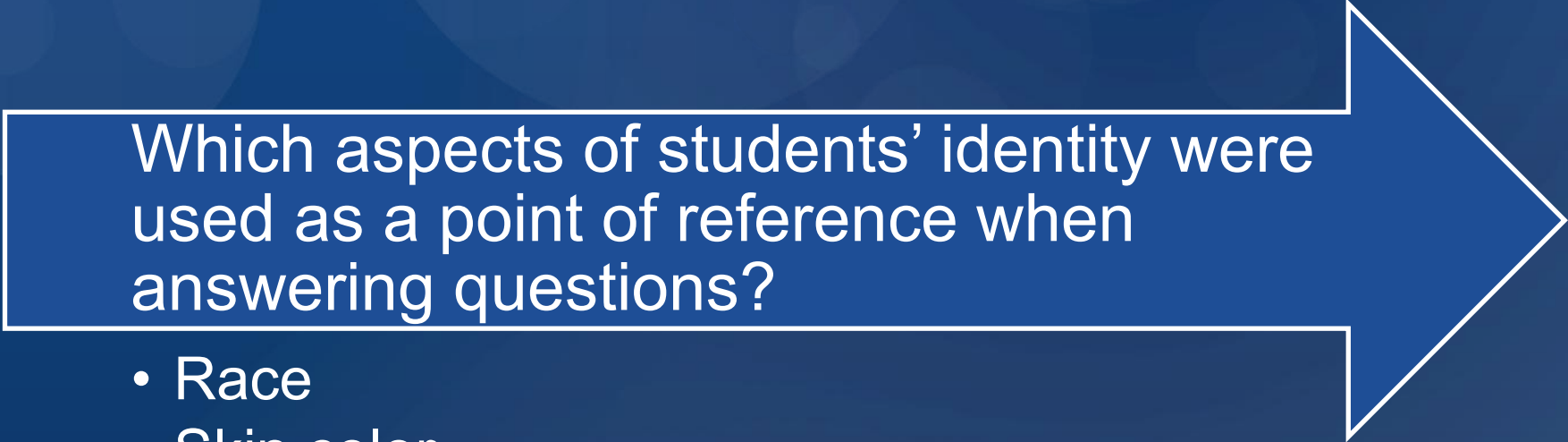
Collecting data on systemic barriers: Survey Analysis

The diagram consists of two large, blue, arrow-shaped boxes pointing in opposite directions. The left arrow points left and contains text about typical analysis. The right arrow points right and contains text about equity-informed analysis. The background is a dark blue gradient with faint circular patterns.

Typical analysis:
Disaggregating data
by dimensions of
identity

Equity-informed
analysis: Not making
assumptions,
students select
reasons

Collecting data on systemic barriers: Survey Analysis



Which aspects of students' identity were used as a point of reference when answering questions?

- Race
- Skin color
- Ethnicity
- First-generation student status
- Gender

Equity Elements in Data Collection and Analysis



Understand how your biases and identities play a role

Using participatory approaches to research

Aligning research to cultures and context

Grounding the work in communities' assets and strengths

Challenging systemic oppression

Questions?

