

**State of Vermont**  
**Agency of Administration**  
**Office of the Secretary**  
Pavilion Office Building  
109 State Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05609-0201  
[www.aoa.vermont.gov](http://www.aoa.vermont.gov)

[phone] 802-828-3322  
[fax] 802-828-2428

*Kristin L. Clouser, Secretary*

Monday August 08, 2022

**SENT VIA E-MAIL AND POST**

Josh Arneson  
Richmond Town Manager  
P.O. Box 285  
Richmond, VT 05477

Dear Josh,

As we transition from such an eventful and uncertain last few years, the demand for meaningful, lasting change is stronger than ever. To meet that demand and continue moving Vermont forward, the state is launching a new initiative called **IDEAL Vermont** and we are writing to invite Richmond to consider its readiness to join the inaugural cohort.

IDEAL Vermont stands for something—and so do its members. “IDEAL” stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, and Leadership. This initiative creates a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible actions. It fosters coordination to multiply, amplify, and build synergy across the state. Richmond has been identified for this opportunity because it has demonstrated a willingness to confront and overcome inequity, including racial/ethnic inequity, through actions such as the adoption of the Declaration of Inclusion.

As you know, the movement for justice is sweeping the globe—natural disasters, justice reform, re-envisioning workplaces, student success in schools, placemaking and community-building... Inequity intensifies all these challenges and creates heightened urgency for collaboration and unified action. Clearly there is no time to lose. Local, state, federal, and community leaders across Vermont have worked hard in recent years to increase awareness and enact policy to make Vermont more equitable for all. In some parts of the state, these efforts have been met with resistance and even violence. In others, leaders and residents have stepped up in recognition of the myriad benefits and moral imperatives of pursuing more equity. This is why we are going all-in on IDEAL Vermont—it holds the promise of unique collaboration across municipalities and counties to harness the transformative energy that is already building throughout our state.

Part of this transformative energy comes is driven by our partners, who have committed to embedding equity and inclusion in their internal policies and their external programs. Those key partners include


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Vermont League of Cities & Towns, Vermont Community Foundation, Abundant Sun, and Vermont Council on Rural Development.

The official launch date for IDEAL Vermont is October 26<sup>th</sup>. On this day, we will hold a convening to bring the member municipalities together. At this convening, we will review the initiative's objectives, identify resources, and develop concrete action steps for municipalities to take. After that, municipalities will engage in regular in-person convenings throughout the year to share progress, troubleshoot issues, learn more about equity work, and offer mutual support. In addition to the regular convenings, municipalities will have access to a resource library to guide their work and technical assistance from relevant state agencies. Member municipalities will also be eligible to apply for small grants of up to \$10,000 each year.

We are hopeful that Richmond will join in this impactful and necessary work. **Please reply to this invitation no later than Monday September 12<sup>th</sup>.** I have enclosed a factsheet with more information about the initiative and will make myself available to discuss the program with you or other Richmond leaders as you consider this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "XR Davis". The letters are stylized and cursive.

Xusana R. Davis, Esq.  
Executive Director Racial Equity  
State of Vermont  
Xusana.Davis@vermont.gov

IDEAL VERMONT

INCLUSION DIVERSITY EQUITY ACTION LEADERSHIP

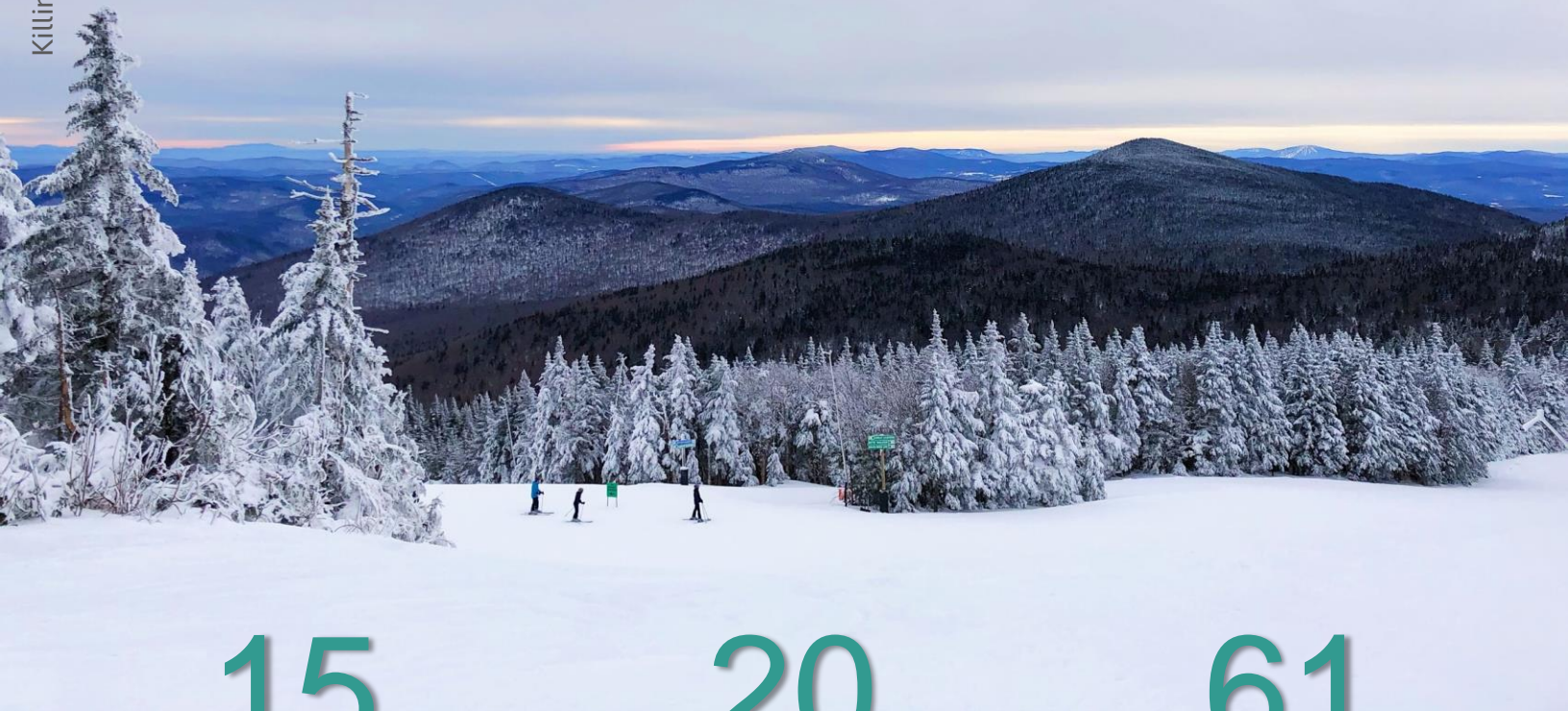


Stowe // Photo credit Jeffrey Clayton

# Advancing equity at the local level



Vermont's communities become more diverse every day. As part of this growth, municipalities around the state and the country are recognizing the need to prioritize equity and social justice. Already, dozens of Vermont's communities have taken steps to be more inclusive.



15

municipalities represented on the Equity Committee of the VT League of Cities & Towns

20

VT school districts known to have an Equity Coordinator role as of school year '21-'22

61

municipalities that have adopted a Declaration of Inclusion as of July '22

**IDEAL VERMONT WAS CREATED TO BRIDGE THE EFFORTS OF INDIVIDUAL TOWNS AND COUNTIES ACROSS THE STATE TO BUILD COHESION, MOTIVATION, AND SUCCESS.**

## LEARNING TOPICS WILL INCLUDE

- foundations of racial equity
- tourism
- MWBEs
- housing
- health equity
- anti-bias policy
- school curriculum
- fair and impartial policing
- data, planning, strategy
- environmental justice

Access to grant funding

Convenings + Workshops

Technical assistance from state agencies

Data sharing + coaching

Online Platform + resource library

Guided by a multi-disciplinary team of state agencies, IDEAL Vermont helps local leaders advance equity in their communities through workshops, technical assistance, grant opportunities, and facilitated spaces to share with and learn from peers around the state.

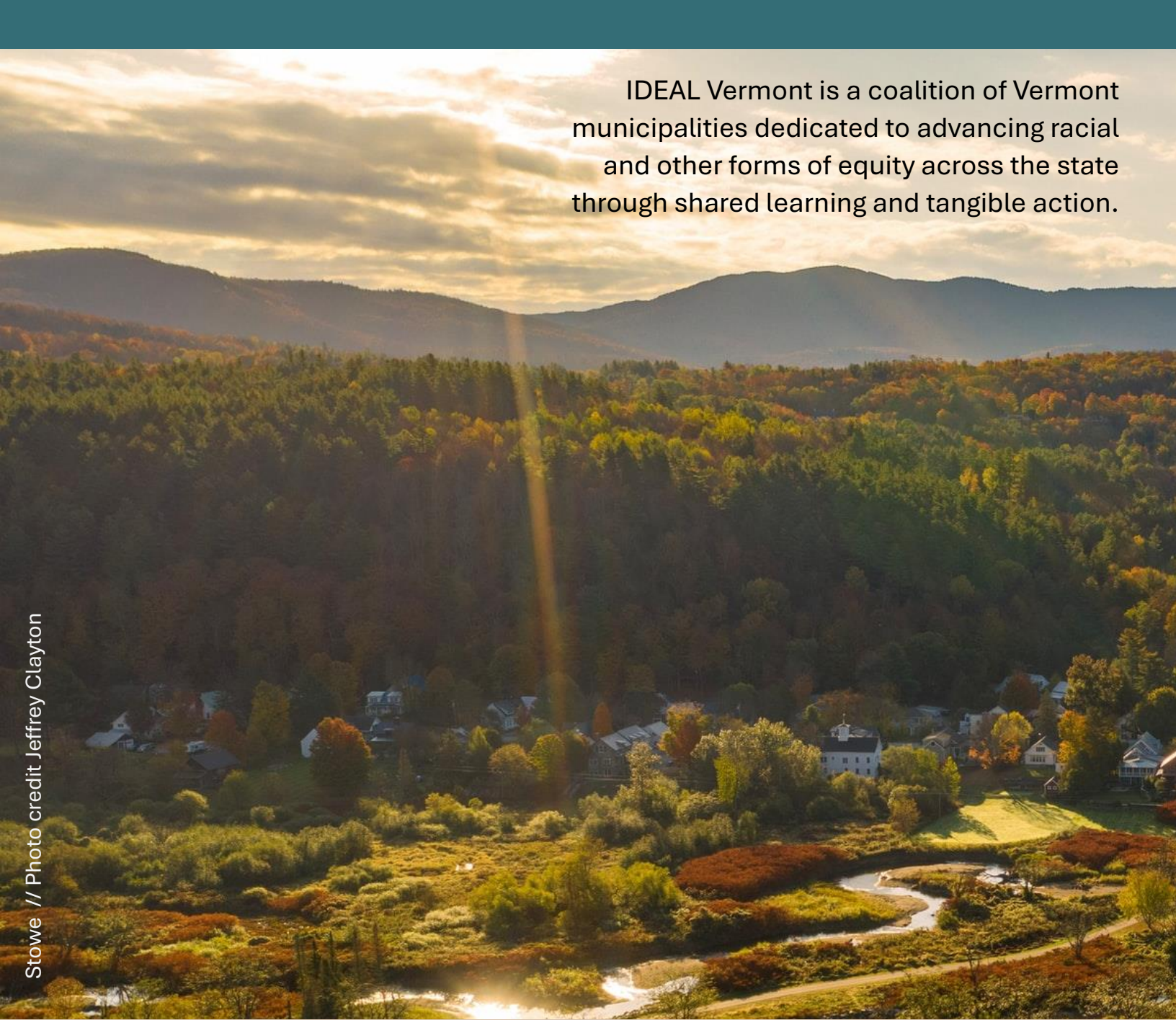
## Join Us

The initiative unifies, educates, and empowers counties and municipalities that are committed to making Vermont more inclusive and more equitable. Member municipalities hold themselves to a high standard of good governance, and are willing to learn and un-learn the practices that can make or break an equitable society.

Your town may be a candidate if it can deliver

- Commitment from the local executive
- Commitment from the local rulemaking body
- Regular, active engagement in IDEAL activities
- Tangible action steps and investment





IDEAL Vermont is a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible action.

Stowe // Photo credit Jeffrey Clayton

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## Supporters + Partners

Equity is everyone's job, and each of us plays a role in shaping it. Many community organizations, state agencies, and advocates have inspired and amplified IDEAL Vermont. We are grateful for their contributions, and especially to these key partners who provide core elements of the initiative, including grants and education.

- Vermont Community Foundation
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Vermont Declaration of Inclusion
- Abundant Sun