

5-30-2022

Centering on BIPOC Experiences in Multi-Stakeholder Processes with Marisa Zapata

Marisa A. Zapata
Portland State University, mazapata@pdx.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/pdxplores>



Part of the [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), [Social Justice Commons](#), and the [Urban Studies and Planning Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Repository Citation

Zapata, Marisa A., "Centering on BIPOC Experiences in Multi-Stakeholder Processes with Marisa Zapata" (2022). *PDXPLORES Podcast*. 8.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/pdxplores/8>

This Podcast is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in PDXPLORES Podcast by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

Centering on BIPOC Experiences in Multi-Stakeholder Processes with Marisa Zapata

Welcome to PDX PLORES, a Portland State research podcast, featuring scholarship innovations and discoveries, pushing the boundaries of knowledge, practice and what is possible for the benefit of our communities and the world.

My name is Marisa Zapata, I'm an Associate Professor of Urban Studies and Planning and the Director of the Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative at Portland State University.

What does it mean to center on Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and their experiences in a multi-stakeholder process? I have developed this analogy from research and experience to help answer this question.

Convening a process is like composing and performing a song. A conventional Euro-classical piece of music is written by a single composer who decides which instruments perform when, and how to contribute their voices. This approach to making music can parallel traditional government advisory groups and public hearings. Unfortunately, Euro-classical music has served as a place of exclusion for people whose ancestry is not from Europe. Similarly, traditional government advisory groups and public hearings have also historically silenced the voices of BIPOC

Writing a piece of jazz can occur in collaboration and provides a looser structure in which an individual can offer their voice and perspective. Breaking the “rules” for experimentation is encouraged, and people listen carefully to understand your message. Jazz can have simple and easy to hear and read patterns, or, as is common in Latin jazz, a set of rich and seemingly complicated percussion patterns reflecting the cultural heritage of Africa and Latin America. Both music genres can provide beautiful music and powerful experiences, but only one is rooted in the lives and experiences of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color. When centering on BIPOC when creating multi-stakeholder processes, we are writing and performing jazz, and for some of us that means pushing away from the Euro-classical music model of a single leader with the baton and instead embracing a more collaborative process where everyone listens deeply and contributes.