It's Time to Share Our Failures

There are a variety of reasons why people might be reluctant to share failures—pride, guilt, fear of losing support, or inability to recognize the failure itself. Yet in fields like global health, where resources are limited and replicating mistakes can be extremely costly, it's especially critical that practitioners learn from each other. Luckily, some evidence-backed steps are available that projects, organizations, and the field can take right now to reduce barriers and facilitate this type of sharing.

Against the DEI Backlash

Becoming Advocates for Equity

DEI Work is a Marathon, Not a Sprint

Calling Out, Calling In, and Calling Upon One Another

What Strong Organizations Know About DEI

Recent world events have thrust diversity, equity, and inclusion back on the front pages. Several SSIR contributors address the challenges of sustaining these initiatives for the long haul. Setbacks like the US Supreme Court’s decision on affirmative action in higher education “demand not only our attention but also our renewed commitment to publicly advocating for the values that underpin our work,” argues Independent Sector CEO Akilah Watkins. “Every runner knows that you’re going to face some obstacles along the way,” writes Jonathan Njus of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. “That’s the moment when you need to find a way to push through, to focus on the little things.”

One effective way to advance anti-racist work is for nonprofit CEOs to engage each other in peer-to-peer learning, writes Stefanie Demong while telling the story of a Silicon Valley-area group with a growing track record of success. “Those of us committed to bringing about lasting change must recognize that diversity, equity, and inclusion are much more than a passing fad,” adds Undraye Howard of the nonprofit organization Social Current. “They are a framework for engaging an organization’s full strength.”

96%
The share of respondents to a survey of global health professionals who said they think it’s important to share their failures with each other.

72%
Respondents who said they had shared a story of failure in the last six months with a colleague in their own organization.

41%
Respondents who said they’d shared a story of failure with a colleague from a different organization.

23%
Respondents who said they’d shared a story of failure with a donor.