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Advancing Racial Equity With Data: Principles & Tools

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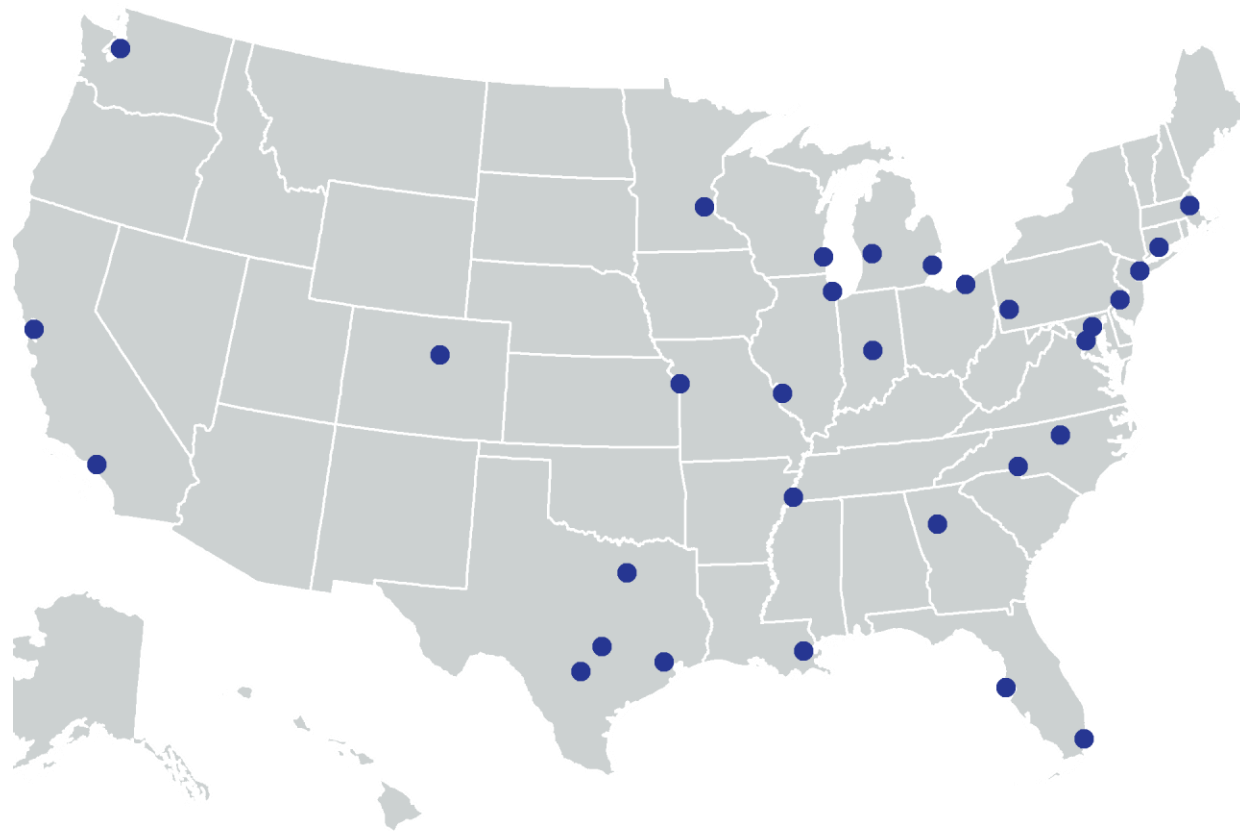
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Urban-Greater DC : greaterdc.urban.org
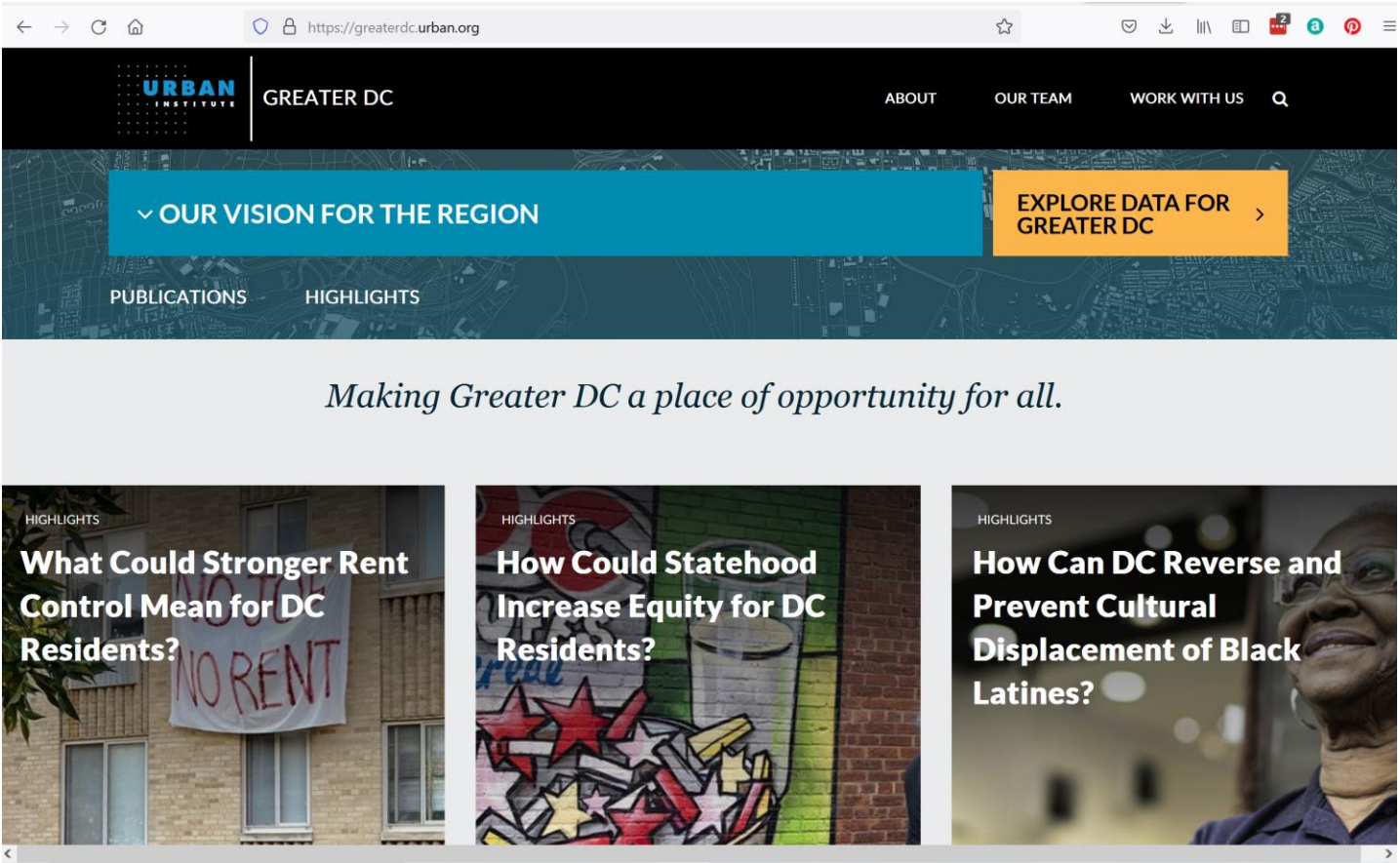
National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership

- Mission to ensure all communities have access to data and the skills to use information to advance equity and well-being across neighborhoods

Principles are needed to protect people and communities

Principles for Equitable Data Practice

- **Beneficence** – maximize benefits and avoid causing harm

- **Respect for persons** – uphold people's power to make decisions in their interest and protect those without power

- **Justice** – fair distribution of burdens and benefits among people

NATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS PARTNERSHIP

NNIP

https://bit.ly/equitydatagoals

Home » About NNIP » NNIP's Goals to Improve Use of Data in Advancing Racial Equity

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NNIP's Goals to Improve Use of Data in Advancing Racial Equity

NNIP Partners ensure their communities have access to data and the skills to use information to advance equity and wellbeing across neighborhoods. As a network, NNIP and its partners have been working to advance racial equity for decades. Our partners are in a unique position having both data expertise, as well as deep knowledge about their city's neighborhoods and the people who live in them. But we want our data services and analysis to be more effective in furthering racial equity in each of our communities, as an outcome and a process. To that end, we have drafted a set of aspirations for NNIP partners to hold ourselves and each other accountable as we strive to democratize data for people to use in strengthening their communities.

This statement is a living document, which we plan to update as we learn from both outside perspectives and partners' efforts to improve our practice. As a network, we will explore together what these goals mean for our institutions, identify how we can make our data and methods more inclusive and equitable, and share our successes and challenges. Over the next six months, we will hold virtual sessions for NNIP partners to dive deep into selected goals together, reflecting on how to move forward on the aspirations, tackle barriers to progress, and gather promising examples.

We also compiled an online guide of resources for improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in both our internal practices and external products to help our partners and others navigate this space.

Goal	Rationale
We strive to incorporate community voice and collaborate with residents on research design, data collection, interpretation, and dissemination.	We recognize that the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other people of color and their communities are often excluded from research. We need to improve on our quantitative and qualitative methods to better incorporate their experiences into analyses. This includes designing research and interpreting data with people and communities represented in the data and returning the results of analyses to the community in forms they can use in their own advocacy.

Goal: We strive to use data in ways that reveal the inequities in systems.

Example: Placing the responsibility on the system

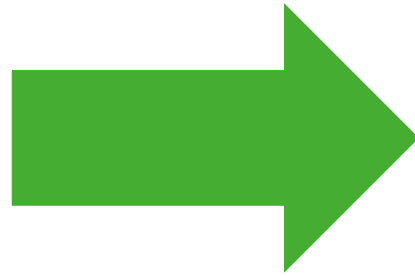"Black families are more likely to be denied a mortgage to purchase a home than white families."

→
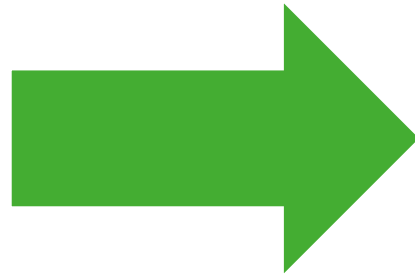
"The Bank and Mortgage industry denies mortgage applications to Black families more often than white families."

Goal: We strive to use data in ways that highlight the assets of people and communities.

Example: Asset-framing

"We help at-risk youth in high-crime neighborhoods." ➡ "We help young people overcome obstacles and achieve their dreams."

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Racial Equity Analytics Lab

Goals: Real-Time Data for Race-Conscious Solutions

- Generate and share ***granular disaggregated data*** by race and ethnicity, across multiple domains, and at the smallest geographies

- Expose patterns of ***structural racism*** via analyses that connect policy choices – both past and present – with racial disparities revealed by the data

- Deploy ***engagement strategies*** so that our products are responsive to real-world needs, reach influential audiences, and inform key decisions.

DO NO HARM GUIDE

Applying Equity Awareness
in Data Visualization

https://urban.is/donoharm

Tracking COVID-19 Effects by Race and Ethnicity

- Analyzed and released data based on Census Pulse survey
- Food Insecurity for Black and Latinx populations in the DC Metro region was consistently higher than average throughout the pandemic state of emergency
- April 2020 to July 2020
- August 2020 to present

**Black**

Hispanic or Latino
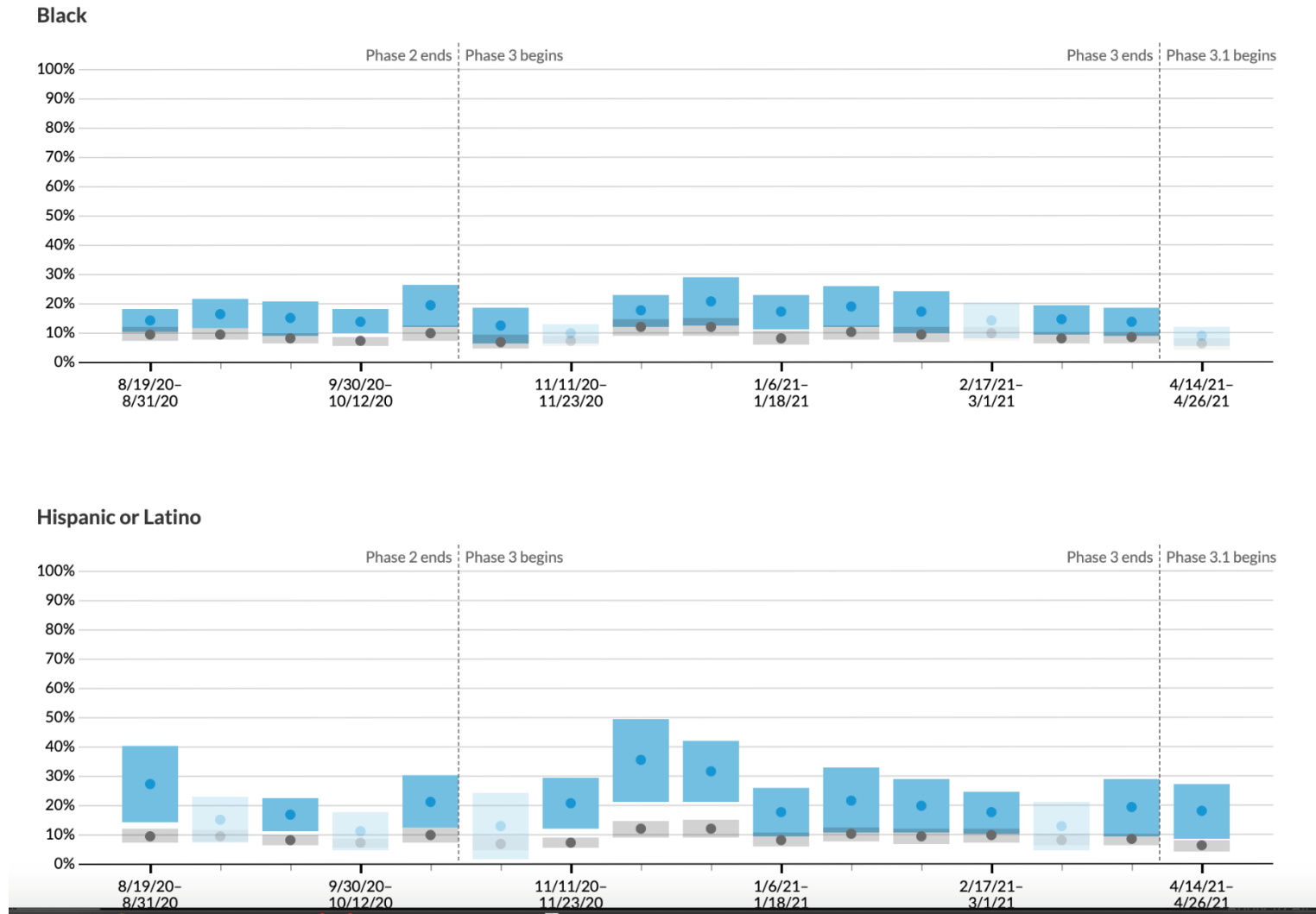
Ethics and Empathy in Imputing Race/Ethnicity

- Imputation is a key tool to fill race and ethnicity data gaps

- The problem: many ethical risks

- [Case Study](#) and [standards guide](#) on whether/how to impute ethically

START: zip code **12345**, age range **1**, race/ethnicity **unknown**

END: zip code **12345**, age range **1**, race/ethnicity implicates

Spatial Equity Tool

Data with lat/lon → Spatial Equity Tool → Demographic Disparity Scores / Geographic Disparity Scores
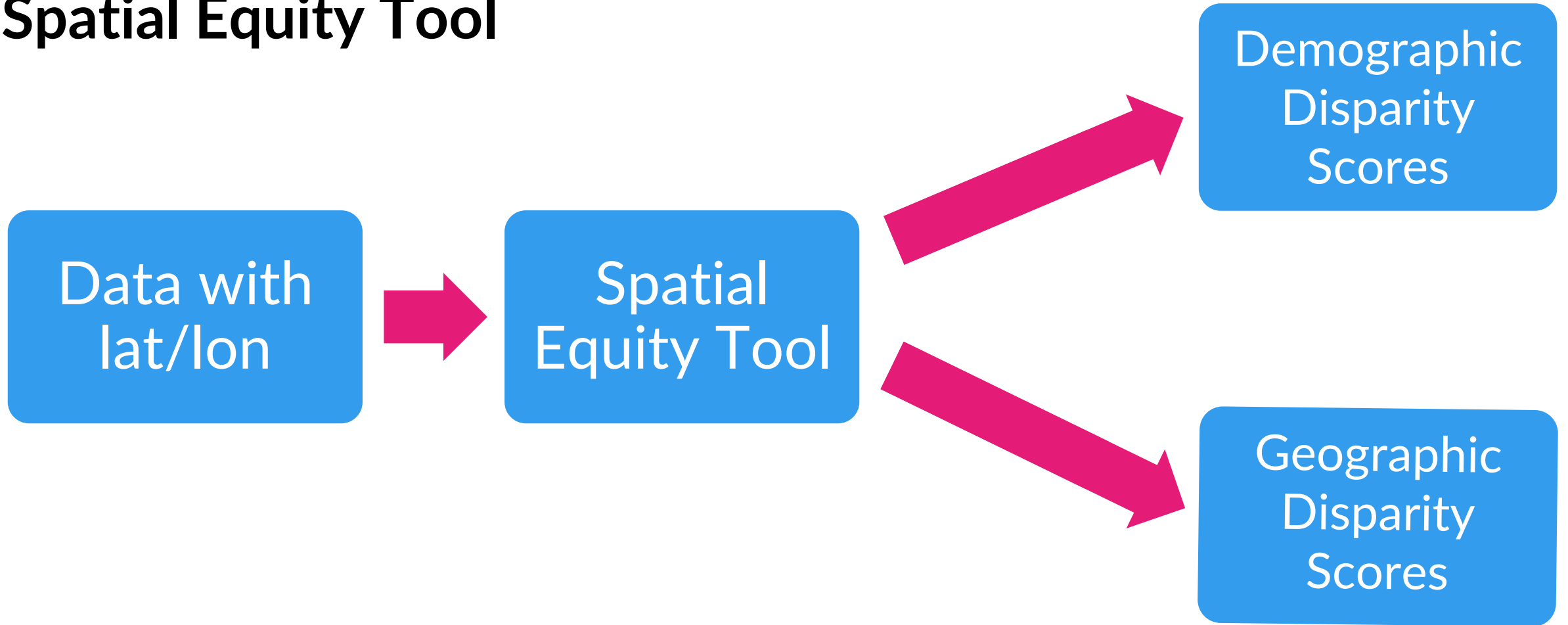
Spatial Equity Tool

- Performing standardized equity analyses just became easier!

Why should you care?

- Performing standardized equity analyses just became easier!

  - **Compare across time**
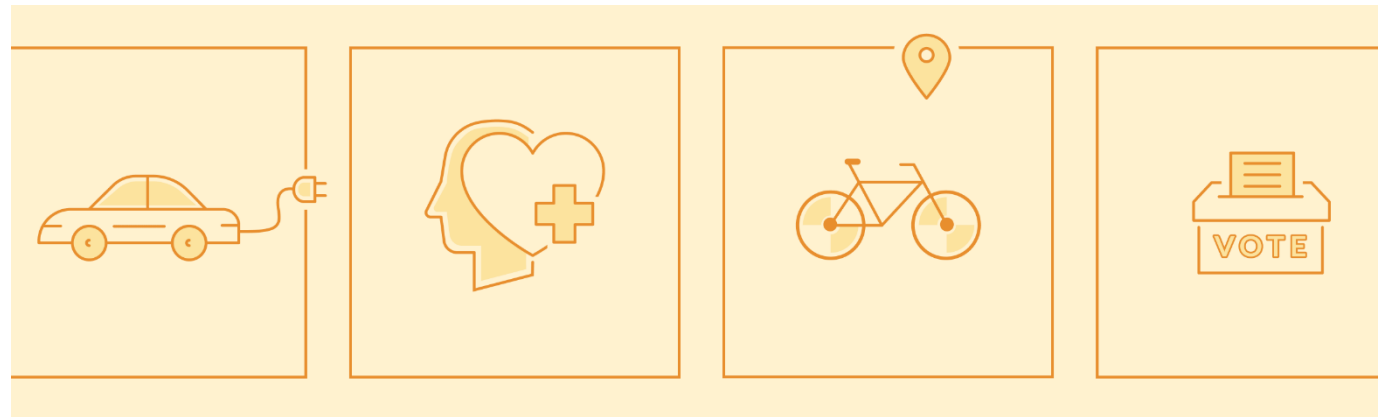
    Your data from 2021
    2020
    2019

Why should you care?

- Performing standardized equity analyses just became easier!

  - Compare across time, geographies

    Your data from Miami-Dade County, FL
    Broward County, FL
    Pinellas County, FL

Spatial Equity Tool

- Performing standardized equity analyses just became easier!

  - **Compare across** time, geographies, and **policy domains**

Live Demo!

Discussion questions

- What are your pain points/hurdles when using data to examine equity?

Appendix

How Does the Spatial Equity Tool work?

Want our Code or Data?

- Everything is open source!

  - **Tool:** https://apps.urban.org/features/equity-data-tool/

  - **Code:** https://github.com/UrbanInstitute/ui-equity-tool

- Happy to advise/help folks expand our methodology

How the Tool Works

1) Geocode the dataset to a specific geography

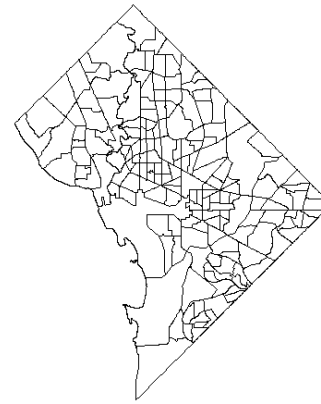2) *Pull geographic and demographic data for that geography*

3) *Compute which Census tract each data point falls into*

4) *Calculate spatial equity metrics*

5) *Calculate demographic equity metric*

6) *Assess statistical significance of our equity metrics*

Washington DC

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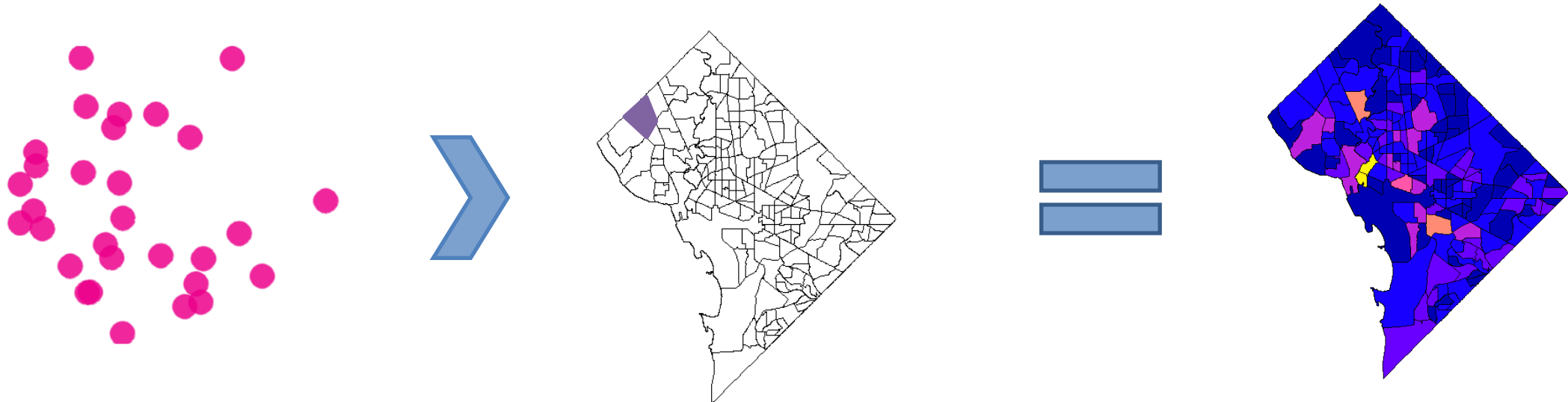6) *Assess statistical significance of our equity metrics*

Tool

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

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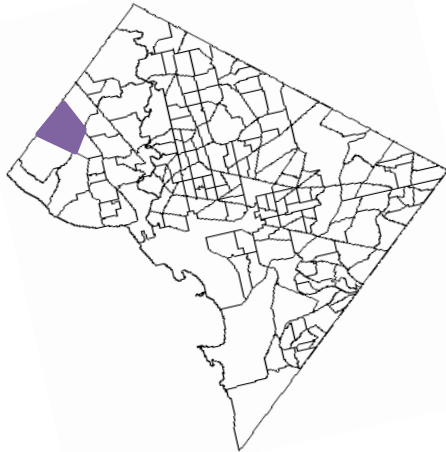
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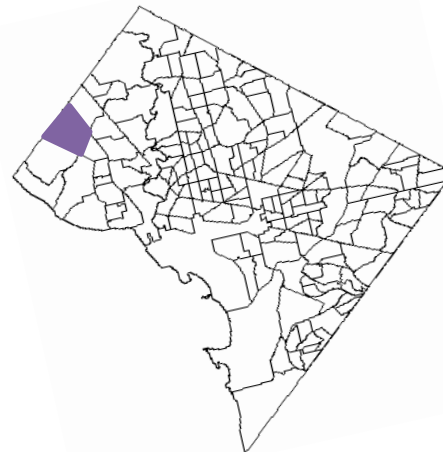
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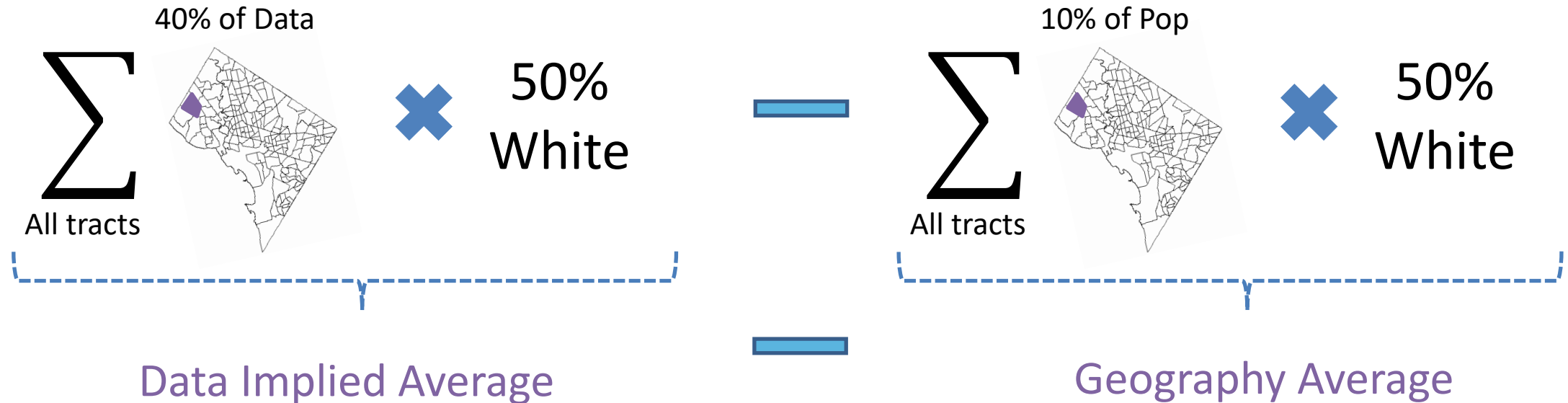
40% of Data   10% of Population

= 30%

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40% of Data

$\sum_{\text{All tracts}}$ 🗺 ✖ 50% White − $\sum_{\text{All tracts}}$ 🗺 ✖ 50% White

10% of Pop

Data Implied Average   Geography Average

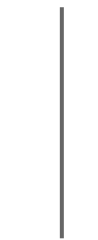# How the Tool Works

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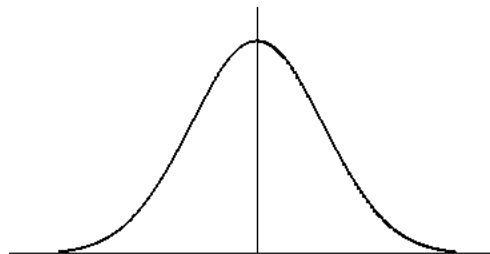
5) *Calculate demographic equity metric*

6) *Assess statistical significance of our equity metrics*

% Data

% Population

% White

40%

10%

50%

How the Tool Works

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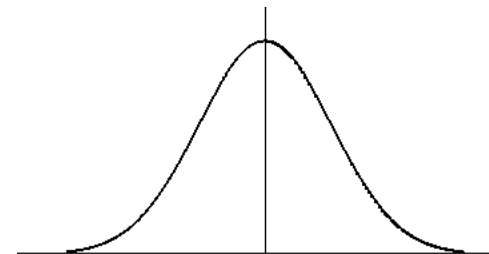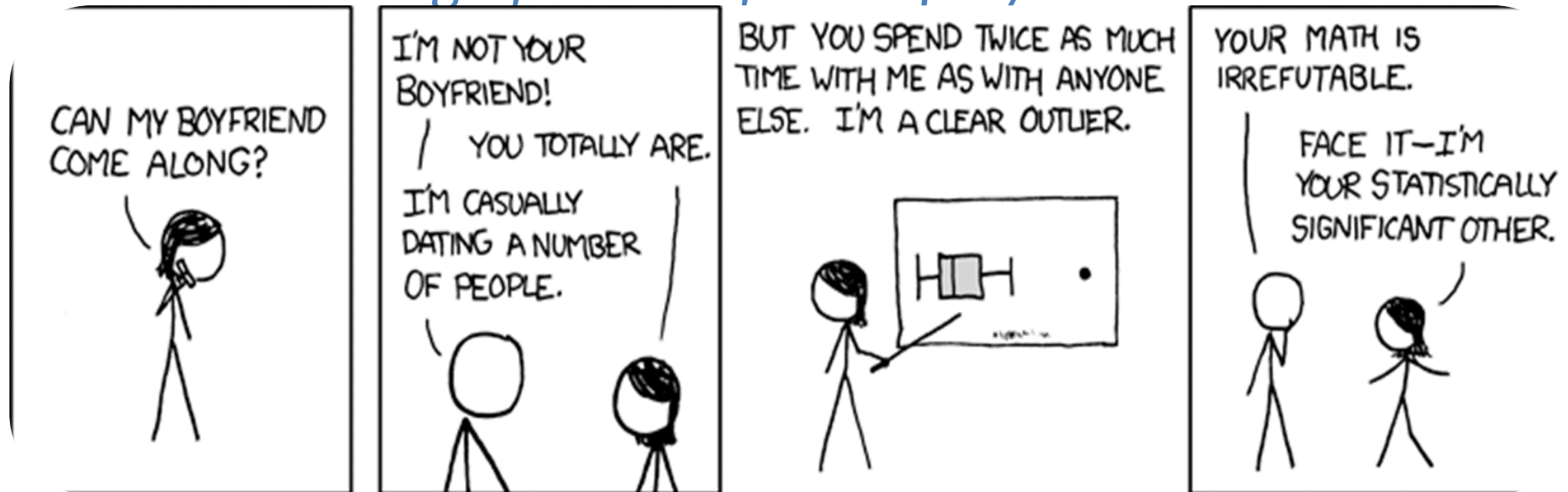6) *Assess statistical significance of our equity metrics*

Who has used the Spatial Equity Data Tool?

- Residents used to assess equity of traffic camera placement in Chicago

- Community groups in Cincinnati used to identify economic and racial inequities in car crash locations

- The Bloomington Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Commission used to analyze equity in sidewalk funding allocations

- People on Twitter used to analyze inequalities in McDonalds locations with broken ice cream machines

- Denver Dept. of Public Safety used to analyze disparities in 911 calls for service

- Residents used to assess equity in building permit approvals in Chicago

Questions the Spatial Equity Tool can answer

- Compared to the <u>population distribution</u> in a geography:

  - Are certain neighborhoods/demographic groups over/underrepresented in my data?

  - How do these disparities compare across time, across geographies, or across different datasets?

  - Are these results statistically significant?

Questions the Spatial Equity Tool can't answer

- ***Why*** are certain areas / demographic groups overrepresented in my data?

- Is the quality of the data equal across my geography?

- Are the data points equally accessible within the geography?