



Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategy Draft August 2020

"Growing and celebrating the diversity of our watershed does not stop at the stream bank"

DEFINITIONS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Diversity: Recognition and respect of individual differences, which can be rooted in identities that are racial, ethnic or nationality, socioeconomic, geographic, and academic/professional backgrounds; Diversity includes but isn't limited to people with different opinions, backgrounds (degrees and social experience), religious beliefs, political beliefs, ages, sexual orientations, physical abilities, gender identities, heritage, cultures and life experience.

We appreciate and leverage our differences, and we involve and reflect the communities in our work.

Equity: Fairness or justice in the way people are treated; the quality of being fair or impartial

We align our policies, practices, and resources so that people of all races, cultures, and socioeconomic statuses have genuine opportunities to participate.

Inclusion: All people, regardless of their differences, identities, abilities, or health care needs, have equal access to participate and be part of our work.

We create an environment in which everyone feels valued, safe and respected.

GUIDANCE

- Create and revisit this Strategy to ensure it represents core values of our organization
- Integrate DEI in all aspects of our work and organization
 - Mission, vision, objectives, outputs and assessments
- This work is ongoing, there is no end date
- Conduct conversations in a manner respectful of all people regardless if they are participating
- Embracing and valuing differences is important
- Outcomes are improved by listening and including other voices
 - Understand what it means to be a good listener
 - Consider the context and place people may be coming from
- DEI is our shared responsibility
 - Be aware of expectations you may place on others
 - Marginalized folks are often expected to push DEI initiatives, placing an unfair burden on those team members
- It is important to find a space for these discussions in our organization
- We will make mistakes and we can use them to learn how to improve on what we do
- DEI will improve our outcomes and the sustainability of our organization

ACTIONS (Next 3 years)

Organizational and Community Culture

- Notice and question whose voices are included in decision-making processes within our organization. Is it inclusive or exclusive? What can we do to make room for all voices?
- Develop organizational ground rules and norms for difficult conversations about DEI. This could include conversations where staff may voice concerns related to DEI within the organization and its culture. Listen to those concerns. Take them seriously.
- Explore conscious/unconscious bias that might be impacting staff and Board members and how they work, especially when they're working with people and in situations that are new to them.
- Make equity a core tenet of our organizational values.
- Truly integrate equity into our organizational strategy. If it's not in our strategy or a part of our values, it's lip service.
- Intentionally evaluate how effective the SWC is at reaching out to diverse groups in our community. Consider speaking directly to community members and partners so we can make better decisions.

Operations

- All Board and staff approvals shall apply equity lens guidance
- Annually Executive Director presents a one-year DEI strategy implementation plan for SWC
- Review SWC DEI strategy on a regular basis
 - Use equity audit tools
- Volunteer, Outreach and Education programming evaluation for inclusivity
- Develop mechanisms to report DEI related incidents and pathways to resolve the issue
- Hiring and recruiting (*include board recruitment*)
 - Promotion of employment opportunities to broader audience
 - Include value statement with job and board announcements¹
 - Expand qualifications for candidates, including those who have either applicable experience or a degree or have experience that translates to the posted position
 - Intentionally recruit for diversity at all levels, with an emphasis on leadership
 - Consider adding practices to reduce conscious and unconscious bias throughout our hiring process, such as an anonymized skills test
 - Continually examine our recruitment strategies to ensure we are reaching diverse pools of talent and building relationships with new institutions outside of our regular networks
- Contracting
 - Add language to contracts about commitment to DEI and set forth contract expectations

¹ [One report from Scientific American](#) found that diverse workplaces can encourage people to be more creative and more diligent, so having a healthy, equitable workplace can help your organization retain your top talent, which has historically been a huge challenge in the fundraising industry.

- Communication with partner organizations about contractor expectations
- Training
 - Include training on the Nonprofit Association of Oregon Equity Lens Guide
 - As we ease back into our new normal, incorporate DEI policy into new staff and board member orientation. Having it front and center in an important process like onboarding will help new staff and board members understand the importance of DEI at the organization
 - Seeking and attending external training opportunities and bringing their practices back to the organization for share out and integrate into our work
 - Identify opportunities and set a policy for board and staff training
- Start Equity committee or Advisory board that has a diverse composition that meets regularly and engages the members of the organization and community
 - Lead the DEI charge and carry out the policy and facilitate conversations
 - Invite staff, volunteers, and board members to read DEI-focused books or articles together and facilitate discussion on them.
- Personal development
 - [Project Implicit](#) tests your implicit associations about race, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities.
 - Read materials that further your education in this area such as articles and books, investigate to ensure they are from credible sources

RESOURCES

- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- <https://impactnw.org/about-us/dei/>
- <https://medium.com/greater-good-studio/tips-to-operationalize-diversity-equity-inclusion-practices-in-your-non-profit-organization-ed2c7c09a7cf>
- <https://www.americansforthearts.org/about-americans-for-the-arts/cultural-equity>
- <https://www.fordfoundation.org/about/people/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>
- <https://www.tfff.org/who-we-are/welcome>
- <https://nonprofitoregon.org/sites/default/files/NAO-Equity-Lens-Guide-2019.pdf>

FUNDING

- <https://www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/environment/goals-and-strategies/strengthening-the-conservation-field/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-capacity-building/>
- Collaborative DEI work opportunities; identify Successful applications
- Ford family foundation
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- *Recognize that some of current funding may have the flexibility to include furthering parts of this work.*

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” —[James Baldwin](#)