



**Coalition *for the***  
**Delaware River**  
**Watershed**

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice**  
**Toolkit**  
**Volume 1: Internal Organization Practices**

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| <b>Introduction</b>   |           |

The Coalition for the Delaware River watershed is a network of 150 non-governmental, non-partisan organizations dedicated to protecting and preserving the Delaware River Watershed’s natural resources. The Coalition is dedicated to advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice within our network structure, partnerships, processes, and policy goals to ensure that all communities share equitably in the benefits of clean water, and public access. We recognize that environmental injustices target marginalized communities and historically minorities have faced barriers in joining the mainstream environmental movement. The Coalition will work to comprehensively represent the Delaware River Watershed’s population by amplifying the voices of unheard communities to build a healthy and equitable watershed for generations to come.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources that empower our members and partners to take mindful action to break down the barriers that hinder participation. Together, we will work toward implementing and encouraging inclusive practices where every voice is heard and valued, across race, ethnicity, socio-economic

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status, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, geography, educational background, religion, ability, veteran status, and political philosophy.

This volume of the toolkit will focus on DEIJ internally, within an organization’s culture, rather than DEIJ in relation to external or programmatic engagement. Oftentimes organizations will focus primarily on external engagement and are faced with setbacks that would have been mitigated if more of their efforts were directed at changing the internal workings of their organization before beginning external work. The overemphasis of external work through outreach implicitly assumes that all that promoting diversity entails is the creation of an effective slogan or advertising campaign, which could not be further from the truth. Diversity is not “the challenge of the moment”, but a goal that should be incorporated throughout an organization’s values and activities. Organizations that approach equity work by creating a solid foundation of internal organizational work find that they are more successful with meeting their goals<sup>1</sup>.

Please note that the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, as so many organizations throughout the watershed, are taking this critical work seriously and aim to integrate every aspect internally, but that this is a first-time process for us, and a learning curve exists. Incorporating DEIJ values within an organization is based upon continuous learning, and to reflect that this toolkit will be a living document to be updated as we gain more resources and experience in this work. In pursuing this work organizations must be prepared to be uncomfortable and make mistakes. Waiting until an organization feels as though it will do everything perfectly is a sure way to never start at all. Instead, organizations must rise to the challenge of reflecting upon missteps, learning to ask questions, and evaluate previously held assumptions, all of which are parts of developing a growth mindset. This takes a considerable amount of emotional intelligence, or “the ability to feel, understand, articulate, manage, and apply the power of emotions to interactions across lines of difference”<sup>2</sup>. Cultivating emotional intelligence within your organization will be a key driver of success in your DEIJ work. By continually improving the process and approach of various initiatives your organization’s work will be more effective and impactful over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Berthoud, H., & Greene, R. D. (2001). [A multi-faceted look at diversity: Why outreach is not enough](#). *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 19(2), 2-10.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, Marcelo. [“Transforming a Movement.”](#) *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

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Throughout the compilation of this toolkit we identified several key findings to help guide your organization’s work.<sup>3456</sup> They are as follows:

- **Integrating diversity into the structure, mission and bottom line** of the organizations work, focusing on multiple facets of the organization in order to ensure it is prioritized across your work
- **Ensuring strong leadership commitment** to embracing the inherent challenges of this work, while simultaneously engaging staff from all levels in the decision making process
- **Creating realistic expectations** that are actionable and measurable and create a cycle for evaluation and reporting of those expectations to require accountability
- **Proactively addressing potential resistance or hesitation** to this work
- **Valuing the effort as an ongoing process** and provide incentive structures that reward cooperation
- **Using multiple types of interventions**, and evaluating the efficacy of the interventions taken and recognizing the limits they may have. Empirical research about diversity training suggests that current practices are largely ineffective over the long-term. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct needs assessments to determine what content should be included in training modules.
- **Reflecting upon successes and mistakes** by encouraging openness and tolerance for dialogue and the exchange of ideas so employees can contribute the insights, skills, and experiences they have developed as members of various cultural identity groups
- **Acquiring adequate and stable funding** to ensure that the work can be given the necessary attention to achieve longevity
- **Establishing a diversity committee or manager to oversee implementation of the work:** Diversity managers must be senior level positions and diversity committees must include senior level employees so that initiatives that address diversity issues are communicated, accepted, and executed

<sup>3</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>4</sup> Berthoud, H., & Greene, R. D. (2001). [A multi-faceted look at diversity: Why outreach is not enough](#). *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 19(2), 2-10.

<sup>5</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

<sup>6</sup> Beasley, Maya A., *Green 2.0*, (May 2017) [“Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization,”](#)

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by top level staff. Be sure to include junior level staff on diversity committees as well to be inclusive to all staff-levels.

- **Creating affinity groups** as a significant first step in creating a safer space for staff with marginalized identities

## The Delaware River Watershed

The Delaware River Watershed provides drinking water to an estimated 13.3 million people, including two out of the five largest metropolitan centers in the country: New York City and Philadelphia. The Watershed supports about \$25 billion in annual economic activity, including recreation, ecotourism, hunting and fishing, water supply, and ports. Additionally, the Watershed provides an estimated \$21 billion in ecosystem services to the region, including water filtration, carbon sequestration, and habitats such as forests and wetlands.

As the longest undammed river east of the Mississippi, the Delaware River provides habitat for over 200 resident and migrant fish species, hosts significant recreational fishers, and is an important source of oyster, blue crab, and the largest population of American horseshoe crabs. The Watershed is also home to the Delaware Water Gap (one of the country's most visited National Park units), more than 400 miles of National Wild and Scenic Rivers, six National Wildlife Refuges, and one of the largest systems in the National Estuary Program. Recently, the U.S. Geological Survey's Water Census identified the Delaware River Watershed as one of three areas of



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national focus. The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed continues to increase awareness of the watershed and its importance not only to the Mid-Atlantic region, but to the nation as a whole.

## The Importance of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

Just as a diversity of plants and animals creates a healthy ecosystem, our advocacy work is stronger when diverse voices, reflective of the communities throughout the watershed, are involved in our work.

On a social level, it is important not only to recognize past injustices and present inequality and biases which persist within all aspects of society, but to actively work to mitigate and counteract discrimination and environmental injustice. Through this work we aim to amplify the concerns of people and communities which have previously been ignored, unsolicited, or excluded, and include them in the process of change. The watershed and its resources should be shared equally by all people and communities. The health of the watershed thrives on ecological diversity, and likewise the movement to protect our shared environmentally important spaces must be diverse and inclusive.

On an organizational level, it is important to incorporate DEIJ into goals, practices, and policies. This fosters a safe, diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace environment which allows for new and impactful partnerships. Incorporating DEIJ principles encourages more creative, collaborative, comprehensive, equitable, and inclusive environmental solutions which have the benefit of multiple different perspectives and considerations.<sup>7</sup> When surveyed over 70% of representatives from NGO’s agreed that diversity could help attack environmental problems from multiple perspectives, increase a focus on environmental justice, help brand the movement by making it more heterogeneous, and increase support for the movement by widening its constituents. Diversity within the workforce has been proven to improve problem solving, creativity, and increase customer bases and market share.

On political and strategic levels, incorporating DEIJ concepts and practices would allow organizations to engage a larger percentage of the population to encourage organizational partnerships, opening new fundraising

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<sup>7</sup> [“Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization,”](#) Beasley, Maya A., *Green 2.0*, (May 2017): 3.

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opportunities, and increase both legislative representation, and grassroots influence.<sup>8</sup> The United States Census Bureau predicts that by 2060 ethnic minorities and people of multi-racial backgrounds will comprise roughly 57% of the population. Minorities have been found to support higher levels of spending on the environment than whites. Black and Latinx congressional delegates vote more pro-environmentally than their peers.<sup>9</sup> As the demographics within the United States change on multiple axes, it is crucial to address the systemic, organizational, and institutional barriers that marginalized communities encounter in order to bring passionate voters into the environmental movement.

Currently the environmental movement does not reflect the diversity of greater society. A study released by Green 2.0 in 2014 found that while more women made up 60% of new hires and interns, men were still more likely than women to hold leadership positions in environmental organizations. This was especially true at the organizations with budgets over \$1 million, governmental environmental agencies, and environmental grantmaking organizations. The racial gap was wider than the gender gap within these participating organizations, with ethnic minorities making up less than 16% of individuals on boards or general staff. Additionally, ethnic minorities were more likely to hold lower rank positions, with less than 12% holding leadership positions, and there were no presidents of an ethnic minority in “the largest conservation and preservation organizations (with budgets over \$1 million)”.

Members of the organizations (a reported 3.2 million people) were predominantly white men, and volunteers were split evenly between white men and white women. The study found that very few people within ethnic minorities were members or volunteers within the participating organizations. Additionally, there were few collaborations between environmental organizations and ethnic minority or low-income institutions or groups.<sup>10</sup>

The current state of the mainstream environmental movement is a product of years of racism and segregation, dating back to the origins of the conservation movement. Many of the most prominent environmentalists of the past such as John Muir, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Madison Grant were also heavily involved in white

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<sup>8</sup> “[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

<sup>9</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>10</sup> “[The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations, Government Agencies](#),” Taylor, Dorceta E., Ph.D., *Green 2.0*, (2014).

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supremacist, eugenics, and anti-Indigenous American movements.<sup>11</sup> In the 1970’s some environmentalists opposed Indigenous American attempts to include social justice with environmental work in order to prevent the conversion of tribal lands into public parks and perceived their work as anti-environmental.

Decades of excluding minority voices from the mainstream environmental movement has led to misconceptions about what kinds of people care about the environment. In studies conducted in the 1960’s intended to gauge the public’s participation in outdoor activities subjects were asked about past times typically enjoyed by the white middle class (such as skiing or hiking) and activities typically pursued by people of color or low-income folks (such as visiting city parks or walking for pleasure) were not valued as much as the stereotypical middle class white activities. This led to the false belief that white people cared more about outdoor activities and the environment by extension. At the same time as these studies another found that the most popular complaint by Harlem residents when asked about their blocks was the lack of trees, with 24% of respondents answering as such.

In 1990 Frederic Krupp, the Executive Director of Environmental Defense Fund, argued that minorities are “attracted to issues such as discrimination and poverty rather than environmental issues”. Yet, researchers found that minorities were aware of, interested in, and perceived risks of environmental issues such as climate change and conservation at rates equal to or greater than white counterparts. Another misconception is that people of color only care about environmental issues when related to Environmental Justice. Because Environmental Justice is not always perceived as part of the core environmental movement, this perception further marginalizes people of color. Environmental groups representing communities of color are often only contacted about collaboration when mainstream organizations need their political support for campaigns<sup>12</sup>. Without working to correct these misconceptions within organizations creating an inclusive and equitable workplace will not be possible, and the benefits of a diverse workforce cannot be gained.

As illustrated above it is evident that there is clear inequity in the environmental movement as it currently stands. Despite the best intentions of folks working in this sphere, unconscious bias towards those with marginalized identities is pervasive. In order to combat this inequity, it is imperative for folks to take conscious

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<sup>11</sup> Mock, Brentin. “[The Green Movement Is Talking About Racism? It's About Time.](#)” *Outside Online*, 11 June 2019, ins.

<sup>12</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies.](#) Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

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steps to acknowledge the biases they have and combat against it. For more information on bias, see the Unconscious Bias section of this toolkit on page 24.

For more information about diversity in environmentalism see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

## Examples of Environmental Injustices in the Delaware River Watershed

Environmental injustices result from an unequal distribution of burdens that impact a person’s quality of life, health, and pocket-book. Dr. Robert Bullard, one of the pioneering scholars of the environmental justice movement is quoted as saying,

“We are saying that environmental justice incorporates the idea that we are just as much concerned about wetlands, birds, and wilderness areas, but we’re also concerned with urban habitats, where people live in cities, about reservations, about things that are happening along the US-Mexican border, about children that are being poisoned by lead in housing and kids playing outside in contaminated playgrounds... We are just as much concerned with inequities in Appalachia, for example, where the whites are basically dumped on because of lack of economic and political clout and lack of having a voice to say ‘no’ and that’s environmental injustice”.<sup>13</sup>

Across the nation three out of every five Black and Latinx residents live in communities with one or more uncontrolled toxic chemical dumps, a concentration that is virtually impossible to achieve merely by chance. Evidence pointing to the deliberate act of placing hazardous facilities near impoverished communities or communities of color can be seen in the process for deciding the location for a “low-level” radioactive waste repository in North Carolina. A partial list with recorded staff dispositions expressed at a meeting on whether or not to leave a site under consideration consisted of, “Coleridge ‘houses fairly wealthy’ out; Snow Camp ‘fairly affluent’ out; Cherry Grove ‘residences of site minority-owned’ in; Gold Hill 3 ‘very depressed area’ in” and so on for all of the 21 proposed sites<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, in 1984, the California Waste Management Board paid the Los Angeles consulting firm, Cerrell Associates, \$500,000 to define communities that won’t resist the siting of

<sup>13</sup> Schweizer, Errol. “[Environmental Justice: An Interview with Robert Bullard](#).” *Environmental Justice: An Interview with Robert Bullard*, July 1999

<sup>14</sup> Center, J. (1996, April). [Waste Management and Risk Assessment: Environmental Discrimination through Regulation](#).

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“Locally Undesirable Land Uses”. Throughout the report Cerrell identified the communities least likely to resist as being southern, midwestern, rural, open to promises of economic benefit, conservative, Republican, free-market believers, above middle age, high school or less education, low income, Catholic, not involved with social issues, residents for 20+ years, or participating in “nature exploitative occupations. The study also found that “one occupational classification has consistently demonstrated itself as a strong indicator of opposition to the siting of noxious facilities, especially nuclear power plants — housewives”.<sup>15</sup>

The Delaware River Watershed communities have experienced injustices including polluted water, illegal chemical dumping, and the building of hazardous waste disposal sites. The Delaware River winds past major urban areas including the cities of Trenton, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; Wilmington, DE; Chester, PA; and Camden, NJ, which are home to many communities of color. To learn more about environmental justice work that is being done in your area visit sites and communities where environmental injustices have taken place. Some Environmental Justice groups lead “Toxic Tours” to help those unfamiliar with the conditions in environmental justice, tribal, or low-income communities gain a first-hand view of the lived experiences within the communities. This also provides an opportunity for relationship building, experiential learning, breaking down silos, and visualizing what inequity and injustice look like. If your organization participates in a “Toxic Tour” or meets with community leaders compensate their time directly or with a donation to the group you are meeting with<sup>16</sup>. The following are different examples of environmental injustices in each of the four states comprising the watershed.

**Delaware:** In New Castle County, the communities of Dunleith, Oakmont, and Southbridge, whose residents are predominantly people of color and that have a substantial low-income population, have cancer risks 19 to 23 percent higher than for Greenville (a predominantly White and affluent community located outside the industrial corridor) and 14 to 18 percent higher than for Delaware overall. Respiratory hazard in these three communities is 32 to 43 percent higher than for Greenville and 20 to 30 percent higher than for Delaware overall. Cancer risks in Newport, Belvedere, and Cedar Heights, which have a substantial proportion of people of color and poverty rates above the Delaware average, are 21, 15, and 12 percent higher than for Greenville, respectively, and are 16, 10,

<sup>15</sup> “[Targeting ‘Cerrell’ Communities](#).” *Environmental Justice Network*, Targeting “Cerrell” Communities.

<sup>16</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)



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and 7 percent higher than for Delaware overall. Respiratory hazard in Newport, Belvedere, and Cedar Heights is 44, 30, and 24 percent higher than for Greenville, respectively, and 31, 18, and 13 percent higher than for Delaware overall<sup>17</sup>.

**New Jersey:** Camden is the poorest city in the state and one of the poorest in the nation: per capita income is less than \$8,000.22 and the citywide poverty rate is well over 30 percent. Waterfront South is a particularly devastated and environmentally degraded neighborhood in the southern part of the city. It encompasses most of the South Jersey Port, the former base for a major shipbuilding company, and now contains a small historic residential core, a deteriorated commercial corridor, and numerous industries close to schools, homes, and churches. Within this area, less than one square mile, one can find two federal Superfund sites and thirteen other known contaminated sites, four junkyards, a petroleum coke transfer station, a scrap metal recycler, several auto body shops, a paint and varnish company, a chemical company, three food processing plants, and numerous other heavy industrial uses. Just north of the neighborhood is the large U.S. Gypsum plant. In the early 1980s Camden County decision makers selected the small city sewage plant in Waterfront South for expansion so that it could process all the sewage from 35 municipalities. The county then decided to construct an open-air sewage-sludge composting facility next to the treatment plant. Next came the regional trash-to-steam incinerator, one of the largest in the state. In the early 1990s Waterfront South was chosen as the site for a cogeneration power plant. The rates for asthma and other respiratory problems rose dramatically. At the same time the area became more blighted, housing values dropped, and, for the remaining residents, moving out of the area became increasingly difficult<sup>18</sup>.

**New York:** Six municipalities within the New York portion of the Delaware River Watershed contain potential Environmental Justice Areas: Mount Hope (Orange County), Delaware, Liberty, Fallsburgh, Bethel, and Monticello (Sullivan County). New York State identifies potential Environmental Justice Areas as U.S. Census block groups of 250-500 households each that had populations that met or exceeded at least one of the statistical thresholds:

<sup>17</sup> White, Ronald, et al. “[Environmental Justice for Delaware Mitigating Toxic Pollution in New Castle County Communities.](#)” *Union of Concerned Scientists*, Oct. 2017

<sup>18</sup> Pomar, O. D., & Cole, L. W. (2002). [Camden, New Jersey, and the Struggle for Environmental Justice.](#) *Clearinghouse Rev.*, 36, 94.

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- At least 51.1% of the population in an urban area reported themselves to be members of minority groups
- At least 33.8% of the population in a rural area reported themselves to be members of minority groups
- At least 23.59% of the population in an urban or rural area had household incomes below the federal poverty level<sup>19</sup>

**Pennsylvania:** Chester, Pennsylvania is a small city with a low-income Black population, located in the affluent, mostly white Delaware County. The population of Chester is 65% Black, the highest percentage in the state and ten times higher than in Delaware County, median family income is 45% lower than in Delaware County, and the poverty rate is 25%, more than 3 times the rate in Delaware County. Chester has been home to a trash incinerator that handled waste from the entire county, a sewage treatment plant that still receives the entire county’s sewage, and numerous other waste processing plants, oil refineries, and industrial polluters. Essentially, the low-income, black community of Chester has been forced to live amidst the waste of the more affluent, white towns and cities around it. The children of Chester suffer the highest blood-lead levels, infant mortality rates, percentage of low-weight births, within the state and lung cancer rates that are 60% higher than any other town in Delaware County according to the Environmental Justice Network. The list of potential illnesses people in Chester faces goes on, and yet only 1.5% of the trash burned at the incinerator is from Chester. 28% comes from New York, another 28% comes from the rest of Delaware County, 25% from Philadelphia, 12% from New Jersey, 2% from Delaware and another 2% from Maryland, 1% from Connecticut, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia and Puerto Rico combined and 0.1% from other Pennsylvania counties according to the Environmental Justice Network. The inhabitants of Chester are carrying the burden of ten other states’ trash<sup>2021</sup>.

## Environmental Justice Governance

**Pennsylvania-** Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Environmental Justice,  
(484) 250-5942

<sup>19</sup> [“Maps & Geospatial Information System \(GIS\) Tools for Environmental Justice.”](#) Maps & Geospatial Information System (GIS) Tools for Environmental Justice - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation

<sup>20</sup> [Environmental Justice Factsheet](#), Apr. 1996

<sup>21</sup> Schiff, Alyssa. [“Environmental Injustice in Delaware County.”](#) *The Review*, 20 Mar. 2018.

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New Jersey- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Environmental Justice,  
(609) 633-0747

NJ Executive Order 23: The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), with support from other state agencies, to develop guidance on how all state departments can incorporate environmental justice considerations into their actions. For the status of the Executive Order and more information, [click here](#).

New York- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of Environmental Justice  
1-866-229-0497

Federal- Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Justice (202) 564-2515  
EO 12898 – 1994

Environmental Justice Act of 2019: The Environmental Justice Act of 2019 would require federal agencies to mitigate environmental injustices through agency action and would strengthen the legal protections of those affected by environmental injustices.

For more information about Environmental Justice see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

#### **Additional Resources:**

- The [Delaware River Urban Waters Federal Partnership](#) brings together federal, state, regional, local, and non-governmental organizations to address the systemic and localized environmental degradation and injustices within the watershed.
- Environmental Justice Center at Chestnut Hill United Church: <http://www.chestnuthillunited.org/EJC>
- NJ Environmental Justice Alliance: <http://njeja.org/>
- Isles, a Trenton-based organization: <https://isles.org/>

## **Delaware River Watershed Indigenous Tribes**

The Delaware River Watershed has been the ancestral homeland to the Lenni-Lenape (LEN-ee Leh-NAH-pay) people for over 10,000 years. The Lenni-Lenape inhabited Delaware, New Jersey, southern New York, and



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eastern Pennsylvania prior to the immigration of European settlers. The peaceful tribe was known as mediators, warriors, and diplomats, and are “considered to be among the most ancient of the Northeastern Nations”.<sup>22</sup>

The Nanticoke “Tidewater People” migrated in the 1600’s from the Nanticoke River in Maryland to the Indian River in Southeastern Delaware where they united with the Lenni-Lenape Indians by the 1800’s. The Nanticoke Nation was one of the first to resist the European invasion as early as the mid 1600s. Over the centuries, the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape (like most other Indigenous American tribes) have suffered forced migrations and the colonization of ancestral land; were denied American citizenship; and banned from practicing their religious beliefs. Despite these obstacles, the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape are the longest known stewards of our natural resources and remain active in spreading their history throughout the region today.<sup>23</sup>

The Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware’s website can be found here:

<http://www.lenapeindiantribeofdelaware.com/aboutus.html>

For more information about Indigenous Americans see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

## Governance

### Developing Champions for DEIJ within your Board

The 2014 Green 2.0 study of 1,684 board members of conservation and preservation organizations found that 95.4% of board members identified as white, and 62.9% identified as male. The study also found that the more senior the leadership position, the lower the percentage of ethnic minorities found occupying them<sup>24</sup>. If your organization’s leadership reflects traditional power and privilege structures, consider how they can step back on

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<sup>22</sup> “[Our Tribal History](#),” *The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape An All American Indian Tribe*.

<sup>23</sup> “[Cultural and Historic Value](#),” *Delaware Riverkeeper*.

<sup>24</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

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some decisions and empower staff members with more diverse viewpoints, identities, and experiences to suggest a direction for the organization to work towards in terms of DEIJ.

To have substantive DEIJ incorporation into the mission and values of the organization it is essential to have support from the CEO, high level staff, and board, as they are the primary drivers behind the direction of the organization. Identifying the range of perspectives regarding DEIJ within your board members, either by conducting a survey or having in-person conversations, can be an effective way to gauge potential capacity building needs within your board going forward.

Some common approaches organizations take when introducing DEIJ to their boards include sharing why DEIJ is important to their work, dispelling misconceptions, and answering common questions. A key approach to addressing resistance or ignorance is stressing how DEIJ work is critical to achieving the goals of the organization<sup>25</sup>. Doing continuous work with your board is important so they understand the importance of DEIJ and will be supportive when programs and procedures evolve to be more equitable and inclusive.

Actions that can be taken by boards, CEOs, and high level staff include<sup>26,27</sup>:

- Get comfortable with having uncomfortable conversations
- Actively support DEIJ inclusion into mission, and as an overall priority within the organization
- Institute open and fair hiring, promotion, and pay structures such as pay raises with annual reviews that allow employees to grow in their positions
- Participate in support/learning groups to grow their DEIJ-related competency
- Attend local and national DEIJ-related conferences
- Invite DEIJ speakers to board meetings
- Set aside time for DEIJ topics at meetings on a regular basis

<sup>25</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

<sup>26</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

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- Hire and promote leaders from marginalized groups
- Commit funding allocations to DEIJ efforts
- Provide adequate pay and benefits to all employees
- When there is a board member transition emphasize building or transferring knowledge of DEIJ, seek out members with perspectives that are not yet represented in your board, or make DEIJ part of the on-boarding process

It is important to have diversity in leadership roles within environmental organizations for the following reasons:

- More support for incorporating DEIJ into the mission, values, goals, and strategies of the organization
- Increased perception of fairness
- Diverse employees are more likely to stay with more diversity

### **Integrating DEIJ into your Organization’s Mission**

When bringing DEIJ into your organization’s mission it is vital to connect DEIJ with your organization’s specific vision, rather than a separate thought. When essentialized many missions are to create a community around a particular topic, whether that topic be preserving land, educating the public, etc. Integrating DEIJ into your organization is a key way to ensure that everyone in your community is being reached adequately, thus achieving your mission. To achieve that goal DEIJ must be woven into your organization’s everyday practices and initiatives.

When a firm commitment to DEIJ is taken in an organization’s mission the organization will then be better positioned to commit resources towards implementation. Taking the time to understand your organization’s history in relation to DEIJ work will aid in the recognition of strengths and weaknesses that will inform your work going forward. Because this work can lead to challenging discussions bringing on an external facilitator would be beneficial to help navigate your staff through the process. This process may also be cyclical, after some time working with different initiatives your staff and close partners may come together and identify new ways to approach DEIJ as an organization or coalition<sup>28</sup>.

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- Incorporating DEIJ into the mission and vision of organizations has been shown to increase employee retention and the perception of fairness.<sup>29</sup>
- Comprehensive inclusion of DEIJ into an organization's mission and values should:
  - Be a top priority of the organization
  - Include concrete short and long term goals.
  - Be incorporated into strategic planning
  - Show realistic support (i.e. staffing, funding) to achieve short and long term DEIJ goals

## DEIJ Mission Statements

When DEIJ Mission Statements or priorities are added to your organization's website, avoid listing them last. Doing so presents DEIJ as an afterthought, and not a priority to your organization's goals. Furthermore, your DEIJ Mission Statement should be prominently displayed on the site.

Some examples include:

[Choose Clean Water Coalition](#)- Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and incorporate these issues into the structures, analysis, policy development, decision-making and advocacy process of the Coalition.

[The National Wildlife Federation](#) strives to increase diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in all elements of our work and with our partners to support the interdependent needs of wildlife and people in a rapidly changing world.

[The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed](#) is dedicated to ensuring equal access to healthy and clean water to all people, regardless of any aspect of diversity. Clean water not only has health benefits for humans and wildlife, but it drives economic growth and opens new recreational and community building spaces. Clean water has officially been recognized as a basic human right by the United Nations

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<sup>29</sup> [“Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations,”](#) Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

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since 2010,<sup>30</sup> yet communities within the Delaware River Watershed do not have equitable access to healthy water. Additionally, the communities most impacted by water degradation, water disparities, and environmental injustice are most often the least responsible and the most oppressed and ignored. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are the foundations upon which diverse participants and groups will have the opportunity to unite and achieve the mission and goals of our movement.

We are committed to protecting and restoring the Delaware River, its tributaries, and more than 13,500 square miles of forests, wetlands, communities, and other distinctive landscapes in the watershed so that clean water and valued resources are secured for generations to come. The scope of the environmental movement has evolved over decades and must change further from a mainly white and affluent movement to be equitable and inclusive. The River Network wrote: “American environmentalists have successfully served as the voice for rivers and nature, but we have fallen short in listening to and amplifying the voices and contributions of people who have less access to those resources because of the color of their skin or the size of their wallets”.<sup>31</sup>

## Budget and Fundraising

An organization’s budget reflects what an organization’s priorities are. Ensuring that DEIJ actions such as trainings are specific line items and expanding the budget for existing programs to be modified to include DEIJ will show the organization’s commitment to this work. When reaching out to donors engage those who have already shown an interest in DEIJ initiatives, and for those who have not reach out to understand what areas they may consider funding in the future<sup>32</sup>.

DEIJ work is a process that spans many years and requires a steady amount of funding, which can be perceived as a barrier by organizations. Cost is not always an overriding factor, and often the more costly diversity initiatives are used to help promote women into leadership positions rather than promoting people of color into

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<sup>30</sup> “[Human Rights to Water and Sanitation](#),” *United Nations*.

<sup>31</sup> (“The Case for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion,” *River Network*).

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leadership positions<sup>33</sup>. Remain cognizant of how your organization’s funding may or may not be reflecting your stated goals of DEIJ.

## Promoting DEIJ in the Workplace

### Reflecting on Organization’s Diversity and Inclusion

An organization’s true diversity is dependent on their commitment to inclusivity. Although one method of measuring diversity within an organization is to literally count what percentage a certain group or different groups contribute to the organization, it is beneficial to go further once you have those percentages and also include into the definition of diversity the concept of inclusivity--workshops and supports that are in place. For instance, are: unconscious bias trainings scheduled, affinity groups active, pay transparency practices standard, and DEP (development, evaluation, and promotion) practices in place?<sup>34</sup> When examining the data it is important to disaggregate by position level. Are all the people of color in entry level positions? Is the board majority male?

Another method for reflecting upon an organization's inclusion is to track meetings and record who spoke when, how they were responded to, who was ignored, and who shifted the direction of the conversation, etc. This will highlight who in the organization has less power in decision making processes. Tracking meetings will determine when it might be necessary to designate a portion of each meeting for sharing observations and making room for those who were pushed out of the conversation.<sup>35</sup> Other things that could be included in surveys are: employee attitudes regarding diversity, workforce flow (i.e. hires, turnovers, promotions), employee utilization and awareness of resources, i.e. review of complaints and legal activity regarding employee practices.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>34</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

<sup>35</sup> Berthoud, H., & Greene, R. D. (2001). [A multi-faceted look at diversity: Why outreach is not enough](#). *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 19(2), 2-10.

<sup>36</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019



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Having multiple ways to gather feedback from staff to allow for different preferences in sharing experiences will be crucial as your organization’s work with DEIJ continues. Some common mechanisms include<sup>37</sup>:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Facilitated discussions</li><li>● DEIJ Trainings</li><li>● Lunch speakers/webinars</li><li>● Surveys and written feedback opportunities</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Work plan evaluations</li><li>● Staff evaluations and development</li><li>● Anonymous feedback loops</li></ul> |
|---|--|

When reviewing the feedback prioritize staff from the marginalized groups your work is directed towards. For example if your organization is making an effort to increase gender equality and inclusion, focus and hone in on the voices of women or transgender people in your office. Keep in mind that having a respectful and professional relationship that is based on safety, trust, and inclusion is very valuable when asking staff to share their experiences. Be transparent about why you are collecting feedback, what you are trying to improve specifically, and what you will do with the information shared.<sup>38</sup>

## Developing an Action Plan

When developing an action plan it is important to start with inclusion, not diversity. Focusing solely on diversity without inclusion can lead to tokenism and an unsafe environment for staff and board members of color and/or other members with marginalized identities.

Conducting an assessment of your organization’s current culture, practices, and programs will provide insight on various perspectives within the organization. It can include a survey or one-on-one interviews of staff and board, facilitated discussions, or feedback from volunteers, clients, grantees, and partners.

<sup>37</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

<sup>38</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

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Equity- the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion- the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, valued and able to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. A diverse group is not by default always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or ‘implicit bias’ helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

Possible questions include:<sup>3940</sup>

- What is it like to work here? What is the best thing and what is the thing you like the least?
- How are differences addressed at this organization?
- Do you see strong leadership support of the organization’s value of diversity and inclusion?
- If you had a concern about harassment or discrimination, where would you report that concern?

After conducting the assessment specific challenges and opportunities relative to DEIJ will emerge, which will influence the direction your DEIJ work takes. After considering the results of the assessment, develop specific, measurable, and actionable goals to respond to those opportunities and challenges<sup>41</sup>. For example, if survey responses show that few staff members know the process for reporting work-based discrimination, providing clear communication of that process would be something to prioritize.

These goals will vary from organization to organization, some will want to set broad goals while others choose a more tailored approach. It is important to integrate DEIJ throughout the strategic plan rather than having it as a separate program. DEIJ is relevant to every department, program, and practice and thus should be reflected as so in the strategic plan.

The most vital parts of an action plan are the inclusion of clear incentives, accountability measures, and defined roles and responsibilities for each department. Other recommended components include messaging or a forward from organizational leaders, an explanation of the business case for diversity and inclusion, commitment to moving beyond state and federal requirements, a breakdown of current workforce diversity, a comparison of hires and losses by demographics, an overview of the DEIJ plan, and specific long term and short term goals with strategies for reaching them and measuring efficacy<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> [AICPA- Sample diversity and inclusion questions for employee surveys](#)

<sup>40</sup>The Winters Group. (2013, June 25). [Developing Sustainable Diversity and Inclusion Strategies - Part 6: Conducting a Cultural Audit](#).

<sup>41</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

<sup>42</sup> Beasley , Maya A. “[Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization](#).” *Diverse Green*



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For examples of organizational assessments visit CDRW’s Member Access DEIJ page and the cultural audits are found under [Resources → Internal Organizational Practices → Cultural Audits](#).

## Hiring a Consultant

Consultants can help your organization begin or continue on the DEIJ journey. Learn from their experience within their own organization and from working with other organizations which have gone through similar processes. Consultants can lead internal workshops; disseminate information and best practices; lead, oversee, or facilitate webinars on DEIJ topics; and support the integration of DEIJ into all aspects of the organization. Organizations recommend seeking out a consultant sooner rather than later to help guide them on an effective path from the beginning of their work. Research has shown that there is a need for staff or consultants that can: deliver trainings or workshops on topics such as racial equity or culture change, coach and advise leaders, support all staff and board members, support the development of new organizational systems, provide insight into organizational culture, develop a growth mindset culture, create staff of color support systems, teach skills to help navigate difficult conversations, and facilitate DEIJ discussions<sup>43</sup>.

List of consultants:

1. [The Avarna Group](#)- Provides workshops, presentations, assessments, and strategies. Has a page for free resources including readings, videos, activities, and graphics.
2. [Resource Media](#)- Services include strategic planning, message development, media relations, multicultural communications, digital organizing, social media, content, training, research, imagery, and crisis communications. They have free blogs and tipsheets to access.
3. [Youth Outside](#)- Primarily focused on outdoor education, holds Outdoor Education Institute annually, a Rising Leaders Fellowship for early-to-mid level positions within youth-serving outdoor programming, Cultural Relevancy training, and has a grantmaking capacity.
4. [The Raben Group](#)- Services include Media and Communications, Government Affairs and Policy Counsel, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Impact Entertainment, Issue Campaigns and Movements, and Strategic Planning. For DEI specifically they offer training, facilitation, third party engagement, environmental

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surveys/cultural assessments, equity and inclusion policy integration, strategy sessions, and operationalizing equity.

5. [Green 2.0](#)- Compiled comprehensive reports on the current state of diversity within the environmental movement, presents webinars on that research.
6. [PRISM](#)- Services include Diversity and Inclusion, Talent Management, Cultural Competency, Harassment and Discrimination, and ERGs and Diversity Councils. For D&I specifically they offer consulting, training, toolkits, eLearning, and presentations.
7. [Visions, Inc.](#)- Services include workshops, training, organizational development, and youth engagement.
8. [Jumana Vasi](#)- Services include advising on environmental advocacy strategies, building organizational capacity, implementing DEI initiatives.
9. [Andrea Lawful-Trainer](#)- In addition to her expertise as an education consultant focusing on closing academic achievement gaps, Andrea Lawful-Trainer also offers implicit bias training for young people and adults.
10. [Angela Park](#)- independent consultant, researcher, and writer dedicated to making social justice and equity hallmarks of progressive advocacy, policymaking, philanthropy, and business. She helps mission-driven organizations embed social justice and equity throughout their work, bringing three decades of experience on sustainable development policy, environmental justice, equity and diversity, and organizational and leadership development.
11. [AORTA \(Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance\)](#)- AORTA members work as consultants and facilitators to expand the capacity of cooperative, collective, and community-based projects through education, training, and planning. They offer workshops on topics such as racial, economic, and gender justice.
12. [Attic Youth Center’s Bryson Institute](#) - offers dynamic, interactive, and educational trainings around best practices for working with LGBTQ individuals. The goal of their trainings is foster understanding, impart knowledge, and provide strategies for creating safe and affirming environments
13. [Beyond Diversity 101](#) - offers intensive, multi-day classes which focus on recognizing, taking responsibility, shifting mindsets, and building and utilizing effective skills.
14. [Hillary Blecker](#)- provides individual coaching, group coaching, facilitation, and training. Formerly a part of Blue Door Group.
15. [BMe](#)- The increasingly volatile climate concerning race, communities and America’s future makes taking no position highly conspicuous and taking the wrong position extremely costly. Adaptive executive leaders and

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managers in social innovation, philanthropy, and major associations overcome that immobilizing fear by applying an award-winning cognitive frame that engenders understanding, confidence and inspired constructive action. It’s called “Asset-Framing”.

16. [True North EDI](#)- Offers Organizational Development, Staff Development, and Communications.
17. [Center for Diversity and the Environment](#) Equity Audit: assessment tool that illuminates an organization’s current reality and provides strategic direction on the path forward. Through the tool, CDE analyzes what an institution is already doing, what it is not yet doing, and recommends practical, strategic, and feasible next steps
18. [Curdina Hill](#)- Facilitating organizational and collaborative planning process, developing cultural proficiency and racial equity in organizations, coalitions, and networks, designing and facilitation of research, program evaluation, or new program initiatives, organization development.
19. [Davis Associates Consulting Group, Inc.](#)- Workshops on leadership development, customer services, diversity and inclusion, stress management, communications, conflict, as well as individualized coaching.
20. [Olive Branch Educators](#)-OBE consultants have experience working in varied settings, creating programs tailored to meet the specific goals and objectives of our clients. Competency in diversity and inclusion requires the ability to negotiate, uphold, and value varied perspectives simultaneously. As a result, one program design does not fit all settings. We take a thoughtful, systemic, and strategic approach to the needs of each client.
21. [DiverseForce](#)- Offers recruitment services (employer branding, job marketing/distribution, search assistance), a leadership development program, strategic diversity leadership training, and a recruiter’s diversity innovation boot camp.
22. [Dragonfly Partners](#)- provide strategic planning, advising and consultant, training and coaching, facilitating and mediating, policy research/planning, evaluation.
23. [Community Equity Partners](#) - group coaching and workshops, equity-driven leadership coaching, cross-racial coaching, equity-driven coaching for education leaders, and coach training.
24. [Equity Matters](#)- Created over 50 hours of original Cultural Competence and Equity curriculum and tools including inclusive community engagement, recruiting and retaining diverse staff, understanding institutional and structural racism, creating race equity, development of evaluation systems.
25. [Fatima Hafiz-Wahid, PhD](#)- Dr. Fatima Hafiz-Wahid has over 35 years of experience teaching, facilitating groups, and coaching professionals. She teaches courses and facilitates workshops focused on topics

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including social justice and multicultural competency development. Dr. Hafiz-Wahid is particularly interested in helping to enhance the emotional intelligence and capacity of human service providers to deliver support to diverse groups.

26. [First Degree Consulting](#)-Our services include: *Visioning & Strategic Planning Organizational Structure and Capacity Development Policy Development Implementation Design & Execution Community Outreach & Coalition Building Event Planning Meeting Facilitation Messaging & Communications Authentic Youth Engagement*
27. [ICW Consulting](#)- ICW Consulting builds more effective partnerships, teams, and organizational systems. They work with clients to create a culture that strongly values and seeks out opportunities to bring different perspectives into consideration. ICW Consulting also delivers interactive presentation on topics related to inclusive leadership and culture including micro-aggressions and unconscious bias.
28. [Aha Solutions Unlimited](#)- Aha provides consulting, research and guidance for organizational change. This includes strategic planning, cultural competency assessments and organizational assessments. Aha will also coach the leader and the team through the change process.
29. [Kaytee Ray-Riek](#)- offers organizational development, coaching, training, meeting and retreat facilitation, and hiring consultation.
30. [Keecha Harris LLC](#)- provides research and evaluation, project management, and strategic development.
31. [Matthew Armstead](#)- Matthew weaves together community organizing, activist training, and physical theatre to create performances that engage audiences as active participants.
32. [Marie Amey-Taylor EdD](#)- Marie Amey-Taylor, EdD, is an Adjunct Professor at Temple University and member of the Academic Center on Research in Diversity (ACCORD) Steering Committee. Her doctoral research focused on diversity practitioners, and Marie herself has designed and delivered hundreds of diversity-related programs in academic, private sector, nonprofit, community, and volunteer settings.
33. [Moirá Wilkinson](#)- Provides services covering education policy analysis and strategic planning, education program design and evaluation, K-12 teacher and leader effectiveness, education for sustainability, coaching and external research to inform decision-making.
34. [National Coalition Building Institute, Philadelphia](#) The National Coalition Building Institute is dedicated to ending the mistreatment of every group whether it stems from nationality, race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, job, or life circumstance. Their programs develop principled leaders who examine their own leadership, initiate training programs, and enter the heat of emotional group

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conflict to build bridges across differences. The National Coalition Building Institute operates on an All for One and One for All basis, addressing all forms of oppression & prejudice.

35. [National Conference for Community and Justice](#)- offers interfaith programs, workplace training, anti-bullying programs, diversity trainings (single day, multiple day, or train the trainer), and LGBTQ training programs.
36. [People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond](#)- supports the on-going anti-racist efforts in communities, organization, and institutions through the following programs: Undoing Racism Community Organization Workshop, Community Organization Strategy Team, Reflection, Assessment, Evaluation Team, and an European Dissent group.
37. [Perception Institute](#)- Offer tailored services related to reducing discrimination and harmful practices including mind science workshops (sector-specific workshops on the science of the mind covering racial polarization and our society’s current racial paradox, how our unconscious brains operate, perception’s core concepts: implicit bias, racial anxiety, and stereotype threat, evidence based strategies that override implicit bias, racial anxiety, and stereotype threat on an interpersonal and institutional level, communication strategies to reduce polarization and racial anxiety, study designs, survey development, data collection, and communication strategy.
38. [Perceptions Unlimited](#)- Perceptions Unlimited offers training and consulting, coaching, and strategic planning to assist organizations meet diversity and equity goals. They specialize in teaching organizations how to leverage cultural competence system-wide working with leaders, staff and those you serve. Perceptions Unlimited’s mission is to help organizations set and meet sustainable equity goals for all stakeholders, and align institutional policies and practices with best practices in organizational culture transformation.
39. [Race Forward](#)- Race Forward brings systemic analysis and an innovative approach to help people take action toward racial equity. They conduct racial justice trainings which focus on how to challenge and change institutional racial inequities throughout the country.
40. [The Building Movement Project](#)- The Building Movement Project develops research, tools, training materials and opportunities for partnership that bolster nonprofit organizations’ ability to support the voice and power of the people they serve. Their three focus areas are leadership, nonprofits and social change, and movement building.



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41. Skeo- Offers tailored services covering coalition building and facilitation, collaborative problem solving, building cultural competence, telling your story, study circle process design and implementation, community mentoring and organizational development tools, climate equity, and watershed specific assessments tools and frameworks for protection.
42. Training for Change- Since 1992, Training for Change has provided training and capacity building services for activists and organizers. In addition to training workshops, they also have an online Training Tool Library, which allows users to access over 100 tools and articles.

### **Cost-effective alternatives to using a Consultant**

Keep in mind that different consultants cost different amounts and offer different services which might be feasible for your organization. Ultimately, securing funding for a consultant would greatly benefit your organization, but steps can be taken to promote DEIJ in the organization while finding that funding, as well as concurrently when a consultant is found. There are online resources to begin the journey--becoming familiar with literature regarding DEIJ issues. For example, many of the consultants listed above have free resources on their websites.

Creating affinity groups to share resources, knowledge, and experiences is another low cost practice. Within the group setting you can create individual and collective action plans. To learn more about affinity groups see “Creating Safe and Liberated Spaces” on page 26.

Meet with DEIJ practitioners that you would like to learn from and ask what they have done that works well and how they overcame challenges, ask for feedback for where you are stuck. Make sure that you lift up these organizations by nominating them for awards, speaking opportunities and conferences, or sharing other resources you may have as a method of compensation.<sup>44</sup> While a study found that 72% of conservation organizations report collaborating with other organizations frequently, only 18.7% and 13.1% of the groups reported collaborating with groups representing people of color or low income communities respectively with

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the same frequency<sup>45</sup>. Engaging in collaboration with groups different than your own will help facilitate the sharing of ideas, and strengthen all organizations involved.

More and more organizations are committing to integrating inclusion and equity work into their missions. Share what you have learned with partners and encourage those partners to incorporate DEIJ into joint projects. In return they can share resources they found valuable with your organization.

### Forming a DEIJ Committee

The presence of a DEIJ committee is a strong indicator of retention<sup>46</sup>, and is one of the strongest ways to increase managerial diversity<sup>47</sup>. Organizations with established organizational responsibilities for diversity, i.e. a DEIJ Committee, see improved results from diversity trainings, evaluations, networking, and mentoring as well. When a designated committee calls for a proposal it can be more impactful than one or two members of the organization. For a DEIJ Committee to be effective an organization must:

- Reinforce that the committee is doing work that the leadership supports and affirms is necessary. The committee should be brought in when developing long-term planning in order to reinforce that DEIJ is central to the organization’s mission.
- Ensure the committee has a budget for resources such as trainings, equitable pay, or a consultant. This can be an early goal of the committee, your organization may not have the funds already in place to do this work.
- Rebalance the work responsibilities for members of the committee so they can meaningfully engage in the work rather than become overwhelmed with the additional work.

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<sup>45</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>46</sup>“[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

<sup>47</sup> Beasley, Maya A. “[Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization](#).” *Diverse Green*

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- Commit to giving committee authority within the organization, and the recommendations they bring should be considered by those in leadership positions. The committee should be brought in when developing long range planning in order to reinforce that DEIJ is central to your organization’s mission.
  - One way to ensure the committee has authority is to have representation from those in leadership positions on the committee. This can include senior leaders of staff or board members. Having a board member who can be in the room and be a champion for DEIJ concepts, be it budget lines or pushing to make systemic changes towards inclusivity or for changing a mission statement, can be a huge benefit to the progress of your organization.

One of the most important aspects of a DEIJ Committee is bringing different perspectives together in an inclusive manner. Junior staffers often have different perspectives regarding DEIJ work than their senior counterparts or board members. Other types of diversity to consider when creating the committee could be: race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, position within the organization, educational background, department, or professional experience. Do not assume that individuals from typically underrepresented groups will want to serve on the committee, instead offer the invitation broadly throughout the organization. If asked why certain people are on the committee simply stating that everyone on the committee is dedicated to promoting inclusion within the organization. DEIJ Committees will have to have challenging discussions often, it is important that those on the committee feel comfortable working with one another. Taking time to connect members through team building or over meals will help increase the effectiveness of the committee.<sup>48</sup>

Initiatives for DEIJ committees can include<sup>49</sup>:

- Developing a DEIJ mission statement
- Identifying funding opportunities
- Redefining recruitment and hiring interviewing practices
- Cultivating staff of color leadership positions
- Prioritizing inclusivity in regards to soliciting feedback, input, and leadership
- Delivering trainings and workshops
- Coaching and advising leaders

<sup>48</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

<sup>49</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019



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- Supporting the organization to make the case for DEI
- Developing new organizational systems, procedures, etc.
- Replicating how teams and supervisors that exemplify inclusion operate
- Continually promoting a growth mindset
- Supporting ongoing learning

Some organizations may consider creating a community advisory committee made of external stakeholders (from communities served, funders, partner organizations, volunteers, etc.) to complement the work of the internal committee. These folks should be compensated for their time, consider the living wage (~\$15/hour) while also remaining aware of the local context as a starting point<sup>50</sup>. Identifying these individuals from outside stakeholder groups as well as securing funding for their involvement can be early initiatives taken by the DEI committee.

### Effective DEI Trainings

In order to have the intended effect of making a workplace more inclusive, DEI training must not be seen as an event separate from other efforts the organization is taking. On their own diversity training does not significantly affect attitudes towards racial or gender minorities<sup>51,52</sup>, and should not be your organization's primary focus in DEI work but it is a critical first step in the process. Unconscious bias training is correlated to increased employee intent to stay<sup>53</sup>. Trainings are most well received when they are well facilitated discussions that create a safe space for marginalized staff members, rather forcing them to be more vulnerable than their privileged counterparts or are emotionally/professionally “unsafe” spaces for marginalized staff. Other common mistakes

<sup>50</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEI in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

<sup>51</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>52</sup> Beasley, Maya A. [“Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization.”](#) *Diverse Green*

<sup>53</sup> Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019) [“Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations,”](#)

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include one off trainings, trainings that do not provide tools to apply the learning to action, and trainings with low attendance.<sup>54</sup>

Training is an ongoing commitment, and should be assessed annually to inform budgeting needs. In the beginning of this work many organizations benefit from a 101 training for all staff and as time goes on increasing the depth of the trainings. Requiring or incentivizing attendance will develop a shared understanding and common framework for staff to work with, as well as create opportunities for relationship building with members that do not often interact.

Organizations commonly benefit from trainings covering<sup>55</sup>:

- Overcoming fear and anxiety regarding DEIJ work
- Cultural competency
- Cultural humility
- Community engagement
- Effective partnership building
- Funding DEIJ work without triggering 501(c)3 limitations

There are a variety of conferences that are focused on DEIJ trainings, including [White Privilege Conference](#), [Facing Race](#), and [People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond](#)’s various workshops . The [Diverse Environmental Leaders Speakers Bureau](#) is another resource for finding speakers for your organization.

## Fostering an Inclusive Organizational Culture

Many organizations find that they struggle to retain staff over time, which many times related to the workplace culture of the organization prioritizing diversity over inclusion. Understanding your organization’s culture can be challenging, especially for those who have been there a long time, it is simply seen as the way things are done. To begin understanding your workplace culture take the time to facilitate discussions with every member

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<sup>54</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

<sup>55</sup> Choose Clean Water Coalition (2019). [DEIJ in Action: A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Guide for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)

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regarding what it is like for them to be a part of your organization. Being aware of the challenges faced by underrepresented members of the organization is the first step in changing the current workplace climate. As this work begins to take off within your organization many difficult discussions will be had. It is important that everyone be willing to work through these discussions that could range from the historical context of current disparities to the impact of privilege within the environmental movement. Creating this culture of openness is a long-term commitment, it is important to continue working and demonstrate that feedback leads to action<sup>56</sup>.

A study found that 56% of staff of color agree or strongly agree that they have to conform to the culture to succeed, and about 50% of staff of color agree or strongly agree that they can bring their full selves to the workplace every day. Only 2% of staff of color agreed or strongly agreed that the environmental movement’s culture is inclusive. Organizations cannot reap the benefits of different viewpoints if the culture is not willing to accept that those different perspectives may challenge the current climate, ultimately pushing those outside of the predominant culture away. Having a diverse staff without inclusion inevitably leads to tokenism if the marginalized staff members do not feel valued or heard. Be sure to share power and lift up marginalized employees in all facets of the organization, not just on diversity-related work.

Some common exclusive practices are<sup>57</sup>:

- Leaders ignoring suggestions from staff of color and other marginalized groups while supporting the same suggestions when coming from white staff
- Staff ignoring the expertise of people of color
- Lack of investment in leadership development and promotion
- Lack of effort in actionable DEIJ practices, especially after a strong purported DEIJ commitment
- Diversity-only efforts that lead to tokenization
- Lack of commitment, resistance, defensiveness, power hoarding, fragility, from white staff

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When staff of color were asked what makes an atmosphere in which they are comfortable bringing their whole selves, they used the following terms to describe an ideal inclusive environment<sup>58</sup>:

- |                               |               |                    |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| ● Trusting                    | ● Vulnerable  | ● Helpful          |
| ● Ask questions               | ● Open-minded | ● Caring           |
| ● Listen                      | ● Welcoming   | ● Fun              |
| ● Respectfully agree/disagree | ● Accepting   | ● Self-reflective  |
| ● Celebrate differences       | ● Respectful  | ● Thoughtful       |
| ● Supportive                  | ● Encouraging | ● Culturally aware |
| ● Open                        | ● Kind        |                    |
| ● Authentic                   | ● Genuine     |                    |

## Unconscious Bias

There are three types of bias: conscious (explicit), unconscious (implicit), and systemic (institutional).

- **Conscious** or explicit bias is a prejudice that results in intentional (known) action towards individuals of an oppressed or marginalized group.
- **Unconscious** or implicit bias is a prejudice that results in unintentional (unknown) action towards individuals of an oppressed or marginalized group.
- **Systemic** or institutional or organizational bias is prejudice, bigotry, or unfairness directed by health, educational, government, judicial, legal, religious, political, financial, media, or cultural institutions towards individuals of an oppressed or marginalized group

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The difference among the three can come down to awareness or intention. Consider a situation in which a woman approaches her manager and asks why her male counterparts are always assigned to lift heavy boxes but she never receives those assignments. If the manager replies that he does not think it is right for ladies to lift heavy boxes that would be conscious bias. He has made an intentional decision to exclude women from receiving that task based on her gender. If he answers that he had never thought about it and the next time the opportunity arises he will ensure that women are considered that would be considered unconscious bias. He was unintentionally excluding women from that task. If he were to say that company policy is that women are not to lift heavy boxes that would be systematic bias. The decision to exclude women from that task was an organizational decision.

Unconscious bias can become conscious bias but not vice versa. While one can’t suddenly become unaware of their intentional actions, once made aware of prejudicial behavior, the action becomes *conscious bias* if allowed to continue. In the above example, had the manager responded, “Oh I didn’t know that was the case, but I’d rather not change what I’m doing,” that would be an example of an unconscious bias becoming conscious and possibly systemic.

Unconscious biases are feelings, emotions, and impulses which we are not aware of, but which affect our decisions and actions. For example, oftentimes white people have unconscious biases towards people of color. In a society with rampant systemic racism, it is almost impossible to avoid internalizing and incorporating those views. Negative unconscious bias is often driven by fear.

The first step to countering these unconscious biases is to acknowledge having them. Have hard discussions regarding race or other marginalized groups. Institute systemic ways of removing any chance of imparting biases. Review literature and other platforms which revolve around race and mitigating unconscious bias. Recognizing unconscious biases is not enough, follow up must include practices to reduce or reduce or remove those biases. A study found that 46% of organizations agreed that there was bias within their operations, but only 56% of that group had any plans to mitigate the biases that they identified.<sup>59</sup> One such mitigation tactic would be, when

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<sup>59</sup> Maya A, Beasley, [Diversity Derailed: Limited Demand, Effort, and Results in Environmental C-Suite Searches](#), (October 2016)

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hiring an employee, having the names of the applicants removed from resumes before reviewing them greatly reduces unconscious bias present during that stage of the hiring process. Constant and conscious work is necessary to reduce the influence of these unconscious biases, it is not something that can be undone with one training.<sup>60</sup>

Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition- thoughts and feelings outside the conscious awareness and control. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases and to provide a “virtual laboratory” for collecting data on the Internet. Choose from a series of Implicit Biases tests from weight to gender to race here: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>

For more information about bias see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

### **White Supremacist Culture and White Fragility**

White supremacist culture is defined as, “the explicit to subtle ways that the norms, preferences, and fears of white European descended people overwhelmingly shape how we organize our work and institutions, see ourselves and others, interact with one another and with time, and make decisions”. White culture is often seen as the default way to do things, promoting the implicit idea that other cultures are a deviation from the “norm” and whiteness is the best way to do things. The term white supremacist culture does not mean that white nationalist organizations are in leadership, but that white culture dominates all facets of the organization. Some characteristics of a white supremacist culture are<sup>61</sup>:

- Perfectionism
- Continued sense of urgency
- Defensiveness
- Valuing quantity over quality
- Prioritizing the written word over other communication strategies

<sup>60</sup> Dovidio, John, PhD. [Speaking of Psychology: Understanding your racial biases](#). American Psychological Association.

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html>



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- Paternalism
- Either/or thinking
- Fear of open conflict
- Individualism
- Believing that objectivity can be achieved while also believing emotions should not play a role in decision making
- Right to comfort for those in power while scapegoating those who cause discomfort

For more detailed explanations of these characteristics please visit Showing Up For Racial Justice’s (SURJ) article [“The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture”](#).

The mainstream environmental movement is undoubtedly a white supremacist culture, which is a prevailing root cause of staff of color’s negative experiences in the workplace. When that culture is challenged the response often reflects a sense of white fragility, or a “state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation”. These emotions and behaviors discourage the white supremacist culture from being challenged and reinforces its dominance. Rather than defaulting to white fragility when challenged white supremacist organizations should listen with openness, humility, and vulnerability<sup>62</sup>.

## Tokenism

Tokenism is defined as “the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce”.<sup>63</sup> Essentially tokenism is diversity without inclusion. . Staff of

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<sup>62</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

<sup>63</sup> <https://medium.com/@TonieSnell/tokenism-the-result-of-diversity-without-inclusion-460061db1eb6>

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color or those from other marginalized groups are part of the organization but are not given the same power and respect as are other colleagues from the majority identity.

Some common examples include:

- recruiting those with marginalized identities to formal leadership positions, but their recommendations and ideas are overlooked
- only hiring people of color for stereotypical people of color roles such as a Diversity Manager
- convening special diversity councils but not building up people of color leadership on the main Board
- asking a junior staffer of color about what your organization should do about diversity<sup>64</sup>

Tokenism often gives those in power or an organization the appearance of being inclusive but they are instead using people with marginalized identities as props to further that appearance rather than valuing their perspectives and ideas. To avoid tokenism, it is important to be explicit about acknowledging the power dynamics in your organization and seeking to change them. For example, to ensure that all voices are heard and valued during meetings, an organization might have a facilitator keep track of who is talking and encourage equal participation, or a group leader may alternate who leads peer meetings.

### **Creating Safe and Liberated Spaces**

Whether or not a consulting firm is hired to assist the DEI journey, affinity groups are great opportunities to facilitate peer-to-peer learning. Affinity groups are voluntary associations for people with common interests, most commonly centered around a common identity. They differ from a diversity committee due to that distinction of being centered around a common identity. They provide a safe space to improve interpersonal and systemic dynamics. Affinity groups can be for different aspects of diversity. For example, you could have an affinity group for those in the LGBTQ+ community, people of color, or disabled folks. In order to fully support a diverse staff with an affinity group the group should have power to provide recommendations to a department or the organization as a whole.

<sup>64</sup> <https://medium.com/the-nonprofit-revolution/8-ways-people-of-color-are-tokenized-in-nonprofits-32138d0860c1>



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Additionally, you can--and should-- have a white affinity group. White culture is so used to *not* talking about race, that they need a lot more information, time, and practice discussing race and racial dynamics than people of color do to get to a high level of conscience and competence. This also lifts the burden from People of Color being the main educators around race. For ideas of what a White Affinity Group achieves you can read [this](#) article about University of Pennsylvania’s White Students Confronting Racism group.

## Welcoming Gender and Sexuality in the Workplace

There are an estimated seven million LGBTQ+ employees in America’s private sector.<sup>65</sup> Overall, 40% of LGBTQ+ employees say that they have been bullied at work.<sup>66</sup> Bullying, or other worries of not being accepted lead many LGBTQ+ staff members to be “closeted”, or to not disclose their orientation or gender identity while at work. This leads to increased anxiety about how their colleagues may judge them if they were to discover their orientation or gender identity, and spend enormous effort concealing that facet of themselves that leaves less energy for actual work. “Closeted” staff typically do not engage in collegial banter about such things as workplace activities-in fear of accidentally disclosing their identity or orientation, missing out on important bonding within the workplace. “Closeted” employees are nearly twice as likely to feel isolated as work, and 20% more likely to believe their careers have stalled when compared to staff members that are “out”, or have chosen to share their orientation and/or gender identity with their colleagues. “Out” workers stand a better chance of being promoted,<sup>67</sup> are less likely to be depressed, feel distracted or exhausted, or avoid social events than their “closeted” counterparts. Specifically for transgender staff members, those who had disclosed their gender identity at work were more satisfied with their jobs, reported higher levels of affective commitment, and less job anxiety than those who had not disclosed their gender identity.

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<sup>65</sup> [LGBT People in the Workplace.](#)

<sup>66</sup> Johnson, J. (2019, April 10). [LGBT-Inclusive Policies Benefit Employees and Companies Alike.](#)

<sup>67</sup> Sumberg, S. A. H. K. (2014, August 1). [For LGBT Workers, Being "Out" Brings Advantages.](#)

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Enacting LGBTQ+ supportive policies not only make your organization more welcoming for those within the community but those outside of it as well.<sup>68</sup> Employees who work in inclusive workplaces report greater job satisfaction regardless of their sexual orientation.<sup>69</sup> Diversity-enhancing policies also have organizational effects that could improve profits such as lower health insurance costs due to the improved health outcomes for LGBTQ+ employees in a supportive environment, or more business from consumers that want to do business with socially responsible organizations.<sup>70</sup>

One way to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ staff is to learn about and properly use gender pronouns. In the workplace, employees have the option of articulating their preferred name and the way this is articulated may vary across settings -- formal vs. informal, email vs. in-person meetings, name badges, business cards and so on, the same should be true for an employee’s gender pronouns. Gender pronouns (such as “he/him/his” and “she/her/hers”) refer to people that you are talking about. Gender pronouns are the way that we constantly refer to each other’s gender identity.

Usually we interpret or “read” a person’s gender based on their outward appearance and expression, and “assign” a pronoun. But our reading may not be a correct interpretation of the person’s gender identity. For example, we cannot assume that a person uses “she/her” pronouns because they’re wearing a dress. Because gender identity is internal -- an internal sense of one’s own gender -- we don’t necessarily know a person’s correct gender pronoun by looking at them. Additionally, a person may identify as genderfluid or genderqueer and may not identify along the binary of either male or female (e.g. “him” or “her”). Some people identify as both masculine and feminine, or neither. A genderqueer or non-binary identified person may prefer a gender-neutral pronoun such as the “they” (e.g. “I know Sam. They work in the Accounting Department”). Some examples of common pronouns are: he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, xe/xem/xyr (sounds like: zee/zem/zair), ze/hir/zir (sounds like: zee/here/zir).

Using a person’s chosen name and pronouns is a form of mutual respect and basic courtesy. Many peoples’ gender identity, gender expression, and interpretation of gender can vary. The experience of being misgendered

<sup>68</sup> Badgett, M. V. L., Durso, L. E., Kastanis, A., & Mallory, C. (2013, May). [The Business Impact of LGBT-Supportive Workplace Policies](#).

<sup>69</sup> Johnson, J. (2019, April 10). [LGBT-Inclusive Policies Benefit Employees and Companies Alike](#).

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can be hurtful or angering. The experience of accidentally misgendering someone can be embarrassing for both parties, creating tension and leading to communication breakdowns across departments, teams, and with the public. When mistakes do happen acknowledge the mistake, correct the language, and move on. Profusely apologizing can make the misgendered person uncomfortable and feel as though they need to comfort the person who made the mistake, when they were the one that was hurt initially. Before correcting others on using a different pronoun for someone you work with, talk to the person instead. They may have reasons for not telling certain people their pronouns, and that choice should be respected.

For more information about LGBTQ+ Inclusion see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

## Disability Inclusion

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines disability as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. 1 in 5 people will acquire a disability in their lifetime, making it one of the largest minority identities in the country.<sup>71</sup> The disability community is diverse within itself, with there being a wide range of conditions considered to be disabilities. No two people experience a disability the way, it is important to ask a person what terms they prefer or what accommodations they may need rather than assuming. Many disabilities, including physical, can be invisible to outside observers. Studies have shown that employees with disabilities stay at their job longer, companies that embrace best practices for employing people with disabilities consistently outperform their peers.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, when people without disabilities work alongside those with disabilities, overall staff turnover decreases by up to 30%, and non-disabled staff are more aware how to make the workplace more inclusive.<sup>73</sup>

Disclosing one’s disability can help ensure that employees receive workplace accommodations, which in turn increases their success on the job, in fact it is the most common reason for disclosing a disability according to one study. Some folks, especially those with invisible or stigmatized disabilities, are apprehensive to disclose their disability to their supervisors, even when they would benefit from accommodations. Factors that help an

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<sup>71</sup> Collier, D. (2016). [Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Workplace: Best Practices for HR Professionals](#).

<sup>72</sup> [EARN's Primer on Disability Inclusion](#)

<sup>73</sup> [Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage](#)

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employee decide to disclose their disability include an open and supportive relationship with their supervisor, knowing the employer has made concerted efforts to create a disability inclusive workplace, knowing that the employer is actively recruiting and hiring people with disabilities, and knowing that other employees disclosed their disability and were successful in the workplace.<sup>74</sup>

Employees may have misconceptions about people with disabilities and their ability to do work, creating a barrier for folks to disclose their disability. Some of these misconceptions are feeling as though the disabled employee is inferior, pitying them, denying that hidden disabilities are legitimate, believing that an employee is getting an unfair advantage when receiving accommodations, or fear that they will offend the disabled employee and will avoid them as a result. Employers can combat these misconceptions by engaging in discussions about disability and providing training to increase employee’s understanding.<sup>75</sup>

As mentioned previously, many folks with disabilities benefit from workplace accommodations often referred to as “reasonable accommodations”. Because they enable people to perform the essential functions of a job they are integral in retention and advancement. Not all people with disabilities require reasonable accommodation, and two people with the same disability could need different accommodations. Some have the belief that workplace accommodations are an expensive undertaking, but the Job Accommodation Network has found that more than half of all accommodations cost nothing, and most employers report financial benefits due to the reduced insurance cost, decreased turn over, and increased productivity.<sup>76</sup> JAN is a free resource that, amongst other resources, offers lists of potential accommodations listed by disability, limitation, or work related function. Those lists can be found [here](#).

The accommodations process is most successful when it focuses on the job tasks rather than the disability, employees making the request can suggest what would be most effective, and the positions are customized to capitalize on the strengths of the employee. It is advisable to communicate the process of requesting and implementing reasonable accommodations to all employees.<sup>77</sup> This increases the likelihood that those who need

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<sup>74</sup>Collier, D. (2016). [Inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Workplace: Best Practices for HR Professionals](#).

<sup>75</sup> [EARN-Attitudinal Awareness](#)

<sup>76</sup> [EARN- Inclusion@Work Trainings & Webinars Step 4](#)

<sup>77</sup> [Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage](#)

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accommodations will request them, and know what to expect when they do. Accommodations can benefit all employees, not just those with disabilities. Consider establishing a universal policy for workplace flexibility. This would also assist folks hesitant to disclose their disability to still receive accommodations when needed and create a culture where folks are not singled out for having apparent accommodations.

Approximately 18% of workers report having a mental health condition in any given month, making psychiatric disability the second most common disability type covered by the ADA (first being back and spinal injuries).<sup>78</sup> Developing your organization's capacity to be inclusive of those with mental illnesses is a key management practice that will help you retain talented staff.<sup>79</sup> For example, 80% of people with depression report some level of functional impairment. If staff does not feel as though they would be supported at work when disclosing their mental illness they may not seek resources or accommodations that would help them succeed in their position, or feel able to take time off if needed to seek treatment. To show support to your staff that may have a psychiatric disability it is important to create a commitment to leading a behaviorally healthy workplace.<sup>80</sup> Other initiatives such as providing flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting, providing stress management training, or anti-stigma campaigns and trainings.<sup>81</sup> This workplace mental health assessment is a great starting point to assess areas of improvement to encourage a mentally well organization:

<https://www.workplacementalhealthassessment.com/>

For more information about Disability Inclusion see CDRW's Member Access resources [here](#).

## Developing Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is defined as “A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. 'Culture' refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs,

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<sup>78</sup> Norman H. Kirshman & Roger L. Grandgenett II, [ADA: The 10 Most Common Disabilities and How to Accommodate](#), 2 LegalBrief L.J. 3, par. # (1997)

<sup>79</sup> [Mental Health Conditions in the Workplace and the ADA](#)

<sup>80</sup> (June 2016) [WORKING WELL: Leading a Mentally Healthy Business](#)

<sup>81</sup> [EARN-Pillar 1: Build AWARENESS and a Supportive Culture](#)

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beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities.”<sup>82</sup>

Cultural competence takes time and practice. It also requires that the person acknowledges their own culture, values other people’s cultures, understands the complexity of the differences between cultures, is respectful of cultural boundaries, receptive to both explicit and minute changes in body language, expression, and engagement. Flexibility in terms of behavior and routines also aids cultural competence. Being explicit about differences rather than making it a taboo topic allows people to understand others better, negotiate effectively, recognize contributions equally, resolve disagreements, and engage in creative problem solving. Everyone is a part of the diversity picture, even when the identities they hold may be privileged. Through self-reflection an individual with privileged identities learns that diversity is as much about themselves as it is about others.<sup>83</sup> Those who hold and recognize their privileged identities are powerful allies in equity work, as they can leverage their privilege to lift up others who may be overlooked due to their identities.

Being culturally competent is not the same as knowing exactly what to say and what to do at all times. Instead it involves being curious and inquisitive, learning to ask questions, and reflect upon automatic assumptions in a respectful manner.

## Recruitment and Retention

### Job Postings

Many organizations are discouraged from finding minority hires by believing the misconception that there are few people of color in the hiring pool that are qualified for positions. As a generalization, organizations are not including language or information in their job postings that attract candidates of color or from other marginalized groups, or they are not advertising in accessible venues. Another common mistaken belief is that

<sup>82</sup>[Cultural Competence](#). National Prevention Information Network.

<sup>83</sup> Berthoud, H., & Greene, R. D. (2001). [A multi-faceted look at diversity: Why outreach is not enough](#). *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 19(2), 2-10.



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candidates of color want higher wages than organization’s can afford. A study found that salary expectations of minority college students were not inflated. The same study found that 59% of minority students are interested in working for national nonprofits, and 65% are interested in working for grass-roots nonprofits post graduation.

#### Inclusive Job Descriptions

Many hiring consultants see value in transferable skills from other sectors to environmental advocacy work but recognize their clients’ reluctance. In cases where diversity in a position was prioritized consultants note a tendency to increase the desired qualifications, setting up a search for someone who does not exist, regardless of demographic background.<sup>84</sup> When crafting a job description be sure that your organization does not fall into this trap, and welcome the opportunity for transferable skills from candidates with backgrounds in non-environmental sectors. Ask yourself, “What skills are must-haves and which are skills that can be learned?” Additionally, explicitly include ways in which experience could suffice for education in relevant situations.

Similarly, reviewing job descriptions to ensure that standards for positions are not unnecessarily restrictive to those with disabilities. For example, many descriptions include that a candidate must be able to lift 25 pounds, even for non-manual labor related positions. Think if it is critical for that position to be able to lift 25 pounds, or if it is not essential to the role. Another way to promote accessibility for candidates with disabilities would be the inclusion of an accommodation statement to the posting. Such language could resemble, “If you require reasonable accommodation in completing this application, interviewing, completing any pre-employment testings, or otherwise participating in the employee selection process please direct your inquiries to...”<sup>85</sup> Including where to direct their requests is more inviting than simply asking whether or not a candidate needs accommodations, as some folks may be discouraged that they would be passed over for another candidate that does not require accommodations.<sup>86</sup>

Access to higher education is not a privilege that everyone is afforded. Consider writing “Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent work experience required” to acknowledge that fact. Unless absolutely necessary to the role, do not include “Master’s or Advanced Degree Preferred”. That phrase discourages those only a Bachelors, Associates, or

<sup>84</sup> Maya A, Beasley, [Diversity Derailed: Limited Demand, Effort, and Results in Environmental C-Suite Searches](#), (October 2016)

<sup>85</sup> [Job Assistance Network Workplace Accommodation Toolkit](#)

<sup>86</sup> Leary, A. (2019, June 5). [To be more inclusive to people with disabilities, employers should start with their job descriptions.](#)

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equivalent work experience from applying, as the assumption is someone with an advanced degree will automatically get the position. Including phrasing in the preferred qualifications encourages diverse or culturally competent individuals to apply.<sup>87</sup> Examples include, “Experience working directly, successfully, thoughtfully, and collaboratively with diverse communities and groups...” or “Proficiency in a second language preferred...”

A 2011 study found that gendered language used in job descriptions in male dominated fields reduced the number of women who applied to those positions. Masculine words include leader, competitive, and dominant, for example.<sup>88</sup> Textio is an application that can score job postings for gendered word choice and suggest alternative words to use: <https://textio.com/products/>. The Gender Decoder is a free website that will give a list of gender-coded words in a job description, and note which gender the description may skew towards: <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>

Using diversity metrics conveys the emphasis an organization places on its diversification and inclusion efforts. Messages expressing the desire of an organization to target specific groups for recruitment due to the value it places on diversity and diverse perspectives are particularly effective.<sup>89</sup>

#### Including a Salary Range

Posting a salary range and benefits on a job posting is a simple way to combat women and people of color being underpaid compared to their white male counterparts. When a salary is unlisted or depends on past salary history or experience, potential employees have to advocate for their compensation. Women and minority candidates who discuss compensation at any state in the job application process are viewed as aggressive while white males are not. When an employer knows how much a candidate made at their previous job that is a prime factor in the salary the employer offers, regardless of other factors like experience or the living wage. And

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<sup>87</sup> [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring and Retention](#). (2018) Urban Sustainability Directors Network.

<sup>88</sup> [Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Sustains Gender Inequality](#). (2011) University of Waterloo, Duke University.

<sup>89</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

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because women and people of color historically make less, basing a salary on what they were making previously exacerbates inequitable pay.<sup>90</sup>

#### Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Instead of only saying your organization is an equal opportunity employer, you can list all of the different aspects of diversity which are included within that statement. A section or line can be dedicated to encouraging people with certain identities to apply. Avoid adding an inclusion statement at the bottom of the posting, it looks as though it was an afterthought and not truly valued by the organization, instead weave your organization’s commitment to diversity throughout the posting and on your website.

Examples:

- All qualified persons are encouraged to apply and will be considered without regard to race, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or veteran status.
- [Your Organization] is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. [Women, people of color, and trans folk...] are encouraged to apply.

#### Where to Post a Job

Traditional methods for outreach may unintentionally decrease the percentage of qualified applicants of color, and these methods are commonly referred to as “filtering”. This is because these methods rely on predominantly white networks, job boards, school fairs, and job fairs for recruitment, placing the burden of inclusion on people of color. Many times when a job is posted the news is spread by word of mouth, furthering the importance of inclusion in a white network. While there was interest in diversifying the boards and staff, few organizations had diversity managers, jobs are still being posted in ways that perpetuate socioeconomic stratification, and environmental organizations did not use the “internship pipeline.”

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<sup>90</sup> Dama, Francesco, et al. “[If Culture Sector Employers Want Equality, Post Salary and Benefits With Job Descriptions.](#)” *Hyperallergic*, 7 Oct. 2019

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Searches without a diverse slate of candidates are often the result of a lack of commitment to ensure diversity, or a lack of willingness to provide the necessary time to find a qualified diverse slate of candidates. The least common strategies to search for candidates such as conducting national searches, recruiting from minority-serving institutions, recruiting at minority environmental professional associations, hiring those who make cold calls inquiring about jobs, using unemployment or temp agencies, job fair recruitment, or hiring those who walk in the office inquiring about jobs are some of the most likely ways an environmental employer will find low income or minority recruits.<sup>91</sup> This shows that environmental organizations are not seeking out potential minority candidates where they are found.

Recruitment strategies which can reach diverse applicants:

- Free Job Boards
  - [Pink Jobs](#) – LGBTQ+ friendly employers/recruitment
  - [Green Latinos](#) – Latino/Hispanic environmental professionals
  - [United Latino Job Bank](#) – Must sign up and have your organization approved ahead of being able to post jobs
  - [Hispanic National Bar Association](#)
- Paid Job Boards
  - [Professional Diversity network](#) , \$795 for 90 day listing, \$495 for 60 days
  - [Jobs for Disabled Veterans](#), Pricing varies, \$50+
  - [Recruit Disability](#), \$195-683
  - [Association of Latino Professionals for America \(ALPFA\)](#), \$399-\$699
  - [Diversity Employers](#), \$150+
  - [Inclusiv](#), \$120/30 days
  - [Sujata Strategies](#) (\$25/weekly post in digest or \$50 per stand alone email to list)
  - [Philadelphia Diversity](#), \$295+
  - [National Society of Black Engineers](#), \$450-850

<sup>91</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

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- State Employment Programs
  - [New Jersey](#) (Must register as employer)
  - [Delaware](#) (Call your local office)
  - [Pennsylvania](#) (Contact your local office)
  - [New York](#) (Fill out [listing form](#) and contact your local office)
- Paid memberships with job listing opportunities
  - [Hispanic/Latino Professionals Association](#)
  - [Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy](#) (Must serve AAPI communities)
  - [Latinos and Planning Division, American Planning Association](#) or [Membership for Allied Professionals & Citizens](#)
- Diversity Hiring Services
  - [HireDS - Hire Disability Solutions](#)
- Historically Black College and Universities, Minority Serving Institutions, community colleges and schools with a large number of students of color, either graduate or undergrad, alumni associations or current job boards. Some examples include
  - Delaware State University- [Career Service's, Employer Resources](#)
  - Cheyney University of PA- [Career Development Center](#)
  - Community College of Philadelphia- [Career Connections](#)
  - Orange County Community College- [Career Services, Employer Resources](#)
  - Rowan College of South Jersey, Cumberland Campus- [Career Service, Employer Resources](#)
  - Reading Area Community College- [Career Services, Employer Resources](#)
- Professional Organizations (Relationship, Identity, and/or Membership dependent)
  - [National Hispanic Environmental Council](#)
  - [National Forum for Black Public Administrators](#)
    - [NJ Chapter](#)
  - [Association of Latino Professionals for America \(ALPFA\)](#)
  - [Environmental Professionals of Color](#), Center for Diversity & the Environment

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- [Hispanic National Bar Association](#)
- [Delaware Black](#) (resource for African American Community to promote the growth of Black-Owned businesses, organizations, and events)
- [Delaware Latino Professional Network](#)
- [Delaware Hispanic Commission](#)
- Community newspapers, news websites run by communities of color.
- Organizational partners that represent and serve communities of color, LGBTQ+ folks, those with disabilities, etc.
- Multicultural centers or cultural studies departments at local colleges and universities. Ideally a relationship would exist prior to sending; one way is to offer to discuss jobs in government and sustainability with students.

## Reducing Bias in the Interview Process

Despite over half of environmental professionals interviewed in a study believing that there is bias (both conscious and unconscious) in their organization, only 28% believed that the bias has affected their hiring practices.<sup>92</sup> The following subsections provide alternative practices to fight against biases when interviewing and hiring candidates.

### Hiring Committee

A group decision in hiring holds power within the organization and does not isolate a single staff member for making what could be a controversial decision. When individuals are expecting to share their opinion they are motivated to make more objective judgements as they will be responsible for explaining their reasoning.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Maya A, Beasley, [Diversity Derailed: Limited Demand, Effort, and Results in Environmental C-Suite Searches](#), (October 2016)

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When creating a hiring committee include members on the committee who<sup>94</sup>:

- have worked on projects or initiatives related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice
- are representative of different departments within the organization- including staff that will be interacting with the position
- are members of underrepresented groups themselves

Be mindful that these individuals do not become solely responsible for ensuring diversity and inclusion within the hiring process. All members of the committee should be responsible and committed to considering diversity and inclusion issues throughout the process<sup>95</sup>.

### Rooney Rule

The Rooney Rule is a policy in the National Football League (NFL) that states all teams are required to meaningfully interview at least one minority candidate for head coaching and senior football operation openings, and variations of the rule have been adopted by many organizations (i.e. Pinterest, Xerox, Dropbox) since its inception in 2003. In the 12 seasons before the rule was instituted, the NFL had only six non-white head coaches. In 12 seasons under the rule, the league has added 14 head coaches of color. Simply considering a more diverse candidate pool leads to more inclusive hiring. Consider crafting a variation of the Rooney Rule for your organization.<sup>96</sup>

### Structured Interviews

Interviews in which each candidate is asked the same set of predetermined questions and a scorecard to grade the candidate’s responses standardizes the process and minimizes biases by focusing the interview on the factors that will directly impact performance. If likeability or natural chemistry is often an important part of your

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<sup>94</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

<sup>95</sup> Brown, Marcelo. “[Transforming a Movement](#).” *JEDI Heart*, Oct. 2019

<sup>96</sup> Cook, Ian. “[How HR Can Tackle Diversity Using the Rooney Rule](#).” *Visier Inc.*, 14 June 2019.

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organization’s hiring decisions add that as a part of the “scorecard” to avoid making that the primary determinant.<sup>97</sup> Recommended elements of a structured interview include<sup>98</sup>:

- Basing questions on a job analysis such as critical incidents, hypothetical situations, past behavior, work-related background, job knowledge
- Limiting prompting, follow-up questioning, and elaborations from interviewers
- Employing longer interviews/a larger number of questions to obtain more standardized information
- Preventing candidates from asking questions until the end of the interview
- Rating each question’s response
- Taking detailed notes to aid in recall
- Using multiple interviewers
- Avoiding the discussion of interviewees between interviews
- Providing interview training to those on the interviewing team

#### Including DEIJ Related Questions

Diversity related questions within the interview itself reinforces the organization’s commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion to the candidate, as well as measuring the candidate’s commitment to joining an inclusive workplace. Some examples of possible questions can be found on page 13 of [University of California, Berkeley's University Health Services Recruiting a More Diverse Workforce Toolkit](#). Tailoring the questions to relate to your specific organization allows for more pertinent responses, and reinforces the organization’s commitment to DEIJ.

#### Skills Test

Skills tests force the hiring team to focus on the quality of the candidate’s work rather than unconsciously judging the candidate. These tests also create an opportunity for candidates to exemplify their skills based on the posting’s preferred qualifications when their professional or educational experience differs from the standard parameters the organization has used in the past.<sup>99</sup> For example, education-related interviews could include asking the candidate to create a short presentation beforehand that showcases their skills related to the work

<sup>97</sup> Knight, Rebecca. “7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process.” *Harvard Business Review*, 24 July 2018.

<sup>98</sup> Maya A, Beasley, [Diversity Derailed: Limited Demand, Effort, and Results in Environmental C-Suite Searches](#), (October 2016)

<sup>99</sup> [Interns and Outcomes](#), International Labor Office.

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that your organization focuses on. Standardize the prompt that is given to candidates to decrease variables in the process.

For more information about hiring practices see CDRW’s Member Access resources [here](#).

## **Building a Channel: Youth to Conservation Leaders**

### Internships and Volunteer Opportunities

An internship is the single most important credential for recent college graduates to have on their resume in their job search among all industry segments. Approximately 50% of the internship opportunities in the US are unpaid. Unpaid internships reinforce socio-economic, racial, and LGBTQ+ disenfranchisement by allowing access to only those who can afford to work for free due to familial economic support.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) indicates that paid internships have a higher chance of leading to a paying job compared to unpaid. Unpaid internships tend to provide fewer skills, and are weaker in all measures of internship quality than paid internships.<sup>100</sup> While paid internships are an expense for an organization including funding in grant applications to provide pay will lead to better outcomes for the intern and improve their output quality for the organization.

Separate from internships, volunteering practices also can create barriers that lead to inequity, especially when volunteering can lead to promotions or consideration for leadership positions. Volunteering events that are always on days or times where a particular religious group cannot participate, or are during the day when many people are at work are just two examples of barriers. Being on a board can lead to expenses such as travel or hotels, which can be cost prohibitive.<sup>101</sup>

### Minority Serving Institutions in the Delaware River Watershed

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities

<sup>100</sup> Mayo, Lucy, and Pooja Shethji. “[Reducing Internship Inequity](#).” *Association of American Colleges & Universities*, 20 Mar. 2015

<sup>101</sup> Taylor DE. (2014). [The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies](#). Washington, DC: Green 2.0.

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- [Delaware State University](#)
- [Cheyney University of Pennsylvania](#)
- Predominantly Black Institutions
  - [Community College of Philadelphia](#)
- Hispanic-Serving Institutions
  - [Rowan College of South Jersey, Cumberland Campus](#)
  - [Orange County Community College](#)
  - [Reading Area Community College](#)

#### Greek Life and Student Unions

Many colleges have Historically Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+, and other identity-based chapters of Greek Life. If your organization is not close to a minority serving institution utilizing this network is a valuable way to contact diverse audiences that you may not be reaching already. Student Unions are another avenue for reaching certain populations.

#### **Retention Best Practices**

Many organizations struggle with retaining diverse staff once hired. Turnover rates are 34% higher for people of color than their white counterparts. One of the key factors in turnover is a lack of opportunity for growth, expression, understanding, and promotion within the organization. When staff feel as though they have less access to development and promotions, and that their coworkers question their value they are more likely to leave an organization. All employees benefit from a focus on employee development and transparency in the promotion process. Not all organizations have the ability to promote workers due to size, and in those cases access to professional development is even more important.<sup>102</sup> Some identity-based conference opportunities for leadership development include:

- [Taking Nature Black](#)
- [PGM ONE Summit](#)
- [Naturally Latinos](#)

<sup>102</sup> “[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

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- [Black Sustainability Summit](#)
- [Latinx and the Environment Summit](#)
- [National Environmental Justice Conference](#)
- [Women in the Environment Conference](#)
- [Women in Conservation Leadership Conference](#)

The presence of a DEIJ committee and long-term goals related to DEIJ, unconscious bias training, and pay transparency also increased the perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion amongst staff of color.<sup>103</sup>

Mentoring is positively related to more frequent promotions, higher incomes, and greater satisfaction with wages and benefits. While mentoring is typically thought of only being for entry-level employees it is effective for staff of all levels, and has been shown to increase the amount of women and people of color moving to managerial roles.<sup>104</sup> Those engaged in mentoring programs as the mentors often report a greater understanding of the pressures experienced by their mentees, especially mentees from backgrounds different from their own.

When creating a mentorship program it is beneficial to invest in diversity related mentoring training, and have clear input from organizational leadership about the goals of the program. Acting as a mentor is an additional task to the mentor’s workload; therefore compensation or other benefits when possible will support the interest and longevity of the program. A study of a mentorship program found that mentees expressed the need for more structural guidance within the program. Along with the mentoring relationship mentees requested more opportunities to network with other mentees in the program.<sup>105</sup>

An effective mentoring program requires that<sup>106</sup>:

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<sup>103</sup> “[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

<sup>104</sup> “[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

<sup>105</sup> de Dios, Marcel A, et al. “[The Development of a Diversity Mentoring Program for Faculty and Trainees: A Program at the Brown Clinical Psychology Training Consortium](#),” *The Behavior Therapist*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, June 2013,

<sup>106</sup> “[Leaking Talent: How People of Color are Pushed out of Environmental Organizations](#),” Johnson, Stephanie K., *Green 2.0*, (June 2019).

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- Minority employees are aware that a mentoring program is available to them
- Mentees are provided with mentor options that are senior to their position and in the same field
- Clear guidelines are provided about the role and structure of the program
- A reporting procedure is in place to monitor meetings and the overall relationship to ensure the program’s effectiveness

## Additional Resources

[CDRW’s Member Access DEIJ Resources Google Drive](#)

### List of Trainings, Workshops, and Conferences

- [Taking Nature Black](#)
- [PGM ONE Summit](#)
- [Naturally Latinos](#)
- [Black Sustainability Summit](#)
- [Latinx and the Environment Summit](#)
- [National Environmental Justice Conference](#)
- [Women in the Environment Conference](#)
- [Women in Conservation Leadership Conference](#)
- [White Privilege Conference](#)
- [Facing Race](#)
- [People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond](#)

### DEIJ Activities

[Avarna Group’s Activity Guides](#)

[MIT Residence Life Guide to Diversity-based Teambuilders](#)

- Many university residence life departments have great resources for diversity related activities

[CDRW’s Member Resource Folder for DEIJ Activities](#)

### Frequently Cited Sources



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[Green 2.0](#)

[Leaking Talent](#)

[Beyond Diversity](#)

[Diversity Derailed](#)

[Transforming a Movement](#)

[A Multi-Faceted Look at Diversity: Why Outreach is Not Enough](#)

[Choose Clean Water Coalition’s Action Guide](#)

## Living Glossary

**Cultural Competence-** The ability to respond appropriately to people of varying cultures, ages, races, religions, sexual orientations, abilities, and ethnicities in a way that recognizes difference and allows individuals to feel respected and valued.

**Diversity-** includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

**Environmental Justice-** fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, education or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies to ensure that communities of color, indigenous communities, and low-income communities have access to public information and opportunities for meaningful public participation relating to human health and environmental planning, regulations, and enforcement.

**Equality-** Ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. Equality recognizes that historically certain groups of people have experienced discrimination.

**Equity-** the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups

**Gender Identity-** Self-identification as a woman, man, or other non-binary gender, regardless of biological sex.

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**Inclusion-** the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, valued and able to fully participate

**Intersectionality-** the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise

**Justice-** Embracing a vision of society in which the distribution of resources and access to decision making is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

**Neurodiversity-** Concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation. These differences can include those labeled with Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyscalculia, Autistic Spectrum, Tourette Syndrome, and others.

**Privilege-** Power and advantage derived from historical oppression and exploitation of other groups often seen as a right or immunity granted as a benefit

**Race-** Group identity related to local geographic or global human population distinguished as a group by genetic physical characteristics, such as skin color, hair texture, facial features, etc. Today, race is understood as a social construct.

**Sexuality-** An identity based on emotional, romantic, and sexual desires, often determined by a person’s sexual attraction. A component of sexuality. Do not use sexual preference.

**Socioeconomic Status-** the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power and control.

**Unconscious Bias-** social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness

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**White Supremacist Culture-** the explicit to subtle ways that the norms, preferences, and fears of white European descended people overwhelmingly shape how we organize our work and institutions, see ourselves and others, interact with one another and with time, and make decisions

**White Fragility-** state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation