



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

1 pm – 3 pm, Tuesday, December 14th, 2021

Any person may attend the meeting, which are held online via Zoom. A meeting ID and password will be required to access the meeting. Interested participants may request the ID and password by emailing scott@wmswcd.org with the subject line “Request for Conference ID” no later than December 13th, 2021. The meeting can be joined for free directly from the conference link provided. Meeting documents will be available for inspection on the District’s webpage (<https://wmswcd.org/people-places-things/the-west-multnomah-swcd/diversity-and-equity/>)

AGENDA

1:00 pm – Welcome/check-in/announcements – All

1:15 pm – Review minutes from 8/10/2021 – All

1:20 pm – Diverse Supplier Certification Review and Tracking – Randi

1:50 pm – Advisory Committee Forming Plan - Mary

2:15 pm – Partner Funding Equity Lens Review Findings & Suggested Next Steps – Mary

2:35 pm – Updates (5 minutes each)

- Bias Awareness Training Facilitator’s Guide (Please review prior to DEI meeting) – Ari, Randi
- Openness at the Workplace Board/Staff Training Update - Terri
- Demographic Mapping - Mary
- Education Programming Niche Finding - Mary

2:55 pm – Action items review – Scott, Laura/All

3 pm – Adjourn

Next meeting February 8th, 2022 1-3 PM

**DRAFT - WMSWCD Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Summary – DRAFT
October 12, 2021 1:00pm to 3:00 pm, WMSWCD Zoom meeting**

Attending: Scott Gall & Laura Taylor (Co-Chairs); Ari DeMarco, Mary Logalbo, Terri Preeg Riggsby, Randi Razalenti

Welcome/Check-In/Announcements – Mary shared the following in the group chat: I sent out information about a neighborhood DEI training/café chat series that anyone interested can participate in (led through NWNW). Laura, Kammy and I applied a lens to partner funding and I'd be happy to report out on that later. Also, Education Program Niche Finding RFP had a great pre-bid session including contractors already working with CELs on the proposal.

Mary shared the following via email, unsure of being able to fully join the meeting: "Building Diverse Communities" NWNW supported community conversations, workshops and presentations on our staff Teams channel, but I also wanted to mention these at the DEI meetings, so I'm sending along a link to these opportunities here: <https://nwnw.org/about-us/what-we-do/building-diverse-communities/>

Mary also shared that mid-November is when Mary & Isa may be able to get census data to work with.

Terri shared that she is looking to run for Metro Councilor for District 6, and if she gets appointed, may not be able to stay on the District's Board of Directors, but would still be involved in the District in other ways.

Action item: Mary to follow up on partner funding via email.

Approval of August 10, 2021 Meeting Summary – Laura noted that a sentence that was unclear regarding the suggestion of collecting demographic data from staff – it said a "threshold", and should be changed to say 'threshold of people' to be more clear what the threshold is referencing. The minutes were approved with this change.

Randi brought up that the District's draft DEI Committee minutes are currently posted to the website as part of the packet, but we do not follow up with posting approved minutes, and asked if the group thought this would be a good change if it's not too cumbersome for Renee's time to post the approved minutes as well. Terri was curious to see DEI page analytics at some point when possible to find out how often the page was visited, and would like to see this again when we update the website.

Action item: Randi make changes to the final approved minutes as discussed. Randi talk to Renee about getting analytics with traffic on webpages on the current DEI site vs. new site after some time, and if possible, to start putting approved minutes up on the DEI site. Renee to report out on DEI page analytics when she gets a chance during a check-in at a future DEI Committee meeting.

Bias awareness training needs for hiring- Mary shared resources from City of Portland (COP) hiring process for Bias Awareness training, and Ari used these resources for this past year's internship hiring process. This Bias Awareness training process consisted of staff on the interview panel reading the COP training materials and signing an agreement acknowledging having read the materials as well as a component on confidentiality. Ari reached out to the DEI Committee to see if we want to tailor these materials to be more District specific. Mary shared that when she was on an interview panel for COP the group talked about some of their own biases and had a discussion around it, and Mary noted that this might be most important in times when there are partners outside of District staff. This process didn't happen in the internship hire as Ari was not aware of this process. Ari noted that the confidentiality piece was only on the agreement form, and is wondering if this should be elsewhere than just in the agreement. Laura (who was on the interview panel for last year's interns) noted that the training was helpful and felt there wasn't a need to reinvent anything, but it may be good to have the discussion piece added for consideration. Ari noted having some issues with the discussion piece as this can reveal things about yourself to the group that you may not be comfortable sharing.

Mary had another session with using this packet for the Climate Change Intern and a lot of it is on the facilitator to convey that the process is a safe space and is confidential, noting that the most important piece is that it is voluntary to share your own biases. Mary noted this can also be a good opportunity for interviewers to discuss if they know an interviewee so the group can discuss how to deal with that situation. Mary also noted that Metro offered to share with us a bias awareness training that they do with their own staff.

Ari noted that the confidentiality piece would be good to give to everyone that works on any component of our hiring process including resume reviewers, administrative redactors, interview panel, etc.

Mary noted that the equity lens facilitator guide has good information that could be used for coming up with a “cheat sheet” for the facilitator process for a bias awareness training (saved on our server here, for internal reference: \\WM2\Shared Folders\Shared\Planning & Reports\Long Range Business Plan\2021-2025\Team Materials\DEI\Equity Lens\LRBP Equity Lens\LRBP Equity Lens Facilitators Guide.docx)

The following were decided upon at the meeting amongst the group:

Confidentiality acknowledgement: for everyone working on any piece of a hiring team (including redactors) – all to look through this & sign off in the beginning stage of the hiring process.

Bias awareness training & voluntary bias discussion: for those reviewing resumes and those on an interview panel.

Action items - Ari & Randi: 1) create a facilitator “cheat sheet” for the bias discussion based off the equity lens facilitator guide that Mary gave, and bring to the DEI Committee in December for review (as well as any other updated components that specifically need the team to review); 2) Look at the Bias Awareness Training Acknowledgement form to determine if the confidentiality component should be removed or repeated on this form; 3) Create a confidentiality form for all to use for District hires; 4) Incorporate these pieces into the upcoming hiring schedule for permanent hire and internship hires as soon as possible; 5) Incorporate these pieces into the permanent and internship hiring schedule templates at their ideal times in the process as well as store the materials as part of the overarching Hiring Playbook.

Redaction of applications during hiring – Terri mentioned having an automated redaction processes to consider, but Randi has looked into this before and let the group know of the limitations. Terri retracted the automated suggestion because of our size and all the nuances with redaction. Laura suggested having candidates that apply do this themselves. Randi felt that there may be some hiccups along the way, but that it is a good time to experiment with a permanent position and see how it goes. The permanent position is a better chance to experiment with this due to there being more of an investment for the candidates to take the time to do this for a full time permanent position rather than candidates applying for a part-time temporary internship. Randi relayed that Jim Cathcart wanted the group to have a check-in on whether or not there was still merit in redacting resumes. Randi recused herself from this discussion since she is normally the primary person to redact resumes. Mary noticed that redaction has been very helpful in understanding self-awareness and self-biases, and would like the District to continue this process. Scott noted seeing benefits from the process as a way to easily remove biases. Overall, the group echoed sentiment on feeling best about staying the course on redacting, and agreed to try self-redaction with the upcoming permanent position (as long as this works for the Core Hiring Team for this position), and redact candidates’ materials internally (with help from intern Martina Avendano) for the internship recruitment.

Action Items: Randi – to check in with the Core Hiring Team for the Forest Conservationist to ensure they are comfortable with the self-redaction process by candidates. Laura – will help with writing instructions on how to self-redact.

Board and Staff Trainings – Terri let the group know that the Board had a consultation with Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO), and the results on the reporting on how they were doing were good, but that coming out of remote conditions was noted as something to be cautious about by the assessment. Terri was in touch with SDAO about a training related to this, and SDAO recommended having a training about supporting a culture of openness at work that would be beneficial to both Board and staff. SDAO recommended HR Answers to conduct this training and Terri will look at this with Michele and Jim. Terri noted that part of an openness at work is nurturing a positive environment and knowing how best to give and receive feedback, and that it would be beneficial to include in this overall training topics that are related to this in terms of microaggressions, gender identity, etc. or any other DEI-related matter that we may want to incorporate. Terri felt that specifically including microaggression in the training would be especially important to incorporate so that giving and receiving feedback (which will be included in the training) will be successful, positive and constructive. Funding for this training would not come from DEI budgeted training funds. As far as timing goes, Terri felt this was best to do this sooner than later as it’s best to do this before staff return to work at the office. Terri and applicable staff will try as much as possible to get all staff and board to attend, but Terri would prefer to not wait and push this training out too much longer just based on trying to get 100% participation. Terri felt that this would be in addition to the microaggression refresher that Scott and Laura plan to present to the Board at their November meeting.

Randi reminded the group that the Board still need to complete a high-level gender awareness training. Terri would like the gender awareness training to be part of an existing Board meeting, and paired down to about an hour (the original high-level training was quoted as a two-hour training initially).

Mary reported that she doesn’t have much of an update on staff trainings with Capacity Building partnerships, but

noted that they are happy to work with us, but won't be ready to work with us until January next year. Mary circled back with Laura, Scott, and Jim about this and they all agreed this timing can work for us. Capacity Building Partnerships also mentioned bringing in their colleagues earlier to deliver these trainings if needed, and Capacity Building Partnerships could still develop the training.

Action items: Terri will follow up with HR Answers about the all staff and Board training and will get back to the group about timing. Mary will work with Capacity Building partnerships about a 1-hour training with the Board at a Board meeting while also circling back about staff trainings. Terri will work with Jim to find a Board meeting that will work for the gender awareness training.

Action Items Review

See above

Next Meeting: December 14, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Notes taken by Randi Razalenti

DRAFT

Partner Funding Equity Lens Findings

10/7/2021

Participants: Mary Logalbo, Kammy Kern-Korot, Laura Taylor

Notes

Introduction: We acknowledge that partner funding has been helpful in expanding our capacity to serve landowners and other constituents by targeting groups with like missions, such as watershed councils. It has not, however, been made widely available or advertised to other community groups whose missions may overlap with our mission and align with our strategic directions. Partner funding procedure has not been fully standardized across or within program areas in regards to application review/ranking and selection, award and budget amounts, and activity and reporting requirements. We want to assess the potential advantages and disadvantages of standardization and of making partner funding available to more groups-- while recognizing our limited budget. Thoughts on this from Jim shared with the group as part of the introduction and later edited by Kammy to provide more context, edits shown in [brackets]:

The overarching question is – how do we make access to partner funding more inclusive? Do we solicit proposals that are evaluated competitively against objective, unbiased criteria? Maybe we don't need to do this annually – but every 2 to 3 years.

Most of our partner agreements are sole source – there is only one Forest Park Conservancy [to help meet conservation goals] in the [forested areas of the] west hills; only one Scappoose Bay Watershed Council [to serve our overlapping zones of jurisdiction in the far NW area of our district, only one Tryon Creek Watershed Council, only one Backyard Habitat Certification program], which assists urban and suburban landowners that are too numerous for us to serve directly]. So, [it's] difficult to think of opening these up to other organizations. But, is my stance here a barrier – a blind spot. Perhaps we need to engage other partners – like those new to us and us new to them – that served on the Conservation Scope Advisory Committee. Maybe they see something we can't (or I can't).

Partner funding for education programs seems to fit the competitive award approach – [there are] so many organizations are out there. It makes sense [that] we support the Sauvie Island Center because they work near ground zero in the District – but are we being objective given the plethora of environmental education organizations that are out there and also work in our District?

Another dimension – maybe we don't worry about this as long as we require our partners who get our funding to be equitable with their services. That certainly seems to be our current tact – and maybe that requirement enables equity and inclusion in receipt of services we fund and, because of that, it is less an issue that the access to our funds is perhaps less equitable [competitive or broad-reaching].

Lens Examined Question: What are the pros and cons of conducting broader partner funding outreach (that may reach unknown partners that this funding may support, and may drive the need for revised selection criteria and standardization)? Does the group have a recommendation on ANY changes that should be made to the partner funding program after going through this lens review including proceeding with broader outreach?

Equity Lens Questions Posed:

1. What assumptions are we making about this decision?
2. How will the projected outcomes (including unintended consequences) impact (increase or decrease) equity?
3. Does this decision engage and/or account for multiple perspectives?
4. What barriers to engagement exist or may result from this decision?
5. Based on this discussion, what plan changes are needed to support more equitable outcomes?

Lens Review Notes:

- 1) Assumptions:
 - a. Program managers are on the same page regarding partner funding program objectives
 - i. Objectives discussed and were stated to be about *expanding capacity and leverage our limited resources and in-house staff capacity* through partners to *better accomplish our mission*
 - b. There was discussion about how conservation education is now clearly stated to be a major part of our mission, but that this is a vast area and that the world of traditional on-the-ground restoration (and its related partners) seems like a different category of partners to consider.
 - i. This distinction led to a discussion about the need for different ranking criteria for conservation education partners vs on-the-ground restoration partners after we get beyond baseline criteria, however there are some that cover both areas so this distinction may get tricky.
 - c. There is a major assumption that we know all the most strategic/best partners to which to provide funding to enhance our capacity. That there is one primary org in a particular geographic area that can/should be delivering programming. That we know all the relevant partners out there.
 - d. There is an assumption that other conservation-specific partners wouldn't seek this funding if it was advertised since we assume we've identified all relevant partners. There's also an assumption education-specific partners might overwhelm the program as there are many environmental education organizations.
 - e. There is an assumption that other partners not currently receiving partner funding wouldn't as effectively help deliver our mission or increase our capacity.
 - f. There's an assumption that many of our currently supported partners are broadening our reach whereas some may be reaching the same constituencies the district is already in touch with. Bringing in new other partners may well help us better reach community members we've not yet connected with.
 - g. That staff are too busy for additional advertising/webwork/criteria refinement that'd go along with opening up this funding pool more broadly.
 - h. That we would be operating with the same or smaller sized budget compared to past years if we opened this up to more groups – thus potentially lessening the amounts

available to the valued partners to which we already provide funding and rely on to meet demand for conservation services we can't meet with our limited in-house staff; that we would lose capacity in those areas

- i. A sense of urgency that any unaddressed inequities need to be dealt with immediately.
 - j. That the education niche-finding exercise may change this programming.
 - k. That if we open this up that our communication channels will reach new relevant partners.
 - l. The lack of funding/continuity [if we routinely make partner funding more competitive and less continuous] could have a major impact on our [existing and future] partners.
 - m. That the timing is not good to change funding for partners already hard-hit by a reduced funding stream and loss of stability during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also have an assumption that we may be returning to "normalcy" at some point (post pandemic). The flip-side to this thinking is that organizations NOT currently receiving funding could also use some added help during these challenging times.
 - n. The board will accept changes to this program if we decide to make them.
- 2) Impacts to Equity:
- a. Added application/process/reporting hoops could decrease partners ability to focus on equity outcomes by burdening their overall capacity.
 - b. That equity criteria and reporting for partner funding is believed to have positive impacts on partner equity outcomes.
 - c. Changes to our current partner funding allocation approach may result in a more rigid structure in award amount limits and potentially decrease partner support allocations for some partners receiving more than others, which may impact those partner's capacity in regards to equity outcomes.
 - d. Scappoose Bay WC and other rural partners that may be eligible might not score high in regards to serving underserved community members, partly based on the demographics of their service area, but our funding can encourage them to find ways to be more equitable in their program delivery and to start or deepen their DEI journey. If we give up that leverage, we may forego opportunities to increase equity outcomes with that partner.
 - e. We may end up finding more partners that reach/serve more diverse communities, thus increasing equitable outcomes.
 - f. We may realize new partners are better aligned at helping us achieve our newly declared mission/vision/directions, including equity outcomes, such as Rogue Farm Corps and Black Food Sovereignty Coalition that have been suggested as potential partners we should consider supporting, given their missions.
 - g. Concerted work through various communication channels/partners/lists will be needed to reach a broader set of partners than can help increase equity outcomes.
 - h. We might improve public accountability and trust to have this programming [to whom and how we determine partner funding?] more visible.
- 3) Engage/Account for Multiple Perspectives:
- a. We are speculating on both known and unknown partner needs and preferences. We know what partners tell us. We know that our easy application, biannual payments framework, simple reporting requirements, and some continuity of funding from year to

year have been praised. These processes are crafted in a way that aims to minimize administrative burden and enhance capacity of the partner.

- b. It would be nice to reach out to both currently supported partners, as well as other potential partners, to get additional input.
 - c. It would be helpful to look more at what sister Districts are doing or have done. EMSWCD's PIC grant was brought up, as an example of a sort of partner funding. They note on their website that they are looking into equity concerns, further evaluating their programming and, have moved more toward our model for this current year in terms of supporting groups that were previously supported, due to the hardships of the pandemic. Referenced PIC Grant Site: <https://emswcd.org/grants-and-cost-share/apply/for-organizations-pic/2021-pic-grants-awarded/>
 - i. Follow-up Action: Reach out to Suzanne Eastman to see if they have any assessments of their funding program available to share.
- 4) Barriers to Engagement:
- a. COVID-19 staffing, health risk challenges, economics/funding streams, and some potential partners are focusing on other pressing community needs.
 - b. Communications bandwidth and limited audiences – need to find and use additional outlets that reach more potential partners (e.g., Metro communiques that share information about conservation-related grant opportunities around the region; strategic social media groups, community based-organizations);
 - c. Organizational capacity (internally and externally w/ partners depending on outcomes)
 - d. Relationships and expertise to do this work and/or history in work.
 - e. Language barriers
- 5) Changes Needed:

Take Home Actions/Recommendations:

- ASAP: Change contact on education programming/school assistance (from Laura to Mary). Create a partner funding webpage that provides an overview of the program and a list of recent awardees and funding amounts. Include a note that we will be reassessing the program in the future, but intend to continue funding for this next year our historic partners -- with like amounts, assuming successful outcomes spending those funds in previous years. The delay in implementing any big changes is to avoid exacerbating fiscal and capacity hardships to current partners brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic and to take time to do a deeper analysis of the pro's and con's of the current model and of equity implications. (Use language similar to that on EMSWCD's current PIC Grant page). **Website should mention how we are waiting for educational niche finding results. *Include a contact us if you're interested in hearing about our program when we re-open applications. *Once open we will aim to get on other partner sharing platforms including metro's grant platform.*
- By the fall of 2022 Kammy & Mary will meet and refine the partner funding application, criteria, and scoring rubric. This will include discussion of weighing social and environmental outcomes and potentially having different criteria for rural and urban partners. Give existing partners lots of advance notice that our funding approach may be changing.

- Wait to enact further education partner funding program changes until conservation education niche finding results come in. Revisit education partner funding programming and promotion needs with the results in hand. If the results of the education niche finding process recommend a significantly different model for funding education organizations than what we end up doing for partner conservation organizations, then consider entirely separating the funding programs for these two groups. For example, run a grant program with its own name for environmental education groups separate from the Conservation Partner Funding Program.
- By NEXT Fiscal Year: The following is assuming that a conservation education partner funding program will be continued. Education centered partners will have a different funding award evaluation rubric than on-the-ground conservation centered partners. A strategy will be devised for partners that provide both education and on-the-ground conservation.

Notes drafted by Mary Logalbo with edits by Laura Taylor and Kammy Kern-Korot incorporated.

Bias Awareness Training Discussion – Facilitator’s Guide

Adapted from Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) Equity Lens Facilitators Guide

Intent: This guide is provided to assist in facilitating a discussion on the “Bias Awareness” training required of hiring teams.

1. PREPARING FOR DISCUSSION

Documents to be reviewed beforehand can be found here S:\Personnel (staff and directors)\Hiring\Hiring Playbook\Hiring Playbook Resources

- Bias Awareness Hiring Training City of Portland (**required** for those scoring resumes and conducting interviews; encouraged for all individuals involved in the hiring process)
- Bias Awareness Training and Confidentiality Instructions & Agreement for Hiring Teams (**required** for all individuals involved in the hiring process)
- Equity Terms- From Nonprofit Association of Oregon (encouraged for all individuals involved in the hiring process)
One or more of the exercises found here <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> (encouraged for all individuals involved in the hiring process)

Generally, this discussion is expected to take no more than 1 hour. Sending out an agenda or note on the goals and expectations of the discussion in advance may help orient participants’ expectations of the process, which will help ensure that dialogues are fruitful.

2. FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION (Materials Modified from: National Gender & Equity Campaign of AAPIP, Facilitation Guide for Community Engagement)

Open the meeting

This is a confidential space and identities and opinions shared here will not be discussed outside of this group meeting, nor will they affect the ability of a group member to participate in this or future hirings.

Check in with how everyone is doing today. Alternatively, you may wish to have participants state what they are interested in gaining from the meeting.

Introduce the purpose and expectations of the meeting

There are two main purposes to this meeting:

- 1) To allow group members to discuss thoughts related to any of the materials listed above
- 2) To facilitate an opportunity for members to share any of their own biases with the group. The goal of this specific exercise is to help group members reduce any potential negative consequences of their own biases when hiring. Since discussing one’s own biases can be revealing about one’s identity/identities, this meeting will

not be recorded or reported on. Any action items will be related only to improving the materials provided for training and reading.

Set ground rules

It is important to be mindful of the power dynamics that have the potential to play out in the meeting. Ground rules are agreements or standards that improve a group's ability to work together, and are also an effective tool for creating a "safe space" for participants. The list of group agreements that the District has found useful before (most of these are from our LRBP Advisory Committee):

- Be mindful of privilege, power dynamics, unconscious bias, and missing perspectives.
- Honor each other's privacy.
- Listen to understand.
- Speak your truth responsibly.
- Step up/step back.
- Acknowledge, accept, and work through mistakes.
- Be willing to do things differently and/or experience discomfort.
- Expect and accept non-closure.
- Respect personal, subjective opinions and preferences.
- Take care of yourself.

The facilitator may ask the group for other important guidelines that they would like to see added to the list for this meeting. Participants then all agree to adopt these values and behaviors. In order for ground rules to be effective, the facilitator must be able to hold participants accountable to what the group has determined as important for everyone to feel safe.

Address Conflict

Conflict is sometimes unavoidable, but it can be a constructive force. Acknowledge or name the conflict, then decide how to move on. Some additional tips for a discussion leader in dealing with conflict include:

- Help participants clarify what the conflict is about
- Do not take sides
- Affirm the validity of all viewpoints
- Frame the conflict in terms of a problem to be solved
- Ask if the group can proceed with what they do agree on and hold back on areas of disagreement
- Take a break, or table any action until a future meeting

Closing the session

Although some questions or ideas may remain unresolved, it is important to foster a sense of closure among the group. Specific ways to debrief might include:

- Summarize what was discussed, what was observed and what was learned
- Ask yourselves what comments addressed any key questions or suggest ways that the District might improve the abilities of its hiring teams to hire without harmful bias? What

themes were repeated over and over in the dialogues? What challenges or issues remain at the forefront of people's minds?