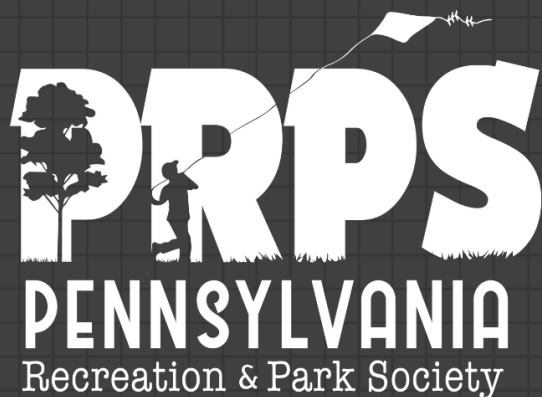


DIVERSITY
EQUITY
INCLUSION
JUSTICE

A TOOLKIT FOR
PARK + RECREATION
ORGANIZATIONS



DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION JUSTICE (DEIJ)



PRPS DEIJ TOOLKIT

Funded in part by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, supported by a grant from the Environmental Stewardship Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

INTRODUCTION

The events of recent years have had a profound effect on parks and recreation. Parks and open spaces have become critical assets for communities. More and more, people are using parks, playgrounds and the outdoors to reap health and social benefits. In addition, the Black Lives Matter movement and the need to acknowledge and support our differences has increased every community's focus on equity and inclusion.

Unfortunately, research shows that many underserved groups and communities face higher health and economic disparities and may not live near quality parks, modern facilities, and open spaces. This has placed greater demand on park and recreation professionals to ensure that our parks and programs remain accessible, inclusive, and culturally relevant.

We must create more equitable access to high-quality parks, programs, and services where everyone can experience the social, mental, and physical health benefits that park and recreation agencies provide. We need to consider and include all to ensure that all voices are represented.

Great parks and agencies creates social cohesion, community engagement and better health. These are worthy goals for our time.



“WHEN WE LISTEN AND CELEBRATE WHAT IS BOTH COMMON AND DIFFERENT, WE BECOME A WISER, MORE INCLUSIVE, AND BETTER ORGANIZATION”

Pat Wadors

WHY DEI?

It is critical that we recognize the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) in our lives and continue to work on these issues within our organizations. Why? Because it is the right thing to do and also because diversity pays. Having a more diverse and inclusive staff can lead to higher revenue. A McKinsey report (2020) found that companies rated in the top 25 percent for diversity were more likely to have financial returns above their industry average while companies in the bottom 25 percent were more likely to be below average. Another recent study by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG, 2017) found that organizations with more diverse management teams have 19 percent higher revenue. Both studies attributed these findings to the ability of these organizations to recognize new and changing opportunities and act effectively. It is not difficult to envision these findings carrying over to agencies and organizations in parks, recreation and programming.



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides some compelling reasons to seek diversity in your park and recreation programs. Under-represented communities comprise just 22 percent of park and rec users, well below the 80 percent rate for Caucasians. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics, points out that children from these communities have high incidences of health concerns, chronic diseases, and poor nutrition. Meanwhile, we know that access to parks and open green spaces can help increase health, community and longevity. There is a real need to tap into and program for our underserved communities.

Diversity in programming and parks can generate several positive outcomes for the professional and their department. Diverse programming will strengthen communities and increase their educational experiences by sharing activities and cultural perspectives, increasing understanding and developing respect for others. Diverse programming will also increase your competitiveness and promote healthy habits and communication throughout the communities you serve.

WORDS TO KNOW

The first step in becoming a more responsive and knowledgeable organization is to be familiar with DEIJ vocabulary. Introducing and using these definitions and concepts in your organization will give you a starting point for having those sometimes hard discussions about DEIJ with colleagues and other staff.

Anti-racism: the practice of identifying and eliminating racism and promoting racial equity through policy changes or personal actions.

Cultural Competency: The skills, attitudes, policies, and behaviors that enable individuals and organizations to work effectively across cultures. Defined as having the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage differences, (4) acquire and apply cultural knowledge and (5) adapt to diversity and the culture of the communities in which one lives and works. Cultural competence is a continuum that develops over time for individuals and organizations.

Diversity: The wide range of human characteristics used to mark or identify individual and group identities. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, race, national origin, age, personality, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion, ability, and linguistic preferences. Diversity is a measurement of representation.



Equity: As a function of fairness, equity implies ensuring that people have what they need to participate. Equity ensures that essential educational programs, services, activities, and technologies are accessible to all. Equitable treatment involves eliminating barriers that prevent the full participation of all individuals.

Ethnicity: A social construct that divides people into groups based on characteristics such as group identity, values, culture, language, history, ancestry, and geography.

Implicit Bias: Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions. These biases (favorable or unfavorable) are activated involuntarily without an individual's awareness or intentional control.

Inclusion: The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.

Gender Expression: The outward manifestation of internal gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, and other characteristics.

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of themselves as a specific gender.

Inclusivity/Inclusiveness: Encompassing all, taking every individual into account, and creating conditions where all feel accepted, safe, supported, and affirmed. Inclusivity promotes the sharing of power and responsibility, the recognition of interdependence, and respect for differences.

Justice: In a DEIJ context, justice is about fairness and doing what is right. It includes actions that dismantle systems and structures that create inequality and create opportunities for diverse groups of people to thrive.

Micro-aggressions: Micro-aggressions are subtle words, expressions, cues, and/or behaviors that (often unknowingly) insult, invalidate, or exclude traditionally marginalized group members. Ex. Stating "I don't see color" denies another's racial/ethnic experience.

Multiculturalism: The presence of many distinctive cultures and the manifestation of cultural components and derivatives (e.g., language, values, religion, race, communication styles, etc.) in a given setting. Multiculturalism promotes understanding and respect for cultural differences and celebrates them as a source of community strength.

Privilege: Systemic favoring, enriching, validating, and including of specific identities over others. These systems are inherent in society. They are usually invisible to those who have it.

Race: A social construct that divides people into groups based on factors such as physical appearance, ancestry, culture, history, etc.; a social, historical, and political classification system.

Racism: A method of oppression involving systematic subordination of targeted racial groups by those who have more social power. This subordination occurs at the individual, cultural and institutional levels.

Social Class: Refers to a person's socioeconomic status, based on factors such as wealth, occupation, education, income, etc.

White Privilege: Institutional set of benefits, including greater access to resources and power, bestowed upon people classified as white.

GETTING STARTED

FIRST STEP – IT’S PERSONAL

Before you can begin implementing DEI efforts in your agency, it is vital to assess how aware you are of DEI issues. Where are you on the cultural competency spectrum? Ask yourself and co-workers questions designed to spark personal and agency examination of attitudes, blind spots, and biases regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. Public sharing of answers demands that a safe space be established to air answers, listen, and talk openly about experiences, actions, and attitudes. Where do you fit in? Use the chart on the right to determine which groups you identify with.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- How many dominant groups do you belong to? Oppressed groups? Belonging or not belonging can have a dramatic effect on how you perceive events and actions. Which of these attributes has the strongest effect on you and how you perceive the world around you? How others perceive you? Can you think of other groupings to include?
- Think about some experiences and interactions you had with individuals who had different social identities when you were growing up. How might your background and identity have contributed to your reactions and response?
- How have I experienced privilege in my life? How has this privilege impacted others? Are there ways I can use privilege to help others?
- Have I ever experienced or witnessed racism or oppression? How did it make me feel? How did I respond?
- What would I need to do (or change about me) to become more aware and less tolerant of racism, bias and oppression?

Answering these questions (or similar ones) can be difficult but necessary. A genuine commitment to DEI issues can only be accomplished by those who are aware of personal bias in themselves and can recognize it in others. We need to learn from our mistakes and others’ experiences to understand how unfair and even devastating these biases can be on individuals and the institutions that serve them.

| Dominant Group(s) | Non-dominant Group(s) |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| White | Non-White |
| Upper/Upper Middle Class | Working/Lower Class |
| Male | Non-male |
| US Citizen | Non US Citizen |
| Heterosexual | Homosexual/Other |
| English is 1st Language | Other |
| Non-disabled | Disabled |
| Under 40 | Over 40 |
| Christian | Non-Christian/Other |
| Physically Attractive | Non-Attractive |

“THE FIRST STEP TO SOLVING A PROBLEM IS RECOGNIZING THERE IS ONE”

Will McAvoy

NEXT STEP—TOGETHER

YOUR ORGANIZATION

YOUR PLACE ON THE INCLUSION SPECTRUM

Where are you and your organization on DEIJ issues? Understanding your personal and your agency’s starting point is a great way to set goals and plot your course. Following is an Inclusion Spectrum Tool. This tool was developed by the Meyer Memorial Trust and modified for this toolkit. This tool provides an overview of several areas where organizational practices and DEIJ issues intersect. You can identify what stage your organization is at by reading the descriptions of the levels between “Getting Ready” to “Better and Better” in any of these categories. This tool will help you identify DEIJ areas that may need to be strengthened in your agency. Start with you and work out to your agency, your board/council, and the local, regional, or state entity your agency is part of.



DEIJ ASSESSMENT FOR AGENCIES

| DEIJ COMPONENT | GETTING READY | STARTED | GOOD | BETTER AND BETTER |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| DEIJ VISION AND POLICY | Recognizes value of DEIJ work. Interested in examining current mission and vision statements and developing policies. | Working with board/community to develop a shared vision. Incorporating DEIJ-related language in some policies. | Has developed a shared vision and working to align the organization’s policies, programs and operations with this vision. Developing goals for DEIJ work. | Integrated DEIJ in organizational mission and vision statement. Has DEIJ policies and an organizational DEIJ plan with clear goals, strategies and objectives. |
| DIVERSITY OF STAFF / BOARDS AND PROGRAMS | Has had initial discussion about diversity, and values the idea of diversifying its board, staff, and programs. | Beginning attempts to diversify its staff and programming. May not know how to do it effectively. May not result in growing diversity. | Actively works to increase diversity. Results in growing diversity. Has begun to identify and institute strategies to retain and increase diversity. | Has policies and strategies for strengthening and maintaining diversity. Staff and board represent the diversity of the community it serves; effective retention and evaluation strategies are implemented. |

DEIJ ASSESSMENT FOR AGENCIES

| DEIJ COMPONENT | GETTING READY | STARTING | GOOD | BETTER AND BETTER |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| DATA | Identify goal to collect demographic data in program and operational work. | Collects some demographic data but not in a systemic or comprehensive way. | Collects and disaggregates comprehensive demographic data but only uses it in limited ways. | Collects and disaggregates comprehensive demographic data and incorporates it to plan programs and operations. |
| COMMUNITY | Values the idea of building partnerships and commits to the process but may not know how or have relationships to start. | Beginning to build partnerships but has not yet established meaningful partnerships and may approach it in a tokenistic way. | Actively works to build partnerships and trust with community groups; working with them to provide valued support and services to these communities. | Has several mutually beneficial and equitable partnerships with organizations and leaders from the local and larger community. |
| LEADERSHIP | A few members of management, administration (and board/council) are leading the DEIJ discussion. | A staff member or team is empowered to lead the organization's DEIJ work | All levels of management, Administration (and board/council) are actively engaged in advancing DEIJ work in agency and taking leadership on DEIJ Issues. | Organization is utilizing best practices. Leadership demonstrated accountability to staff, clients, partners, community members and other stakeholders. |
| INFRA-STRUCTURE AND COMMITMENT | Internal discussions and interest is present. There is no internal organization to guide the agency's DEIJ work. | Has some plans or in motion. Individuals or small groups are guiding internal discussions but aren't integrated into the organization. | Has internal committees, affinity groups or other formal structures focused on integrating DEIJ issues into the organization's works. | Commitment is fully institutionalized. Work on DEIJ issues is integrated into every aspect of organizational culture and infrastructure. |
| DECISION MAKING | Interested in factoring in DEIJ considerations into decision making, evaluation, and accountability. Discussing internally as policy. | Develop policy that includes DEIJ-related metrics in all aspects of the agency, such as staffing, decision making and program/project evaluations. | Some of the organization's standard evaluation and accountability mechanisms include DEIJ-related metrics and questions. | The organization's culture and all decision-making, evaluation and accountability mechanisms, its projects, programs, management, staff and board include specific DEIJ-related metrics. |



10 + 1 IDEAS TO INCREASE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND JUSTICE PRACTICES IN YOUR AGENCY

1. Assess Yourself and Your Organization

It is crucial to perform personal and agency assessments when beginning your DEIJ work. Use the tools in the previous section or others found in the reference section or online to assess your knowledge and gauge your organization's starting point. These assessments will aid you in recognizing your strengths and identifying gaps. They will also provide a reference point for you to assess progress and plan the next steps.

2. Develop a DEIJ Statement and Policy

Including DEIJ language into your mission and vision statements, policies, and practices signals your organization's commitment to DEIJ initiatives and practices. Include accountability language and tangible objectives for your organization and staff. Through your actions, pledge yourself to make these statements more than just words. The commitment needs to be organization-wide to be effective. Senior management should be held responsible for ensuring diversity-related issues are given attention, communicated down the line, and executed.

3. Establish Diversity Goals

Establish specific goals to implement DEIJ initiatives in your organization. Goals can address inclusive language, outreach, programming, hiring practices, DEIJ training, or retention rates. A timeline and specific, quantifiable objectives should accompany each goal. Provide a timeline and celebrate achieving objectives and goals through employee incentives and recognition, and community events. Plan for measurement and continuous improvement.

4. Hold a Staff Meeting

Dedicating staff meeting time to developing a more inclusive agency cements your commitment in an employee's mind. Staff meetings offer an opportunity for you to share policy, answer questions, and provide all employees with procedures to address workplace issues adequately. Providing staff with additional time for reflection, sharing, and interaction with each other and DEIJ issues can benefit the agency and improve employee relations.

5. Provide Training

Unfortunately, personal biases, misinformation, flawed logic, and other influences can be detrimental to implementing DEIJ actions with your staff and your organization. Staff and management training can be a crucial part of addressing DEIJ issues. A good trainer will help staff to identify words, actions, and beliefs that can negatively affect interactions with others and offer methods to expose and correct these deficiencies. In addition, consider incentives for staff to reach DEIJ goals. Incentives that require cooperation can produce results and help to build team culture among the staff.

6. Before Making a Decision, Ask Some Questions

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) has developed a Racial Equity Toolkit (2016) built around asking key questions to identify and eliminate racial inequities in decision-making. Before making decisions regarding practice, program, budget, or policy, ask these questions:

- What is the decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes? What is the data? What does the data tell us?
- How have communities been engaged? Can engagement be expanded?
- Who will benefit from the decision? Who will be burdened? Do you have a plan to mitigate unintended consequences?
- How will this be implemented? Do you have the funding, resources, and backing needed? How will you evaluate results? How will you know the decision was on target and successful?

7. Diversity Officer & Workplace Culture

DEIJ is a significant component of workplace culture, so it is essential to oversee the internal setting. You can do this by putting together a diversity committee, designating a coordinator, or creating a diversity officer position within your organization charged with internal DEIJ initiatives and progress. They would be responsible for identifying areas for improvement and providing solutions. This position would also be responsible for mediating all internal and external DEIJ-related disputes and controversies.

8. Examine your Hiring Practices

Do your current hiring practices cast a wide net? As an agency committed to diversity, your hiring practices need to be accessible and equitable for all. You can do three things to ensure equitable hiring practices. First, examine your job descriptions: are they focused on results or a list of required skills? are the required credentials really needed? Second, post your jobs on diverse recruiting websites. Third, use DEIJ language in your job descriptions. Be sure to state that you are looking for diverse candidates and consider including your organization's inclusion policy, mission statement. Encouraging diverse candidates in your job description will reassure potential candidates. Some websites that are good places to find diverse talent are:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Diversity.com | PDN Recruits |
| Ihispano | Black Career Network |
| Hispanic/Latino Professionals Association | |
| PowerToFly | PinkJobs |
| Campus Pride | Green Latinos |
| LGBTQ Connect | |

IMPORTANT! After any hire, make sure that your orientation includes a review of DEIJ policies and commitment and relevant training.



Photo courtesy of Street LAB (Uni Project)

9. Cultivate a Diverse Future Workforce

An important strategy to identify and cultivate a diverse workforce that reflects your community is through school and youth engagement. Working with universities, high schools, and other community groups is an outstanding way to recruit new talent through work programs and internships. Many agencies collaborate with a partner to run these programs. These programs can bring in local youth and expose them to your agency and industry. Building this pipeline is an excellent way to diversify your organization while also developing support for your agency in the local community.

10. Get Community Input

It is essential for all organizations that serve a community to find ways to listen to all parts of their communities. Plan community meetings, form an advisory board, attend programs and ask questions, put out a survey, or conduct focus groups, whatever it takes. Diverse community input will help you develop successful programs, make better decisions, and serve the whole community. Through informal or formal methods, reach out to community leaders and solicit continuous feedback and engagement. Do you use universal design principles when planning?

+1. Walk the Walk

The biggest challenge to implementing diversity is often difficulty developing the staff's capacity and competency around DEI. Another challenge is attracting people who reflect the community to jobs and careers. DEI programs and policies require management support and funding. Funds and time need to be directed to support planning and staff training, hire DEI staff, fund committees, bring in consultants, and evaluate progress. All these activities will help you to achieve your goals.



ARTICLES/REFERENCES

Here are additional resources that you may find helpful in your journey to becoming a more DEIJ-focused organization. Many of these references were informative when developing this kit.

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Brownlee, Dana: [*Dear White People: Here Are 10 Actions You Can Take To Promote Racial Justice In The Workplace*](#) Forbes Magazine June 2020. Retrieved from Frobos.com.

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[*Diversity Toolkit: Building Principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in Organizations*](#). Updated May 2018. Choose Clean Water Coalition.

Dixon-Fyle, Sundiatu; Dolan, Kevin; Hunt, Vivian; Prince, Sara. [*Diversity Wins: How inclusion matters*](#), May 19, 2020. McKinsey & Company

[*How to Be Anti-Racist: A Social Worker's Perspective*](#) *The MSW@USC, the Online Master of Social Work program* at the University of Southern California. October 28, 2020

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Meyer Memorial Trust; Diversity, Equity+ Inclusion Resources [*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Spectrum Tool*](#)

Mock, Brenton: [*For African Americans, Park Access is About More Than Just Proximity*](#); June 2, 2016. Bloomberg CityLab

Muller, Kathleen; Blair, Debra; Mowen, Andrew; & Powers, Samantha; [*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(white paper\)*](#); produced for the 2018 Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit. Sponsored by PRPS and PA DCNR

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); [*Parks for Inclusion; Guidelines for Developing an Inclusion Policy & Inclusion Policy Template*](#).

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); [*Community Engagement Resource Guide*](#),

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); (2018) [*Parks and Recreation Inclusion Report*](#), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); (2021) [*Diversity Equity and Inclusion in Parks and Recreation Report*](#).

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); (2021) [*Equity Language Guide*](#).

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); [*Workforce Development and Career Exploration in Park and Recreation*](#). 2020

Nelson, Julie & Brooks, Lisa: [*Racial Equity Toolkit; An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity*](#). Updated Dec 2016. Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).

Toll, Erich, *Diversity Blog* - Numerous entries <https://www.diversityresources.com/articles-workplace-diversity/>

[*The Collective DEI Toolkits*](#) The Collective 2020 DEI Collective, LLC; Brooklyn, NY

STATE / NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND CONSULTANTS

The following is a small sample of the many resources that exist to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice issues on a personal, organizational, and community level. Many of the sites contain free resources.

[Attic Youth Center's Bryson Institute](#) brysoninstitute@atticyouthcenter.org 215-545-4331

The Bryson Institute offers interactive and educational trainings around best practices for working with LGBTQ individuals to foster understanding, impart knowledge, and provide strategies for creating safe and affirming environments.

[Beyond Diversity 101](#) 4circlesbeyond@gmail.com 609-880-1888

Beyond Diversity 101 offers intensive, multi-day classes which focus on recognizing, taking responsibility, shifting mindsets, and building and utilizing practical skills.

[Diversity Resources](#) diversity@diversityresources.com 800-682-1261

Offers online and in-person training for groups of any size on a host of DEI topics. Website has numerous articles and resources. Features a diversity calendar for the work place.

[Diversity Training Group](#) Mauricio Velasquez, President CEO 703.850.1145

Diversity Training Group features top experts on diversity, awareness, and inclusion. Areas of expertise include conscious/unconscious bias, sexual harassment prevention, intercultural diversity, building trust and engagement, and more.

[Greening Youth Foundation](#) 404.254.4827

The Greening Youth Foundation's (GYF) mission is to engage under-represented youth and young adults, while connecting them to the outdoors and careers in conservation. [The Bridge Project](#) creates an inclusive and innovative hiring pathway for underrepresented candidates to find jobs in conservation

[ICW Consulting](#) iwasserman@icwconsulting.com 610-667-5305

ICW Consulting works with clients to create a culture that values and brings different perspectives into consideration. Provide presentations on inclusive leadership and culture, including micro-aggressions and unconscious bias.

[National LGBTQ Task Force](#) 202-393-5177

The Task Force advances full freedom, justice, and equality for LGBTQ people. The Taskforce works to end discrimination for LGBTQ people who face barriers in every aspect of their lives, including housing, employment, healthcare, retirement, and fundamental human rights.

[The National Coalition Building Institute](#) Philadelphia Office 215-992-0744

NCBI is an international leadership organization that provides diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for community organizations, K-12 schools, college and university campuses, corporations, and law enforcement. Leadership for diversity and other customized trainings are offered.

“EXCLUSION IS DERIVED FROM FEAR, IGNORANCE, AND POWER, WHILST INCLUSION IS DERIVED FROM LOVE, COMPASSION, AND RESPECT”

Michele Emson

[National Conference for Community & Justice \(NCCJ\)](#) diversity@nccj.org 860-683-1039

NCCJ is a human relations organization that promotes inclusion and acceptance by providing education and advocacy while building respectful and just communities for all. NCCJ offers trainings for corporations, organizations, and educational institutions on systems of oppression and privilege. NCCJ works with organizations to enhance communications skills, build cultural competencies, and create more inclusive work environments.

[Outdoor Afro](#) Network offices throughout the country

Outdoor Afro network celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature. It is a profit organization with leadership networks in 56 cities around the country, it connects thousands of people to nature experiences, and are changing the face of conservation.

[Outdoor Inclusion Coalition](#) Hosted by Venture Outdoors Pittsburgh 412.255.0564

The Outdoor Inclusion Coalition (OIC), is a collection of organizations that are taking action to catalyze change in Pittsburgh's outdoor industry. The organizations involved recognize the innate responsibility to serve the community while developing the industry to be representative of those systematically left out. Through collaboration, OIC seeks to make Pittsburgh an inclusive, recreational community.

[Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit Organizations \(PANO\)](#) 717-236-8584

PANO is a statewide membership organization for nonprofits that serve in the Commonwealth. PANO supports nonprofits through training, best practices, consultation, and programs. There is also a section for Racial Justice Resources.

[Race Forward](#) 212-513-7925

Race Forward brings systemic analysis to complex race issues to help people take effective action toward racial equity. Race Forward is home to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national network of local government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

[Racial Empowerment Collaborative \(REC\)](#) howards@upenn.edu 215-898-5666

The REC is a research, program development, and training center that brings together community leaders, researchers, families, and youth to study and promote racial literacy and health in schools and neighborhoods. REC offers racial literacy trainings to uncover strategies and challenges in making practical and ethical decisions.

[REAL](#) 877-827-2385

Race Equity And Leadership (REAL) is a League of American Cities program that offers trainings and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity to build more equitable communities. REAL can provide training and resources, action guides, and case studies to increase knowledge and build capacity to eliminate racial disparities in communities.

[Training for Change](#) 267-289-2288

Training and capacity-building services for activists and organizers. Workshops and an online [Training Tool Library](#), with over 100 tools and articles.

“IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER”

African Proverb

PRPS INCLUSION CALL TO ACTION

June 24, 2020

Over the past several weeks, the world has taken a deep dive into looking at social injustice, equity, and inclusion issues impacting communities of color. While the tragic and appalling deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor ignited change, there are countless other unnamed victims of exclusion, racial discrimination, and excessive police force. The spotlight is shining brightly on pervasive, systematic institutional discrimination and racism that hinders just opportunities and equal access for communities of color. The wave of individual and organizational self-reflection, education, and action has been set in motion and has resulted in much-needed progress towards change. The case of Christian Cooper, the Central Park birdwatcher, was just one example of a white person threatening a black person with a racist action. It reflected a fundamental breakdown in the social contract between park patrons, in which they can help each other maintain social order and mutual respect, so all may enjoy our public spaces. How do we help people understand that our spaces are for everyone and must be shared in mutual trust? PRPS champions inclusiveness, fairness, and social equity, and urges its members to enter into self reflection, education, and action. One goal of parks and recreation is making playgrounds, parks and green spaces accessible to all: There is no place for racism, intolerance, or divisiveness. It has never been more important for our industry to be a leading voice for social equity and inclusion. With the phased re-opening of our centers and open spaces, communities will be visiting our public spaces in record numbers to access the physical and mental health benefits that parks and recreation uniquely provide. We are in the business of building community, creating joy, and supporting health and well-being. Let's ensure that we continue to do just that! PRPS and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) released the Leadership 2025 proceedings and recommendations from the 2018 Pennsylvania Recreation and Conservation Leadership Summit. Part of that document outlined "Top Priority Statewide Strategies" for diversity, education, and inclusion. Let's continue the thoughtful work of our collective experiences.





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PRPS DEIJ TOOLKIT FOR RECREATION AND PARK PROFESSIONALS (2022)

WRITTEN AND DEVELOPED BY DAN HENDEY, KATHLEEN MULLER, AND KYLE CHIN FOR PRPS