URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/Organization - Example Deliverable

This is what was found by [Insert Pod Name] at [University/Organization] on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

Pods may have members from a range of career stages and involvement in the development and execution of research projects, and pod members may have different experiences or different perspectives when responding to these questions. Consider this in the summary document and focus on capturing responses that are representative of the range in your pod.

● Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:
  ○ Cannot think of any meaningful interactions with communities of color that our Department has initiated. It does not seem to be a priority or even a consideration.
  ○ The College of Geoscience claimed (in the Spring of 2019) that they wanted to partner with local HBCU Prairie View A&M University to get PVAMU students involved in geoscience research at TAMU
    ■ It has since come to light that only one email was sent to an individual at PVAMU, no response was received, and so the college seems to have given up on this initiative/partnership
  ○ Working with students of Reykjavik University, field work in Iceland
  ○ Outreach at Waltrip High School in Houston

● What worked well in these interactions?
  ○ GeoX program has worked well by interacting directly with students.

● What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?
  ○ The same faculty are part of the GeoX program each year. To better address this, the department can come together and involve new professors and their students into the program each year.
● Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?
  ○ Seed funds from College/University to pay local/indigenous collaborators if that grant did not originally include such funds in the budget
  ○ Place value in outreach/diversity initiatives/service

● Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?
  ○ Clear prioritization and support (financially, academically, etc) for working with communities of color
  ○ A reevaluation and prioritization of what constitutes academically valuable knowledge, learning and research. As well as how/if credit should be given for this learning and knowledge.
  ○ Institutional partnerships with institutions that are more set up to serve minority communities and are already working in the communities.
    ■ Local Tribal Colleges and Universities
    ■ Local HBCUs- ex: Prairie View A&M University
    ■ Also need transparency in how these institutions are contacted, engaged, and supported (aka not taken advantage of) by our institutions. Saying that institutions aren’t interested in engagement/collaboration is not acceptable.
    ■ Mentoring and research exchange with these institutions.
  ○ Is there a research review plan that faculty have to provide for trips/funding?
  ○ Completely restructuring/redefining how we write proposals - background, methods, budget
  ○ Increase department awareness of organizations (NABG, SACNAS), and department support and engagement
  ○ Department engagement, support, participation in national conference events that focus on minority community research, engagement, etc in the geosciences
  ○ College and department seminars that are mandatory for faculty, and optional for postdocs and graduate students, on decolonizing curriculum
  ○ The department and college needs to reevaluate what is valuable work/research. It is hard to keep working on these initiatives with no support or active discouragement from faculty & department leadership.
  ○ Need to hire faculty/staff/postdocs/grad students who have shown concrete engagement in diversity initiatives.
Also hire faculty with strong records of equitable and just relationships with BIPOC communities in their research, teaching, and/or outreach work.

- Have larger department and college engagement in programs like GeoX. Have it be regular engagement by the entire college, not just a few faculty every year.
- Unify efforts and better disseminate information for more outreach opportunities.