URGE Session 6 Deliverable: Racism and Inclusivity

Safety Plan for On and Off-campus Fieldwork:

19 April 2021

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Harassment, violence, bullying and discrimination in all forms is not tolerated.

All participants are entitled to a safe environment, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, neurology, physical appearance or body size, first language or accent, marital or reproductive status, age, or career level or employment status. Please provide our Code of Conduct and Complaints and Reporting Policies information to all new team members on or before their start date, regardless of status, and provide to all staff and participants annually, regardless of tenure.

Effective prevention of incidents of harassment and violence in the field relies heavily on 3 core things

- a code of conduct which is provided to all
- an effective reporting system which is provided to all
- satisfactory outcomes or resolution of reported misconduct

Under SI Civil directive, supervisors, advisors, team leads and mentors of any kind are required to report incidents that they witness or are told about within 24 hours. We are responsible for documenting hostile encounters regardless of severity.

If anyone is uncomfortable, feels unsafe, is harassed, threatened, or a victim of violence, feels overtly or subtly biased against, or excluded, either address the individual directly, speak to the project Lead, your supervisor, or another colleague that you trust. Individuals may also contact Dan Gustafson (interns), Alison Cawood (interns and volunteers), the SERC Executive Officer (interns, staff, post-docs), the SERC Director, the SERC Deputy Director, your immediate supervisor, any other supervisor at SERC, SI Civil Coordinator and reporting system, or the Smithsonian Ombudsman, Dania Palosky.

General Guidelines and Good Practices:

Before conducting any fieldwork, it is important to have an open, honest dialogue amongst all the individuals participating in the field work and their supervisor (mentor, advisor, team lead, depending on the relevant relationship) to discuss the goals of the work to be conducted, the expectations of what can or will be encountered at the field site, and how to be as safe as possible while conducting the fieldwork in question.
As the first step, provide clear, consistent ‘what to expect’ and ‘what to bring’ information in writing to all new staff, interns and volunteers prior to their arrival on campus and as soon as possible. This allows people to appropriately plan for gear, food/water, potential sources of stress or challenges, and any necessary accommodations can be discussed and made well in advance. Review and update these documents annually to address past concerns and allow all team members the chance to provide input, edits and additions at that time. Request anonymous feedback via Google doc if needed.

Lay the groundwork for open dialogue, including acknowledging and addressing challenging topics up-front and making space for honest discussion. This allows team members, be they staff, fellows, interns or volunteers, to tell you what THEY NEED to safely and inclusively participate in field activities. Keep in mind that we do not know what is best for other people. Excluding people from certain field sites or types of work ‘in their best interest’ without a discussion directly with them can do more harm than good and is likely a form of discrimination.

Supervisors, mentors and team leads should meet and chat with new team members on day one. State clearly how team members can/should raise discussions, concerns, and complaints. This can include an open-door policy, set office hours, emergency/after-hours contact strategy, providing allies to talk to, a venue for remaining anonymous, or a combination of approaches." Help set the tone for open conversations by being clear that we would rather have a conversation that feels uncomfortable than to have a team member working in fear, missing out on fieldwork, or getting hurt or harassed. In all likelihood, team members with marginalized identities are already aware that daily life brings risks associated with their identities. Be clear that while you expect everyone to honor codes of conduct, you recognize that there are also inherent risks or challenges when we go into the field, particularly when we are off-site. Be realistic. Idealism won’t protect people, and it creates the perception that you won’t believe them if they report concerns.

Provide all new participants, including interns and volunteers, with a secondary contact they can reach out to at SERC or on the team if they don’t feel they can speak to you, have complaints about you, or if you aren’t reachable. Introduce this person in person or via video chat if possible. As field leads, we typically want concerns or information to be shared directly with us, but we should not demand that. As much as we would like to minimize the impact of power dynamics, they will always exist to some extent. Respect that team members may feel more comfortable sharing concerns with someone who shares one or more of their identities (e.g. an intern may feel more comfortable routing menstrual needs to someone on the team who shares those needs, or if English is not someone’s first language, even if they speak it fluently, it may be easier discussing sensitive matters like harassment with someone who speaks their first language). Remind individuals that they may choose to discuss concerns or needs openly with the group or privately.
When discussing accessibility and accommodations, remind team members that we are in a field that often requires collaborative approaches and creative solutions, and that you’ll bring those skills to conversations about safety and accommodation. Be prepared to be uncomfortable with some of the concerns that may be brought up, and respond with kindness and respect, not defensiveness. Respect that while everyone is required to be civil in the course of our work, people working with us are not required to be nice or sugarcoat their needs. Identity-related needs or concerns can be very frustrating or stressful, so listen without judging or reprimanding people’s tone. Even if you are interacting with students or younger hires who are looking to you for scientific expertise, when it comes to personal identities that are different than yours, they’re the subject expert, not you. Finding out there are issues with our current systems offers a chance to excel, to be better. This is a good thing!

Stress repeatedly that the safety of the team is always the top priority. If any of the participants start to feel unwell (including early signs of heat exhaustion like headache, extreme thirst, excessive sweating, nausea or light-headedness) or get injured (even a small cut), tell them to tell their field lead. Have regular check-ins and water/food breaks, and do not advocate for people going past their limits. Be aware that younger team members and marginalized persons may feel the need to push themselves past their limits to prove that they deserve to be on the team. It is the responsibility of PIs, supervisors and field leads to foster an environment where people feel comfortable and are not penalized for speaking up about concerns. Do not expect people to feel empowered to speak up in the absence of that team culture.

Avoid glorifying excessive toughness or working through fear, harassment, threats, injuries, exhaustion, dangerous environmental conditions, or thirst/hunger as the standard of practice. Suspected heat exhaustion, hypothermia or head injury, however minor, are the only time we encourage stepping in and telling people what they need (e.g., put water in someone’s hand and tell them to drink it now). These conditions often impair cognitive functioning.

Don’t set people up to have to say no in order to get their needs addressed. This seems like a small thing. It is not. When asking for answers in difficult discussions or if you think someone may feel unsafe or uncomfortable or injured but isn’t speaking up, frame questions as neutral, open-ended. Otherwise, individuals may agree with you to appear ‘tough’ or out of fear to dissent. Avoid questions like “Does anyone object?” “This is fine with you, isn’t it?” “You don’t mind that boat owner flirting with you, do you?” “We can work for another hour without lunch, right?” “You can tough it out, yeah?” This sets people up to be viewed as disagreeable, problematic, weak, or hindering progress. Instead,
substitute neutral or open-ended questions like “What time do we want our next water break? Now, or later?” “Do you need the first aid kit?” “How do you feel about going back to that field site?” or ask Yes questions like “Are people hungry?” “Are you uncomfortable with this situation?” “Does this seem like it could be dangerous?” “Are those people bothering you?”

**If a member of your team expresses concerns or problems, take them seriously and don’t set them up for the “double complaint”.** Most of us have witnessed or set people up for a double complaint without even realizing it. Someone airs a concern or problem, “I’m not sure this situation is safe for me.” and they’re responded to with “It seems okay. But let me know if you have a problem.” They just did let you know! You dismissed it. Now they have to choose between being the person who complains twice or putting up with a bad situation. Address it and take it seriously the first time. Ask open questions to figure out what’s going on and ask for proposed solutions. Accept that different personality types and identities may have very different ways of expressing concerns, and they may voice them in a milder way than you. Their way isn’t wrong. It’s their way.

**What to discuss in advance for fieldwork:**

*A list of appropriate attire and gear, and what can be provided by us or borrowed from other labs, such as dive booties, skin suits, waders, steel-toed boots, hardhats, gloves, foul weather gear. Do not require team members to pay for their own expensive or specialty gear that may be considered PPE. Offer inclusive sizes in gear (big, small, tall, short). This may mean having this conversation well in advance of actual fieldwork, so there is enough time to acquire items. If you have women on your field team and have shared lab gear like waders and skin suits, buy cuts specifically sized for women next time you restock.*

*Notify everyone about campus footwear restrictions, including interns before they leave home so they can pack appropriately. Inform team members if clothing will get dirty or ruined and if there is a risk of items getting wet or being lost in the mud. Don’t tease or insult people for looking presentable, wearing makeup, having manicured nails or wearing jewelry. As long as attire doesn’t pose a safety risk around machinery or in particular field settings, and team members have been informed of the risks of damage or loss, it’s their decision and is not a reflection of their skills and abilities.*

*Inform team members that sunscreen and bug spray is provided by labs, and offer sunscreen to all team members, regardless of race. People of all skin tones can get sun damage or skin cancer.*

*Amount of food and water quantities to bring. Do not underestimate. Team leads should have back up snacks and water. Let the team know if coolers will be provided, including for heat sensitive medication.*
*Designate a clear chain of command during fieldwork. If you’ll always be present as the team lead, let people know. If someone else will be in charge, communicate that. Make sure all team participants have the contact numbers of relevant team members for after emergency needs.

*Multi-person field teams should request a secondary person, preferably not in a supervisory position, to be the official ‘water/food/rest’ person (one of our field teams has an official Snackmaster. Sounds silly, but it’s effective!) When people know it is their JOB to announce breaks and take care of the rest of the team, they often feel more comfortable speaking up. They can call for a break at any time without being viewed as slowing down work. And the threshold for taking a break is always one person.

*Live animals you will be working with or may encounter, safety concerns in handling or interacting with them or other natural safety concerns. Ensure that in-field training is provided to mitigate risk.

*Relevant vaccinations. We may ASK if people want to disclose having a relevant vaccine such as Covid19 or tetanus. We may not require or demand this information. Certain vaccines may be required by a specific project’s IACUC (Animal Care and Use), e.g. a rabies vaccine might be mandated for those working closely with wild raccoons.

*Team members’ fears, phobias and allergies. Ask if they’ll consider sharing severe allergies with team members to reduce risk of cross-contamination or elevated risk.

*Location of safety gear (life jackets, flares, whistles, flashlights, etc.) and first aid kits.

*Create a field risk management plan and checklist that gets reviewed at the start of every field day and/or before leaving for off-site work. This should include a racial risk assessment.

*Share de-escalation and bystander intervention training opportunities and resources with all team members. Give permission for this to be done during work time. Incorporate this type of training into the performance plans of supervisors/mentors and team leads whenever possible.

*Share the major known physical demands, such as lifting, carrying, swimming, climbing, boating, hanging off structures, periods of extreme heat or cold. Ask if people have concerns or need any reasonable accommodations (e.g., is swimming truly a required skill, or will the ability to tread water for 5 minutes suffice? Is a ladder needed for climbing in the boat?).

*Do not assume ability levels of team members. People may have invisible disabilities or medical conditions that they need accommodation for. People may be observing holidays that require fasting, but still wish to participate with the understanding that they may be slower that day. Ask everyone what they might
need before going into the field. Do not exclude people without an open discussion or assume they are not up for it. Remember that most of the people we work with are adults.

*Open door policy about medical conditions, concerns, disabilities, and accommodations. We cannot DEMAND that adults share this information. We can say that we’d love to know about any particular needs, accommodations, limitations, possible medication or things they would want you to know if they were rendered unconscious, or how you can help in a potential emergency while at a remote location. Encourage the wearing of emergency medical jewelry where relevant. Reiterate that people will not be penalized for sharing medical information and that we want to be prepared in case something happens. Examples:

- A team member with epilepsy discloses that if they have a seizure in the intertidal, it will be a petit mal seizure and not life threatening but someone should pull them to shore or support their head so they don’t drown.
- A team member discloses their life-threatening bee sting allergy, so someone will know to get their epi-pen from their green lunch bag and bring it to them.
- A team member who is 7 months pregnant discloses that they will need a ladder to get back in the boat and a maximum of 2 hours at a time in the heat.
- A team member discloses a short-term disability due to a torn ACL that makes working in deep mud problematic, and they request a piece of lumber like a 2x4 in the field to distribute weight and prevent sinking.

*Presence or absence of physical bathrooms with regular access for urination, defecation, and menstruation. Access to running water for sanitation, or the need for hand sanitizer. Avoid the glorification of a lack of sanitation practices.

*When needed, identify the best available lactation location. It should prioritize privacy, cleanliness, and comfort. At minimum, look for a clean-as-possible private space with a place to sit and a stable surface. Expect a lactating person to need exclusive use of the space for a half-hour or more. Above all, hold an open discussion of needs and accommodations with lactating team members ahead of time, since preferences and requirements can vary substantially from person to person.

- Don't make or tolerate comments that imply that lactating team members aren't pulling their weight or are slowing down the group because they need breaks to express breastmilk. Don't call unnecessary attention to lactating team members’ need to express breastmilk, even if your intention is positive.
- Encourage lactating team members to be open with you about how often they need to express breastmilk and how long the process takes. Do not act surprised or otherwise pressure them to try to minimize their needs. It is physically uncomfortable and potentially harmful for a lactating person to wait too long to express milk, or to have expression time cut short.
Breastmilk expression can be a difficult process and is inhibited by stress and dehydration. You can help support team members with this need by looking for ways to remove time pressure and ensure privacy.

*Give alternate accommodations or protocols for bathroom needs and leave gender out of it. If you aren’t comfortable addressing that many of your staff will have menstrual needs while doing fieldwork, they won’t be comfortable telling you their needs. People who menstruate REGULARLY have to miss fieldwork because these concerns aren’t addressed or appropriately accommodated.

*Be honest about what your team might expect to encounter at various off campus/edge of campus locations, particularly where harassment or threats might or have occurred. Consider that interns of different identities, including gender, race/ethnicity, visible disability, religion, nationality, LGBTQ+, may be a target of harassment or violence that does not impact you or that you may not be familiar with, e.g., if you will be in an area with a history of hate crimes, or visible hate symbols or confederate flags, let all team members know to expect that. White or white-passing team members may still be uncomfortable in these situations, and this isn’t limited to visible expressions of marginalized status. Letting people know in advance that there may be sources of psychosocial stress or othering allows them to be prepared. **If a team member tells you they’re uncomfortable going into that situation, don’t argue. Trust them.** Just do not exclude individual members of your team by making decisions FOR them. Ask or discuss. Remember that if you deem a site unsafe for Black and Brown team members and/or women, it is unsafe for ALL team members.

* Ensure that all participants have Security (vehicle or wetlab lock-outs, gate problems, problems with members of the public) and OFMR’s number in their cell phones. If there are vehicle or trailer problems, a call to one of our mechanics may be able to resolve the problem, or if you’re driving locally they may be able to come assist. **Campus Security should be called to handle any and all negative interactions or problems with the public on our campus, including trespassing.**

*Length of day/time away from campus or lodging. This can affect caregiver needs, medical needs, second jobs. Provide maximum estimates for duration of fieldwork and ask team members for any ‘hard out’ times they need to return to campus (caregivers may need to pick up children from day care or drive family members to medical appts). Don’t run over these deadlines or try to renegotiate while out in the field. Some interns living at home may help care for younger siblings or other family members. Whenever possible, please extend the same opportunities for creative scheduling (4-10 hr. days, every other Friday off, telework, etc.) or compassionate workplace policies that you would expect to receive as a staff member. We all understand that some field days will run long, or take place on the weekends. Please give multi-day advance notice of this. Unless there is an emergency, waiting until Friday to ask team members to work on Saturday is not
appropriate. During interviews or when making internship or job offers, always notify prospective staff and interns if there will be a regular expectation of working evenings or weekends so they can make informed decisions.

**Reduce the likelihood of harassment or violence towards team members while conducting work on managed field stations, non-agency research sites or other campuses:**

*Ask for the other organization’s code of conduct and be clear that our agency’s code of conduct will be enforced for all of our team members.

*Provide all team members with contact info for station managers and security, as well as your contact within that institution. Let them know that if there’s an incident, it is appropriate to reach out to you, your contact/colleague or any member of the field station staff at any time, night or day.

*Let team members know that all SI reporting mechanisms are still in place regardless of location.

*If needed, ensure safe and secure housing is available. Don’t require team members to share rooms with people they don’t know. If room-sharing is required, route roommate requests through the team leader or ask for general housing preferences to match people. Don’t ask people to share a room with someone of another gender unless they request it (if they only know and feel comfortable with one other person on the field team, they may feel more comfortable with them than a stranger of the same gender). Do not assume that because you would be comfortable with this arrangement, others are.

*If team members share concerns about their safety or sanitation related to housing, trust them and work with them to find alternative housing when possible. Pests like fleas, mice or roaches may seem like a minor inconvenience to some, but it may cause psychological stress, sleep deprivation, or create a serious health risk to immune-compromised or pregnant team members. Sometimes at remote field sites there are no other options, but don’t glorify unsafe conditions or withhold relevant safety information if it is known in advance.

**Reduce the likelihood of being challenged by community members during off-campus fieldwork, having law enforcement called (police, park rangers, local security guards, state departments of natural resources, field station security), and minimize harm if law enforcement is called:**

*Don’t send people in the field alone whenever possible. If people volunteer to go into the field alone, make sure it is only in populated areas and require check-ins
throughout the day with other staff at (campus departure, site arrival, lunchtime, site departure, campus arrival). Have a primary contact person off-site and a plan if they miss their check-in. Make sure all relevant staff have your and each other’s cell numbers. Stay within earshot/sightline or have a standard mode of communication (cell, radio).

*Provide or purchase logo shirts or safety vests to all staff/interns who do not already have them. Require the wearing of official logo gear during off-site fieldwork. If logo shirts can’t be purchased with lab/program funds, provide agency-brand/printed lightweight safety vests in high visibility colors that can be used from year to year, and purchased as safety equipment.

*Require staff to bring work badges, and to wear official name tags when possible.

*All team members who have them should bring relevant credentials like a boating certificate, driver’s license, pesticide application license, drone operator’s license, hot work permits, scientific collecting permits, etc. with them during fieldwork.

*Have all relevant collection permits with you at all times. If team members will be splitting up on site, each group should have a copy of permits with them at all time or should know where they are located. Laminate permits or provide waterproof bags if needed.

*When working in areas where there are known or suspected concerns towards, especially those related to marginalized identities, bring several clear signs of doing official work. Prepare formal site documents and sample location maps for your staff, including adding our logo and making them look as official as possible. At sites where there may be problems or a lot of interruptions for questions from the public, prepare an official-looking one page handout of your work to give to the public or property owners. If team members will be splitting up on site, each group or person should keep documents with them at all time. People could be intentionally targeted once the group separates.

*Ensure access to official vehicles whenever possible, even if just driving down to the dock. You may be comfortable driving your personal vehicle around campus, including spending your own gas money, risking damage, or getting challenged about your right to be there. Don’t assume the same of others. Don’t assume that others are comfortable riding in your car, either.

*Carry a clipboard and other items that signal “researcher” or “official” to members of the public.

*Go as a group to introduce all team members to any relevant officials, property owners, or relevant neighboring properties every single time, even if they say you don’t need to when you call for permission. (e.g. harbor or ferry masters, park rangers). This one act can significantly reduce or eliminate harmful interactions or calls for law enforcement.
*Always reference our organization and your site contact by name when introducing your team. One minute of “Hey, we’re the folks from X, we’re just retrieving our experiments. We called and talked to Julia yesterday,” goes a long way in reducing negative interactions. Unless you are required to be escorted (port, military base) be clear that you may be splitting up and working separately throughout the site. Introduce all team members by first name.

*Be overly friendly and patient when officials or members of the public or property owners have questions, even if they’re general questions about our agency. Treat every interaction as you would a visitor on our Science Days. This engenders goodwill and builds trust. Instruct all staff and interns to do the same. Better to lose 10 minutes in the field chatting and answering questions than create distrust. You may not be intimidated by community members or officials, but don’t assume the same for your team. Particularly in areas you or others will visit again, building goodwill is invaluable and helps keep everyone at our agency safe. People often remember positive interactions years later. “Hey didn’t you have some barnacle lady down here one time?”

*A team member may be asked to call or text when work is finished if property owners or contacts are going to be off-site or unreachable. Always remember to do this, but be mindful of who you ask to do this. Some team members may be uncomfortable with a stranger having their phone number (e.g. women may not want repeated texts beyond what is needed for their work, no matter how friendly it seems. This has made past team members very uncomfortable.) The team lead should be the point of contact unless they are the person who is uncomfortable.

*Every team should discuss and designate in advance who will speak to land owners, law enforcement, etc. if a situation arises, ensuring that those who are most stressed or uncomfortable aren’t put on the spot, particularly if they’re new to the team and less able to answer questions about your work easily. Do not volunteer people for this role.

*Every team should have a designated spot to meet up if there are issues. This may just be at the work vehicle. Be aware of where each team member is working so that you can come to their aid should any confrontation or trouble arise.

*If there is a serious challenge or doubt of our affiliation, offer the phone number of our campus security and the name of your supervisor/mentor that they can confirm (if interns give their own name, security may not be able to confirm them, but they can easily look up permanent staff.) Security/OPS are reachable 24:7 and the majority of the officers are former police, so may convey more authority than other scientists.

*Ensure that staff know how to speak about the research in a way that doesn’t trigger or inflame anti-government sentiment. In some areas, challenges have come in the form of fear or suspicion of government overreach or of landowners getting in trouble for an environmental regulation. Use our agency’s name, as it is
well-liked and well-known. Be clear that we do not make or enforce regulations. Many new staff and interns don’t realize this. Teach neutral, academic phrases that can help redirect the conversation, like “We’re interested in learning more about these barnacles.” “We’ve always been curious about where these birds go in the winter.” “We’re students and we’re studying a local orchid that is common in your town.” If you anticipate challenges, provide an elevator speech in advance for newer team members who might be nervous about these interactions.

*If someone from the community threatens a team member(s), it may be safer to leave the area and report the incident from a public location off-site.

*If law enforcement shows up or there are threats or serious challenges, ask for all team members to come to a central or predetermined location to be together. Offer to show all relevant paperwork before being asked. Present a unified front by referring to your team as we/a group. It helps prevent the othering of team members, particularly if your team only includes one Black or Brown person.

*Ensure that all team members are aware of the existence and location of tools that may be perceived as weapons by law enforcement. Many of us are used to having some kind of knife as a part of our standard field kit, but interns and new hires may not be. Team members could be asked about weapons during an encounter with law enforcement and may not think to mention it in a stressful situation. Mentioning their purpose up front may help diffuse concerns (e.g. we use a utility knife to cut rope for our experiments; we have surgical tools to insert an acoustic tracker into fish)

*Ensure your staff know where to find relevant official vehicle documentation, including who to contact in case of a police stop while driving or if challenged about their use of a government vehicle. Also remind staff that they don’t have immunity from moving violations.

*If team members will be driving in areas where there is a curfew in effect, do not require them to drive after curfew hours, even if they are legally allowed to. You may feel comfortable doing so, but Black and Brown team members are more likely to be challenged by law enforcement. Women may also draw suspicion or be challenged when driving larger fleet trucks.

*Consider inviting local law enforcement station members and natural resources police to community/public engagement days to build relationships.

**Ways to reduce negative interactions with officers on our campus:**

*Communicate in advance to campus security/OPS if interns and staff, particularly Black and Brown and international folks, will be working around campus field sites or coming and going in buildings at off hours or weekends.
*Always be clear that there are NOT standard hours to your work, so they should expect to see people outside of M-F, 8-5. This is a good practice even if you doubt it will impact your team in the current year.

*Always double check campus access lists to ensure participants will be allowed on campus without challenge. Make sure they have your immediate contact number in their phone if there are problems. It may be possible to grant emergency access if needed.

*Ensure that all staff who will be using fleet vehicles or boats have the appropriate documentation on file with administrators and safety officers (license, boat operator cert, SERC ID).

*All team members who have them should bring relevant credentials like a boating certificate, pesticide application license, hot work permits, drone operator’s license, etc. with them during relevant fieldwork. If you’re afraid of losing originals, bring a copy.

*Ensure access to official vehicles whenever possible, even on campus. You may be comfortable driving your personal vehicle for local fieldwork, including spending your own gas money, risking damage, or getting challenged about your right to be there. Don’t assume the same of others. Give people an opportunity to refuse to use their personal vehicle without question. Don’t assume that others are comfortable riding in your car, either. Ask security for a vehicle hangtag or print-out if people are driving personal vehicles anywhere other than main campus buildings.

*Ensure that all team members have all necessary keys to access campus buildings or restricted access areas.

*Ensure all staff and interns have campus security’s number in their phones

*Ensure direct reports know that they can and should say the name of the PI they work for if they are challenged while on campus. Statements like “I work in Dr. Greg Ruiz’s lab, and I’m doing fieldwork here.” Or “he asked me to do lab work this evening.” Security staff members are more likely to recognize the name of a PI than individual staff or fellows. If there are ongoing challenges to a particular intern’s presence, supervisors should meet with campus security directly to discuss and be clear that this person has full access to all field sites and relevant buildings on campus at all times. **Trust your team members if they express discomfort with campus security**, and do not minimize or downplay their concerns.

*Build community by inviting campus security members to staff happy hours, to visit field sites and meet staff, etc.

**Reduce negative interactions on International Travel:**
* All travelers must register for SI’s SOS Global Assistance Program and keep contact information with them at all times. All travelers should register with the US State Dept (STEP Smart Traveler Enrollment Program) or the relevant agency in their country of citizenship (even if the travel destination is designated as low threat).

*Supervisors and all team members should review the SI International Travel and State Department guidance on the areas to which you will be traveling, including all relevant advisories.

*Research the culture, local customs and laws of the places to which you are traveling in advance. Be respectful that race, ethnicity, national origin, religious, gender and LGBTQ+ identities may put some team members at risk for violence and harassment, may be criminalized, or may restrict their travel, behavior, clothing, etc. If that’s the case, open conversations with all team members can prevent the accidental ‘outing’ of people in ways that could endanger them. If there are concerns, ask relevant team members how they would like you to respond to questions about their identity, and follow their lead during conversations (e.g. if a team member changes the pronouns they use when referencing their partner/spouse in public situations). Or plead ignorance in your responses “Gosh, I don’t know them that well. I’m not sure what religion they practice.” Better to seem uninformed than endanger a colleague.

*Additional resources for international travel can be found on PRISM on the Office of International Relations website, including general travel guidance, country protocols, what to do in an emergency, and who to contact if health-related issues arise while on travel. Insurance Coverage facilitates emergency medical care; they do not cover medical expenses. (Need to review how worker’s comp is handled in these situations)

*SI staff and affiliates (e.g., interns, fellows) can reach out to the Smithsonian’s Office of International Relations for additional guidance if needed.

*All travelers should keep a photocopy of their passport and any relevant visas on them at all times. Some countries require you to have your physical passport on you at all times. Be aware of these policies and bring additional equipment (e.g. waterproof bags) with you, if needed. Use a passport belt under clothing if needed.

*Provide in-country emergency contact numbers and an international cell phone to solo travelers or at least one member of a team who will be traveling and working together if they do not already have a relevant personal plan. Have an emergency communication plan.

*Always research and offer trusted taxi or shuttle services as an alternative to public transit, especially during off-hours, when staff are traveling with multiple gear bags, or in areas where theft or assault crimes are common, including within
Race, ethnicity, gender identity, etc. can make people a target, particularly if they are carrying heavy gear. Travel in pairs when possible. Sexual assault in STEM has been commonly reported by researchers traveling alone via public transit or unregulated taxis to remote field sites.

*Arrange vaccinations with Occupational Health Services, or try to cover out-of-pocket costs of vaccines at non-SI facilities on travel/grant funds. Many health plans do not cover recommended vaccines for international travel.

*Allow sufficient time for relevant vaccinations or medications when planning international fieldwork. Most vaccines take at least 2 weeks, maybe months, to build a proper immune response.

*Have a plan and open discussion for immune-compromised persons who can’t take certain vaccines (e.g. someone with Rheumatoid arthritis may not be able to have a yellow fever vaccine), those who are distrustful of vaccines, or those whose religious practice precludes vaccination. It is not appropriate for supervisors to challenge people about this. That discussion should happen with a medical professional within SI Health.

*Provide or cover the cost of other disease-avoidance products such as hand sanitizer and insect repellant where malaria, dengue, Lyme, etc. is prevalent. These are basic travel supplies and are provided by SI Health if an appointment is made at the SI Health unit downtown.

*Ensure basic health needs and materials are either readily available for purchase or that team members bring a sufficient supply. Do not assume that you will be able to easily purchase the same items you would at home. Bring additional items that you think might be useful in an emergency (antihistamine – Benadryl, antidiarrheal – Immodium, anti-inflammatory – Tylenol, menstrual products, bandages, etc.) Ensure that team members are familiar with restrictions on the use or possession of hormonal medication such as oral contraceptives or injectables, such as insulin. Most countries require those traveling with prescription medications to bring documentation or original bottle.

*If team members don’t speak the local language, have a discussion about who will act as a translator during travel and fieldwork. Do not assume that team members are comfortable being alone in another country without being able to communicate. Do not expect people to build language skills on their personal time.

*Review SI’s emergency insurance policies in advance.

*Review benefits for Travel card holders, as this may include assistance with replacing lost medication, glasses, travel services medical protection, emergency treatment or evacuation.
Training and Resources

Bystander Intervention and De-escalation

https://www.ihollaback.org/resources/
https://www.ihollaback.org/event/conflict-de-escalation-training-6/

Improving DEI within field teams

There is also existing diversity training for OFMR and OPS in Moodle, however, not for science program staff. There is a new training option on Moodle that is not open yet for program staff: The Disrupting Everyday Bias Virtual Training Program gives you the skills to disrupt the impact of bias in your interactions, behaviors, and decision-making by implementing Cook-Ross’ PAUSE model. https://cookross.com/disrupting-everyday-bias-virtual-training-program/  Course Contact: Patricia McKim

SI issues diversity reports and links to “special emphasis” resources across the federal government.

Resources for Supervisors and Field Leads

Safe Fieldwork Strategies for At-Risk Individuals

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-020-01328-5

Survey of Academic Field Experiences (SAFE): Trainees Report Harassment and Assault

https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0102172

Accessibility and Fieldwork in the Time of Coronavirus


Down Time

*Off-site travel, extended fieldwork and long drives to field sites often provides lulls and downtime, sometimes with shared common living spaces, that people fill with games, music, movies, shared foods, and a wide range of conversation topics. Be inclusive and provide opportunities for all team members to focus on their favorite media, food, or topic of conversation. Remember that the Code of Conduct applies at all times during travel, even outside of work hours. Team leads and supervisors have a special responsibility here since their actions often set the tone and can license worse behavior from others.
*Be respectful of group members identity, ability, and religious or cultural backgrounds.

- If people are observing religious holidays or taking time for prayers, make sure there is a space they can do this in peace. Do not ask others to participate unless they share a religious practice and there is clear consent.
- Don’t diminish or insult food, jewelry, appearance, clothing or personal care habits (e.g. not washing hair every day, not shaving legs). If people’s personal hygiene becomes genuinely problematic for others, a supervisor or trusted team member can have a kind conversation with them in private.
- Respect dietary restrictions without challenges or mocking, regardless of the reason, and ensure that when buying/preparing shared food or going out to eat on travel that there are sufficient, balanced options for those with restrictions.
  - Simple tweaks like replacing a disgusted “Ew, what IS that?” with a curious “Oooh what is THAT?” when it comes to food and media can make the environment much more inclusive.
  - A garden salad or a bowl of rice is not a balanced meal option for vegetarian or vegan folks.
- Avoid inherently racist or sexist media, or religious media, in public spaces, even if you only watch it as a joke or it seems harmless to you.
  - Avoid centering ‘white nostalgia’ (consistently reminiscing about a better time when the entire field team or facility was white) or repeatedly portraying the ‘ideal field team’ or ‘ideal field techs’ as white people. This has been reported as a particularly insidious form of othering.

*Be professional towards others with recreational activities and respect shared spaces.

- Do not place fellow team members at risk through possession of illegal substances or excessive consumption of legal substances, at and outside of workspaces. This includes drugs that may be legal in one state or country but are still prohibited by federal law. You may make people uncomfortable or risk negative interactions with law enforcement.
- Do not bring other people home to shared residences. There may be exceptions for people traveling with a partner or immediate family member, but this should be decided on well in advance with the approval of everyone sharing that residence (e.g. shared living spaces). Or if the entire team wishes to invite a known colleague for dinner.

*Be mindful of additional expenses while traveling for work or enjoying downtime. Even if expenses or activities are optional, they may prevent full participation based on economic resources.

- When splitting checks out with students, intern, volunteers or younger staff, split checks equitably. Do not ask to split checks evenly or pressure team
members or students to eat at expensive restaurants they may not be able to afford. If possible, consider occasionally treating students, etc. especially if you are on per diem and they are not.

This document incorporates foundational past and ongoing work done by Stacey Havard, Katrina Lohan, Midge Kramer, Eric Bah, Linsey Haram, Rob Aguilar, and several URGE pod members. It has been informed by scientific and news articles, interviews, documentaries and panel discussions, as well as the personal field experiences of all contributors. This work critically relies on anonymized recommendations and requests made during conversations with hundreds of interns, volunteers, visiting researchers and colleagues.