



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE; www.urgeoscience.org) is a community-wide journal-reading and policy-design curriculum to help Geoscientists unlearn racism and improve accessibility, justice, equity, and inclusion (AJEDI) in our discipline. URGE's primary objectives are to (1) deepen the community's knowledge of the effects of racism on the participation and retention of black, brown, and indigenous people in Geoscience¹, (2) use the existing literature, expert opinion, and personal experiences to develop anti-racist policies and strategies^{2,3}, and (3) share, discuss, and modify anti-racist policies and strategies within a dynamic community network and on a national stage. By meeting these objectives, we hope that Geoscience departments and societies will be able to implement a well-researched crowdsourced group of anti-racist policies.

1. Ground Rules⁴

1. *Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.*
2. *Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," "you").*
3. *Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas and problems rather than people.*
4. *Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice. Allowing a 20 second pause before moving on may be helpful to provide space for everyone's voice to be heard.*
5. *Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.*
6. *The goal is not to always agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.*
7. *Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses -- they can be as disrespectful as words (even over Teams!)*
8. *Assume everyone's good intentions but also acknowledge the impact of saying something*
9. *that hurts someone else, even if it is unintended. Call in rather than calling out so that we can have open and healthy conversations, not accusatory conflict. For more information on the definitions of Calling in vs Calling out see: http://www.racialequityvtnea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Interrupting-Bias_-Calling-Out-vs.-Calling-In-REVISED-Aug-2018-1.pdf*
10. *Maintain confidentiality. All stories shared in this space stay in this space unless explicit permission is given by the person sharing the story that it can be shared in another setting.*
11. *Don't hold your questions inside; chances are someone else is thinking them, too. Also, don't hold them until the last minute of the session, try to make sure we have time to address them fully.*

Additionally, the USGS code of conduct covers similar and other relevant behaviors for constructive communication/interaction:

U.S. Geological Survey Code of Conduct

Expected Behavior/Conduct

- Focus on the mission & vision of USGS
- Treat others with courtesy, dignity, respect and consideration.
- Communicate with civil attitudes, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Honor the roles and responsibilities of all employees
- Provide a safe and rewarding environment that nurtures, challenges, and encourages all employees to engage.

Unacceptable Behavior/Conduct

- Demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior or speech.
- Personal attacks of any kind.
- Unwelcome or offensive verbal comments or exclusionary behavior related to age, appearance or body size, employment or military status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, individual lifestyle, marital or parental status, national origin, disability status, physical or cognitive ability, genetic information, political affiliation, race, color, or religion.
- Humiliating, intimidating, or bullying behavior, or retaliation for reporting unacceptable behavior.

¹ R. E. Bernard, E. H. G. Cooperdock, No progress on diversity in 40 years. Nature Publishing Group. 11, 1–5 (2018).

² <https://notimeforsilence.org/>

³ <https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>

⁴ Adapted from <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/groundrules.html> and

2. Making it happen as a group

Consensus whenever possible. Democratic process as a second option.

3. Pod member roles and responsibilities

OVERVIEW OF POD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each 2-week session will be led by Session Facilitator with support from Notetakers (one Notetaker per podlet). In the following session, the Notetakers will take over as the Session Facilitators, and a new Notetakers will be chosen/volunteer.

Roles

USGS Pod Members:

It is understood that to the best of each of our abilities given our schedules and obligations, that we will read the Session Reading, watch the Interview and come to the Tuesday Discussion periods ready to ask questions and provide our perspectives on the Session's key topics and Deliverables. For each Discussion period, a Deliverable template will be available on the Teams site. The template can be updated in real time during the Discussion section. How much we learn and how robust our deliverables are depends on contributions from each of us.

Session Facilitator:

Prior to the Discussion Section, read the week's readings, attend/listen to the interview, and develop a few starter ideas for the Session Discussion/Deliverables. Session Facilitator are encouraged to bounce ideas off each other and off the Notetaker to develop Discussion Points and Deliverable ideas. Following the discussion Section, Session Facilitator for the podlets can reconvene later in the week to organize the Session Deliverables based on the discussion inputs, then notify Colleen Clark when the deliverable is ready to upload to URGE. The Discussion time is short, so developing a working draft Deliverable prior to the Discussion will leave more time for podlets to benefit from members sharing their own ideas/perspectives.

Session Notetaker:

To free up the Session Facilitators to engage with and facilitate the Discussion, Notetakers will endeavor to capture notes from the Discussion (especially in discussions of deliverables) and fill out the Deliverables during the discussion as ideas merit. Notetakers will assist the Session Facilitators in organizing the Deliverables following the Discussion period. Session Facilitators will have a fair amount to keep in mind all at once, so the more Notetakers are prepared to assist Session Facilitators via their own familiarity with the Readings/Interviews/Deliverables, the more Discussion time can be devoted to bringing out the podlet member ideas/perspectives.

POD ACTIVITY SPECIFICS

1. Schedule meetings. Our pod is separated into 3 podlets, which have scheduled meeting on Tuesday mornings and afternoons. If the morning (11:30 AM EST) and afternoon (4:30 PM EST) session times do not work for individuals, then they are welcome to

schedule/organize another podlet meeting at a time that is more convenient for themselves and others.

2. Attendance will be taken for the purposes of making every voice heard and engaged, and for reporting URGE participation numbers to USGS Executive Leadership and the Office of Civility and Inclusion, but attendance is not required. If members are not able to make a meeting(s) for any reason, and want to be included, then members should feel welcome to engage/catch up on what they missed on the Teams channel in the notes documents or in the deliverables documents. Session facilitators will respond to comments and suggestions.
3. Take notes as needed, especially in discussions of deliverables. For the first session notetakers kept separate records for notes outside of the deliverable template document. Future notetakers can choose their preferred method of capturing the discussion, from analog, to word document, to making notes directly in the deliverable document template.
4. Upload deliverables to the URGE website. USGS participants will follow guidance provided by USGS executive leadership to ensure these publicly visible documents are appropriately framed and have consistency in standards across USGS pods to facilitate a basis for future discussions and action. The Center Director of the pod leader will review the deliverables prior to submission to URGE. Unless otherwise specified, uploads will be handled by the Pod Leader.
5. Schedule meetings with organization/institution leadership as appropriate for coordinating efforts across the USGS.
6. Read supplemental articles / materials for deliverables as needed (for example, the asset mapping deliverable will be accompanied by a short paper about the purpose of creating community asset maps and how to generate your own.)
7. Draft deliverables and share with the pod for review/edits/discussion. Session notetakers and facilitators will be responsible for creating, seeking review and feedback at the center level (Rob Thieler—rthieler@usgs.gov) and submitting deliverables to URGE. All pod members are invited to contribute/participate in the development of deliverables as they have time/interest, but the weekly facilitators and note takers will be ultimately responsible for finalizing the deliverables.

Schedule (Tuesday Discussion Days listed for the dates)

SESSION	TOPIC	DELIVERABLE	INCLUSIVITY TIP
1) 1/26	Racism and Definitions	Group Norms and Pod Agreements	Finding Your Voice
2) 2/9	Racism and Individuals	Policy for Dealing with Complaints	Why Pronouns
3) 2/23	Racism and History	Statistical Analyses of Program and its History	Finding Your Community
4) 3/9	Racism and Justice	Policies for Working with Communities of Color	Land Grab Acknowledgement
5) 3/23	Racism and Accessibility	Admissions and Hiring Policies	Letters of Recommendations
6) 4/6	Racism and Inclusivity	Lab and Field Code of Conduct	Nominations for Awards
7) 4/20	Racism and Self Care	Asset Map of Resources to Support People of Color	Self Care, Mental Health, & Emails
8) 5/4	Racism and Accountability	Policy Booklet with Summary	Staying Resilient

****These recommendations will be/have been presented to USGS leadership for consideration.****