Session 4 Deliverable: Policies for Working with Communities of Color

If you are involved in research with communities of color, in the US or abroad, have you…

- **Actively sought out local collaborators / liaisons / guides? Why or why not?**
  - OSU -- Simon: I have not personally. Often collaborations are started by other field experiment planning leaders. Emily has found it a necessary and rewarding component of the research collaboration. Flaxen agrees as she's engaged in some research related to seafood processing workforce development, and has found it interesting and rewarding.

  - Government Lab -- before doing any field work its required to have a hired archaeologist do a cultural survey to ensure no artifacts and/or sacred ground will be disturbed from any type of sampling. Local landowners, etc may be informed or invited throughout the permitting process before being able to sample for any projects. Beyond permitting, there has been some outreach to a few local tribes i.e., through presenting research projects/proposals and providing data after the project has concluded.

  - Blue Marble Space: For our online Young Scientist Program, we have sought to engage The National Association of Black Geoscientists, but have never received responses. We were successful in engaging the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society and were thus able to post our opportunities on their bulletin boards. We will know in April whether any of these populations did in fact apply to our program.

- **Were they included in the early development and/or proposal of the research or project itself, or added at a later stage?**
  - This varies at OSU -- Organizers of large field projects seek institutional partners and collaborators in foreign localities. Simon has collaborated with researchers at the planning, field work, and analysis stage of

research, but not as much in the proposal phase. Emily- varied experiences from logistical inclusion in proposals, to co-developing independent co-research proposals (e.g., funded via to different countries) to support of partner proposals (e.g., through USAID). Flaxen - in this seafood processing workforce project, this target audience was not involved early on in the process but that's generally a much better way to do it (I've done this with Tribal partners).

- Government lab -- After asking around, I don't believe so. Most work involved with tribal partners in the past was only at the early stage in regards to permitting, but no successful attempts to actually engage in active collaboration with the research project itself. There is also some past work of sharing data once it's been generated to tribal groups, but again, not much proof that I can find of actual collaboration and creative input from local communities outside of the organization
- Blue Marble Space. No, the projects are pre-defined prior to student involvement. Students can take the projects and make it their own though, with support of their mentors.

● **Were any local collaborators included as authors on presentations and/or papers?**
  - OSU -- Yes. Simon's perspective is mostly of forming the collaborative relationships in the field. This takes advantage of the prior leadership of experiment planners to include institutional partners. Emily agrees with Simon. Flaxen agrees as well because she believes that this is important for equity and for reaching broader audiences with the lessons learned and stories connected to the research.
  - Government lab: No. Not that I can find within my small subset of biogeochemical researchers in the past. However, we are starting talks with local heritage universities and some tribal colleges to set up summer REU programs and begin relationship building with local communities of tribes whose ancestral land we are working on. As I begin to collaborate with this employee and outreach group, I hope that we can begin to actually include indigenous voices in all stages of the science, and to change how we do science to incorporate a broader and more inclusive perspective that is not purely extractive.
  - *WSU Vancouver* (Sofia) - currently I don't participate in research with communities of color but I do my best to audit a relevant campus project below.
  - Blue Marble Space: Yes, students are, regardless of populations, first author on their project papers, if they do go so far as having publishable results.

Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:

E.g. How many research projects were undertaken in countries or regions with communities of color, how many of those included meaningful interactions with those communities of color? Briefly describe one or more example projects to provide context for the following questions.

Government lab -- I was unable to find public research projects which specifically described interactions with communities of color to audit. This is really unfortunate. The lack of transparency on past interactions concerns me, and I am hoping to hear back from some colleagues on how to learn more about the historical past interactions with local collaborations.

OSU -- Simon: Many research projects are in international waters, and I have not paid much attention to indigenous interests in these cases, though I am sure they exist. Sometimes data is collected in exclusive economic zones by agreement with other nations. These are arranged by chief scientists, research vessel operators, and US State Dept.

WSU Vancouver (Sofia): Although I could not find a list of how many research projects are undertaken with communities of color, there is an online list of 24 professors on our campus actively involved in research on "diversity and the role it plays in the modern world". One example project is "The Thin Green Line is People: Documenting Pacific Northwest Fossil Fuel Resistance", an open-source online archive that documents the struggle of Pacific Northwestern communities against fossil fuel companies. The project highlights the role of tribal members from the community in this struggle and was spearheaded by a team of WSUV professors. I did not participate in this project personally but will do my best to suggest what might have worked/didn't work from an outsider perspective in the questions below.

Blue Marble Space: we have collaborators that have established connections with native american populations. Years of effort were needed. We have programs engaging prison populations as well.

What worked well in these interactions?

E.g. Using local names for landmarks or features, adhering to restrictions and customs such as not scheduling outreach meetings/events during hunting season

OSU -- Starting early. Personal interaction. Often researchers had to visit in person to secure agreements and interactions. It requires time and resources to visit early and often. Simon collaboration with researchers from local institutions on research vessels. Including local collaborators as coauthors. Another item that seems to work is engaging with partners and communities outside of the main research project, e.g., visiting collaborator homes or local organizations like schools, churches, etc. Seems trivial but identifying the right communication route is also really important- many international communities rely on tools like WhatsApp rather than email for example. I have used it for exchanging code, coordinating with agencies, socialization/networking, and general information exchange. Forming research teams with established programs in India. Student and early-career scientist exchanges, collaborations. Meetings.

WSU Vancouver (Sofia) - in reference to the Thin Green Line campus project mentioned earlier, a prominent part of the project website showcases recorded oral histories of tribal members (and other members from communities of color and white communities) discussing their knowledge of the struggle against fossil fuel companies. This worked well because it clearly highlighted the importance oral histories serve in tribal communities and respected them as legitimate ways of knowing, rather than 'anecdotal'. These oral histories were a direct part of the project, however the project also documents the role tribes have played in other forms of activism and protest (not directly associated with the project) such as 'kayaktivism' and 'artivism'.

Blue Marble Space: What works well is genuine interest in establishing human relationships, and taking the time to do so. Never any last minute requests. An emphasis of co-creation and co-learning is indeed as well. Engaging with native american populations is like engaging with a sovereign nation. It takes time to establish trust.

What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?

> *E.g., We did not include priorities of local communities of color when developing our proposal, and to address this in the future we will include community member(s) in the early stages of proposal planning and writing as collaborators*

OSU -- As above. How can expanding the scope of the project mutually benefit the research and the indigenous communities? How is time and effort spent networking with local and indigenous communities in the early stage compensated for indigenous and University researchers? Use known resources, networks and best practices to establish interactions. Interacting through the state departments can be really challenging. You are somewhat at the whim at the larger international political stage. You also need to know the right people and how to interact within a given structure. For example- does the

culture function from a top-down or bottom-up approach. You can unintentionally kill a collaboration before it starts if you try to navigate connections in the wrong way. Flaxen totally agrees; less "directing" and more "mutual building."

WSU Vancouver (Sofia): Although the Thin Green Line project is certainly a useful tool, it seems unclear how tribal communities were involved in the development of the tool and what role they play in its future. It seems more like a way for folks outside of tribal communities to learn about the history of this issue and how tribes have played an important role in that history. Future plans should try to incorporate tribal communities early on in the project conception and ensure the project is beneficial for both parties, rather than informative for only one. Furthermore, I can't find much on the website attributing any kind of authorship credit for the tool, other than a [news release](link) claiming the project is backed by a "community-based research team of professors from WSU Vancouver" (and contact information for the project is directed towards an English professor on campus). Ensuring tribal communities gain a lasting benefit--e.g. credit of authorship, or perhaps payment for their time giving oral histories, etc.--would be good to include in future plans.

Blue Marble Space: We still struggle to attract a diverse group of humans applying to join our institute. It's hard to know if it's a pipeline issue or we are somehow positioning ourselves as not attractive to those populations.

Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?

E.g., Work with and compensate community members to translate research results and outreach materials into local language, include acknowledgements in forthcoming publications and presentations

OSU -- Continue and rekindle collaborations started in the field. Include collaborators as coauthors. Flaxen agrees and adds that periodic and open communication about how it's going, mutual goal building, etc. is critically important.

WSU Vancouver (Sofia) - Given manuscripts and published papers are often the last step of a project, projects already underway often still have time to make sure that collaborators from communities of color are included as co-authors and have significant say in the final published work. Furthermore, even if a project is already underway, researchers can adjust plans on how data/information from the project will be managed after the project is over--e.g. making sure these data are openly accessible to the community of color, not hidden behind a paywall, and stored in a way that is understandable for future interested parties.

Blue Marble Space: Continuing the effort of building relationships, even after the projects have ended, is needed and difficult to do. Otherwise, it feels again extractive and dishonest.

Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?

E.g., Additional support/funding for early planning process of projects to include forming productive and mutually beneficial connections with communities, establish a point of contact for interfacing with communities so as not to overwhelm with individual requests from researchers and collaborators

OSU -- Yes. These examples are appropriate. See what didn't work so well above. Flaxen agrees. One of the biggest things to make note of when planning and engaging is the reality that not everyone (culture) works on what I call "Whiteness Time" and therefore, operate out of a place of willingness to take the time needed (a "go slow to go fast" approach).

WSU Vancouver (Sofia): The Thin Green Line project received start-up funding from the [WSUV Council on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](). Given these grants are often used to work with communities of color, perhaps the [grant guidelines]() could be adjusted to improve the process. For example, the grant application could include a management plan that asks grant writers to specify how communities of color or tribal communities may directly benefit from the project, how these communities will be involved in authorship/project credit, specifying how collaborative plans for publishing/data management during and after the project will work, etc. This would be a good way to ensure these funds are going directly towards collaborating with communities of color.

Blue Marble Space: It feels introductions are necessary. I'm not sure why we've not had any responses to our messages sent to the National Association of Black Geoscientists. I wonder if we accidentally positioned ourselves negatively despite having the best of intentions? It's hard to know without feedback.