

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for Durham University Earth Sciences and Geography departments

This is what was found by Earth Sciences/Geography at Durham University on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**
 - *The pod meeting considered anecdotal examples from its members and from several invited speakers. We have not conducted a complete audit of all projects that have interacted with communities of colour. It is likely that there are very few Durham ES/Geography projects that have involved a community of colour within a western country (e.g. within the USA or Canada), but a very high number of projects that are or were international, and operate in countries with a non-white majority.*
- **What worked well in these interactions?**
 - *Interacting with local scientists at all stages of the project from planning through execution*
 - *Prioritization of local scientist defined scientific questions which often relate to local hazard/priorities of local communities.*
 - *Making use of local knowledge and expertise of scientists (in-depth regional knowledge) and local people (guides).*
 - *There was a sense that local scientists are best placed to handle the interactions with communities.*
 - *Providing information of work being done and translating into local languages.*
 - *Having local collaborators as co-authors on any published working, and acknowledging local land-owners etc.*
 - *Assisting co-authors in their lead author papers in terms of with language helping them get their work published in high ranked journals.*
 - *Setting up long-term collaborations with local scientists*
 - *Getting local students involved – sharing funding with local institutions where this was possible*
 - *Learning about local customs/history/practices to be respectful*
- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
 - *Some issues with funding opportunities and being able to directly share resources with local institutions/get funding to cover costs of local PhD students*



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- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
 - *The URGE suggestions are hard to improve on: Work with and compensate community members to translate research results and outreach materials into local language, include acknowledgements in forthcoming publications and presentations*
- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**
 - *There could be additional checkpoints within the project planning process. E.g. the NERC liaison committee has oversight of major grant applications and could check that opportunities for working with communities of colour are not missed; the NERC DTP could likewise perform a sense check during the project approval stage.*
 - *We are not aware of any university level best-practice guides within our institution as to how to interact with local communities – something that we could work on in the future. They could look to draw further experiences within our departments such as anthropology or social sciences*