

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



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ENVIRONMENTAL
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URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for
University of Maryland/Environmental Science and Technology

This is what was found by Environmental Science and Technology at University of Maryland 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.

URGE Questions Answered by Peter May:

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

-Actively sought out local collaborators/guides? Why or why not?

Yes, with our US DOE Solar Decathlon 2017 entry reACT (resilient, adaptive, climate technologies). The team actively sought out the input and guidance of members of the Nanticoke and Piscataway Indian Tribes as the effort strived to work toward a future in the spirit of native 7th Generation principles and respect for resources and the land.

-Were they included in the early development and/or proposal of the research or the project itself, or added at a later stage?

First nations people were included early in the development effort of reACT.

-Were any local collaborators included as authors on presentations and/or papers?

Presentations have included tribal members. There have as yet no papers been developed but if so will include local members as co-authors.

-Have you actively sought to include local students in your research? Why or why not?

Yes, for the reACT competition students were integral to the effort. In professional practice I have included students on projects wherever possible to expose them to “real world” project experience.



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-Have you sought to build trust and form long-term connections and collaborations with local institutions if your project is multi-year?

Yes, especially with a local DC area school, and a local municipal government over several years.

-Were previous negative interactions, whether from inside or outside of your organization, addressed in the plans for building these connections and trust?

We had no previous negative interactions.

-Have you shared data and findings with local/regional community in a way that is more accessible? Why or why not?

Yes, data and multiyear project progress has been fed back to a local nonprofit group, as well as a local municipality.

-Have you educated yourself and your group about local politics, culture, customs, and knowledge, including the history in the region?

Yes, a knowledge of local history, politics, customs, knowledge are an integral part of being a systems ecologist, which I teach as a part of a class Ecosystems Ecology.

-Was time allocated to the process of working within the community's governance, customs, and priorities?

Yes, on several projects. This approach is key when working in, with and for local communities.

-Is respecting culture and customs included as part of your code of conduct?

Yes, the reACT Think Tank opens each of our meetings with an acknowledgement of the campus residing on unseeded land of native peoples. In working on any project it is important to understand and recognize this.

-Have you acknowledged local communities/Indigenous tribes in your research results?

For our reACT results we have, it is integral.

-Have you included local communities in your broader impacts in a meaningful way that builds on the communities identified needs and concerns?

Yes, it is important to what we do and always include local organized groups as well as outreach to individual homeowners in project areas.

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-Did these efforts leverage community members, and was that work compensated appropriately? So far projects did not ask for professional involvement that required compensation, reACT was all volunteer. Project proposals I have worked on did include paid line items for local community organizers.

-Have you considered and prioritized research questions and research locations based on needs of local communities, in addition to how impactful they are seen within academia?

Local communities were consulted on certain project placement and have been worked with to consider best placement.