



URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center

This is what was found by TIDE Pod at NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center 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.

- **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.*
- 33/154 projects in the Project Planning Database included 'Tribe'
- **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*
 - Putting in the time to build personal relationships and trust. This includes respectful and transparent communication, and lots of listening to make sure research incorporates local knowledge and topics of mutual interest. In-person meetings go further than group emails. We often bring food to share at meetings and on field days.
- **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*
 - Sometimes we have pursued funding for a research question before first consulting with tribal partners. This short changes our partners and the quality of the research. For instance, by (1) focusing on study questions/deliverables that are not priorities for the community and (2) by losing out on the opportunity to learn from and build on existing local knowledge.



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- **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*
 - Include community members in the early stages of proposal planning
 - Be aware of lines of questioning that may be viewed as threatening by tribal communities; e.g., benefits of hatchery production.
 - Cultivate a broader perspective on our mission and awareness that for many communities, recovery of threatened species is not just a science goal, but intricately tied to preservation of culture and livelihood.
 - Improve communication of results beyond conventional scientific presentations and publications.
- **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*

Recommendations for NWFSC leadership:

- Recommend that the tribal training Katie recently attended be at least available to all NWFSC staff - and maybe even mandatory?
- Upgrade PPD to include a "type of partnership" field to track data about project collaborators
- Develop a NWFSC set of mandatory guidelines for all researchers working with communities of color
 - Include a planning phase for projects that involves identifying BIPOC community partners and establishing collaborative relationships
- Land acknowledgements
 - Should there be an overarching statement at NWFSC website
 - Broader encouragement to include as part of presentations and papers?