



URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/Organization

This is what was found by various members of Sea Grant Pod at various institutions 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:**

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.

- CT Sea Grant mainly funds marine science-based research projects that are undertaken by other scientists. The types of research conducted by CTSG staff has involved testing of wastewater treatment plant effluent, seaweed cultivation and other scientific topics related to aquaculture. While none of these research projects specifically involve communities of color or other communities, some of our training and outreach projects have. These include seafood safety training courses that are required for workers in the wholesale and retail seafood industry that attract diverse students, and one-time science education and beach cleanup events in urban communities. We are in early stages of a creating storm preparedness materials that will address the needs both of renters and homeowners, and are planning to assemble diverse focus groups to guide this effort. We have also published Spanish-language educational materials on Long Island Sound and plan to expand our Spanish-language offerings. In 2019 we supported one of our aquaculture extension experts in a five-month research leave to develop and teach marine science at a school in the Dominican Republic for girls from impoverished families.
- Ohio Sea Grant (OSG) requests for proposals do not currently address priorities in communities of color or partnerships which focus on communities of color. OSG does not currently require or suggest as a best practice, the inclusion of local communities as partners in the planning or research process nor in the dissemination of research results. Building relationships with communities of color across the organization is important and is why two staff members were chosen to participate in URGE this year. The Ohio State University, in particular, the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences is now providing more professional development opportunities for staff with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. OSG can make



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a more concerted effort to create meaningful partnerships with communities of color through recommendations from our involvement in URGE.

- In 2019, Oregon Sea Grant used program development funding to support a project that inventoried previous projects and contacts with various communities of color. The project, Understanding Oregon Sea Grant's Historical Connections to Cultural Groups, encompassed projects from 2000 – 2018. Data were gathered through a series of interviews with current and former employees, and were archived in a database. The goal was to establish when, how, and with whom Oregon Sea Grant has collaborated, towards a goal of more inclusive work and improved relationships with various cultural communities in the state. Projects results were presented to the program, and the searchable database and summary report are available on our Internal Resources website.
- Georgia Sea Grant does dedicated outreach to minority-serving institutions and non-R1 universities in our state to encourage participation by faculty and students in our research and fellowship programs. This outreach has certainly led to the recruitment of more diverse applicants. However, we still have a long way to go. We also provide program development awards to facilitate research at minority-serving institutions in our state.
- Maine Sea Grant: selected activities in the last 12 months:
 - Indigenous community - Passamaquoddy Tribe: Monitoring effort for spawning populations of alewife in two watersheds; Soft-shell clam recruitment study conducted on the Passamaquoddy Reservation of Sipayik.
 - Community of color - AmeriCorps youth leaders: Facilitation training.
- **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*
 - Working in communities where we have already established relationships.
 - Take the time to cultivate the relationship - and acknowledge the time needed to do this.
 - Georgia Sea Grant -- Leveraging our long-standing and trusted relationships with the communities that we serve through our extension and education programs. Also, fostering information exchange and relationship building between the scientific enterprise and community stakeholders.



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- Maine Sea Grant selected activities in the last 12 months:
 - Indigenous community - Passamaquoddy Tribe: Well established professional and personal relationships that promote a good working environment. Responsibilities were shared across members of the project team, fostering mutual respect and support.
 - Community of color - AmeriCorps youth leaders: Participants shared their experiences and skills and had opportunities for co-facilitation and peer-to-peer learning.
- **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*
 - In a recent review of “Letters of Intent” responding to a Request for Proposals from a state Sea Grant program, no researchers included underserved communities in their research or outreach program.
 - When there is a social science aspect to any research project, either one that CT Sea Grant funds or undertakes itself, it should be developed from the earliest stages to meaningfully engage communities of color whenever possible in the design, information dissemination and other aspects.
 - Georgia Sea Grant: Research projects where community participation is an afterthought don’t work. Developing meaningful relationship with diverse individuals and communities takes time and persistence. Regrettably, scientists are not trained to engage with diverse communities and/or taught ways to ethically engage with communities of color, tribal or indigenous partners or other stakeholders.
 - Maine Sea Grant selected activities in the last 12 months:
 - Indigenous community - Passamaquoddy Tribe: Restrictions associated with COVID 19 required cancellation of activities with tribal students and also required obtaining formal permission to access restricted study sites on the reservation. This limited social interactions with tribal members and potentially limited the overall positive impacts of the studies. However, the research will be conducted over several additional years.



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- Community of color - AmeriCorps youth leaders: Due to the pandemic, one of the trainings with AmeriCorps was conducted virtually, limiting the opportunity for relationship building.
- **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*
 - In a recent review of “Letters of Intent” responding to a Request for Proposals from a state Sea Grant program, many researchers said that they would reach out to Sea Grant to develop their outreach plan. This is an opportunity for that state’s program to set the ground rules including the importance of working with under-served communities.
 - We are already planning to compensate focus group members on the storm preparedness project, but should be mindful to continue this practice in any other projects where community members are tapped for their input. We are meeting regularly about improving our DEI efforts generally, and as part of this are considering including land acknowledgement statements on our website and other materials, and developing ongoing outreach projects that are relevant to communities of color.
 - Georgia Sea Grant: Co-production of knowledge requires a recognition that community members are not mere participants, but collaborators in research. Meaningfully engaging with community members through our extension and education programs builds trust. Allocating resources on projects for their participation on the project honors collaboration and fosters accountability.
 - Maine Sea Grant selected activities in the last 12 months:
 - Indigenous community - Passamaquoddy Tribe: Further investigate tribal knowledge and cultural connections to the marine species that we are studying. Western science is only one lens for understanding.
 - Community of color - AmeriCorps youth leaders: Expand opportunities for AmeriCorps members to take leadership roles in training their peers.
- **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*



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contact for interfacing with communities so as not to overwhelm with individual requests from researchers and collaborators

- In the future, Requests for Proposals should include verbiage about the three pillars of Sea Grant: research, extension/outreach, and education. There should be a commonly understood value (i.e., explicitly stated value) that, even if not specifically requested, letters of intent and proposals that include elements of all three pillars will be more favorably reviewed. This, together with the explicitly stated value of working with underserved communities, opens so many possibilities.
- In the future, Requests for Proposals should include verbiage regarding Sea Grant's value that "work with underserved communities serves all of the community. (Arthur Lawrence, Historic Charleston Foundation Oral History Project)" There should be a commonly understood value (i.e., explicitly stated value) that, even if not specifically requested, letters of intent and proposals that include working with underserved communities will be more favorably reviewed.
- A statement encouraging researchers to incorporate work with communities of color in their proposals has been added to recently revised guidelines for research proposals. Additional staff dedicated to outreach would be ideal. Existing staff must commit to continuing to make this a long-term priority, and realize that progress may be gradual and that building relationships takes time.
- Georgia Sea Grant: In addition to improving the language in our RFPs and fellowship applications, we are committed to fostering communication between the scientific enterprise and the broader community through informational webinars, one-on-one meetings, and relationship-building.
- Maine Sea Grant: Because of increased funding opportunities, there are new efforts by other organizations that are proposing solutions in communities of color without significant effort into identifying the problems or the community leaders to work with. I would like to see that all projects are focussed on responding to community-expressed needs with engaged community members.