

Strategic Plan for Adding Diversity to EFI

The Ecological Forecasting Initiative recognizes that a diverse community brings different expertise and experience towards ecological forecasting; we see such diversity as a benefit, and necessary to the development of a diverse and inclusive community of interest and practice. Thus, we welcome all participants, and encourage patience and tolerance among all, holding curiosity and respect as the cornerstones of personal and professional growth. The following steps will guide our efforts to develop diversity, accessibility, and inclusion within the ecological forecasting community. An iterative approach works not only in the process of ecological forecasting, but if we adopt a mindset to continually engage with people of different backgrounds, get input, revise our efforts, we will become a more diverse community.

- Step 1: **Identify and clarify the problem.** What are the basic barriers we face in diversifying the EFI group? What are some potential goals?
- Step 2: **Identify barriers** that may be preventing students from underrepresented groups to participate in ecological forecasting as a career.
- Step 3: **Identify possible solutions that could be taken.** These could be broken down by age group, type of institution. Solutions can be either mile wide, inch deep--impacting many people (such as a science museum exhibit) but not deeply impacting most people; or they can be the opposite--working directly with 5 students, for example, for a year. Possible ideas can include better education curriculum/courses, research experiences, scientists in the schools, etc.
 - Most proposals start here. But we should start with Step 1
- Step 4: **Identify which solutions from Step 3 make sense to work on now** for the EFI group. Who can do what? With what funding? What do people want to do? Where is the low-hanging fruit? What's already being done, or what's been tried but hasn't been successful?
- Step 5: **Identify who else needs to be involved in the process and make a plan to bring them in.** This step might actually be better as Step 1--what groups should be involved in identifying the problem? And if the problem is that the right people are not involved, how can we adequately examine what the barriers and solutions might be? Realize we cannot solve the problem without broader participation in identifying the issues, barriers, and potential strategies.
- Step 6: **Form collaborations and seek funding to carry out the plan.**