

## October 16, 2023 DEI Working Group Call

Attendees: Antoinette Abeyta, Anna Sjodin, Nick Record, John Zobitz, Jody Peters, Alyssa Willson, Jason McLachlan

Agenda/Notes:

1. EFI 2024 Conference Announcement
  - a. Submit proposal using this short feedback form to submit proposals for workshops, panels, short courses, socials before/after/during this conference.
  - b. Deadline for proposals : 01 Nov 2023
  - c. Ideas from September: Ideas of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice is viewed differently around the world. It would be important as we have the meeting share what we have been doing and open up a broader discussion. Think it will be very generative.
  - d. Design Justice Principles: <https://designjustice.org/read-the-principles>
  - e. International perspective of inclusion/justice from EFI
  - f. Check in with Istem about what might work in terms of logistics for the Conference. Half day or day long to apply principles
  - g. Go through principles about how to design for equity and justice in mind when working on projects
  - h. Make it big tent on justice principles? Or have focus on Indigenous equity. Depends on the vibe with friends at FMI. Are there anyone from Indigenous backgrounds that will be at the meeting - that can influence what we are planning to do
  - i. 2 remaining questions
    - i. How much focus to have on Indigenous perspective in environmental science
    - ii. If we don't do that, then need another focus. In Boulder, was focused on the NEON Forecasting Challenge, but for an international group, would need to figure out a broader topic to focus on - something that can provide a common ground as people are brainstorming ideas
      1. Jody likes the idea of identifying communities that are current participants/included communities and brainstorming excluded (can be unintentionally excluded) communities and thinking about how to reach out to excluded communities to incorporate their voices and leadership
      2. Could balance between the two - discuss who is excluded, and then use inclusion of Indigeneity as a guiding example of including other voices. Then could lead in to a discussion of how to use this example in your work
      3. If we focus on the Indigenous side of things, be considerate of who is on the panel

- j. John's work with Fulbright Finland Foundation - had Sámi speakers with that experience and is willing to use his contacts to connect with them as possible participants
    - i. John to meet up with Sean and Jason when Jason is in Minnesota
  - k. Related to this topic, here is another option for the book club:  
<https://www.amazon.com/Stolen-Ann-Hel%C3%A9n-Laestadius/dp/1668007169>
2. Thinking Spatially Symposium: Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Oct 27 10-12:30pm CT
- a. Sean is moderating the panel discussion
  - b. There will be a hybrid option
  - c. Register:  
<https://ias.umn.edu/events/thinking-spatially-symposium-indigenous-data-sovereignty>
  - d. Details: Concepts of Indigenous data sovereignty challenge the western academic perspectives on information, data, and ownership. Join us at the 6th annual Thinking Spatially symposium for a series of presentations featuring Indigenous researchers exploring issues of data ownership and access, including spatial data, and discussing how these issues need to be approached in research and public communication. Who should have access to what knowledge, and in what circumstances? How do researchers navigate these issues while working within a large research institution? Panelists will share how they navigate issues of data sovereignty in their own work and with community partners.
3. Paper: [Identifying Assets and Collaborative Activities to Support Student Success in Environmental Data Science at Minority Serving Institutions](#)
- a. Description: The project brought together current and former faculty from Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to discuss opportunities to empower and support equitable data science education across these institutions and co-create solutions that ameliorate the digital divide. Our collective vision is to ensure all students have the resources and skills required to be effective in applying data science throughout their careers, ensuring their competitiveness in the workplace where they will be active participants in using their knowledge and skills to influence policies and decisions that may directly impact their communities. We focused specifically on the application of these skills to the environmental sciences, as there has been significant growth in large ecological datasets and environmental synthesis projects over the last decade. We aimed to co-create actionable recommendations for undergraduate environmental data science education at TCUs and HBCUs.
4. Check in with Anna about the Book Club Action follow up - is a summary of actions ready to put on the Book Club page?
- a. <https://ecoforecast.org/resources/efi-book-club/>

- b. There have been a number of things that were book club adjacent. Not sure if the things that were done were because of the book club or because
- c. Only concrete action was the statement developed from
- d. Themes:
  - i. First two books: Caste and Things That Matter Most - focused on mentorship, inclusive trainings
  - ii. Second two books: Addressing unintended consequences and self reflection. There are some continued work through EFI related to this
- e. Have others look at the doc and see if there are things that are a priority
- f. Within EFI want to have enough experience and have a trustful environment to allow for discussions and allow for the group to do better
- g. Want to make sure for the early career people to get something out of activities when it is useful for them
- h. Braiding Sweetgrass had students from REU which was great to have discussions with people from multiple backgrounds. That is similar with other book clubs where we brought in people from industry, government, academia at multiple career stages
  - i. Discussions, mentorship, across different stages of career
- i. Anna's recommendation: Drumline
- j. John's recommendation: see above. Could be a good book to to read to prep for the Conference
- k. Jody's recommendation: Books by Robert Bullard
- l. Would it be useful to take the book club discussions and create educational modules around them?
  - i. Discussions that happen around book clubs could contribute to the educational modules. Specific examples or context or challenge in environmental justice
  - ii. Jason is teaching a class where students are creating educational modules in collaboration with Georgia Smies at Salish Kootenai College
  - iii. Come up with an exercise for class project about negative consequences from ecological forecasting
  - iv. Julio Bettencourt - trying to inspire fire managers. Made fake news casts. Negative: The forest service is under fire. And positive version. Getting across to people that the different ways decision making takes place and communication
- m. Will want to share the document with people in the last book club
- n. Could go through notes and anonymize people's names. Then post the summary/notes on the Bookclub page
  - i. Before posting to the book club page:
    1. Send email to previous book club participants checking in to make sure they are comfortable with sharing the information
    2. Let them know it will be anonymized
    3. Let them know we are not sharing notes from all the discussions, just notes about potential action items

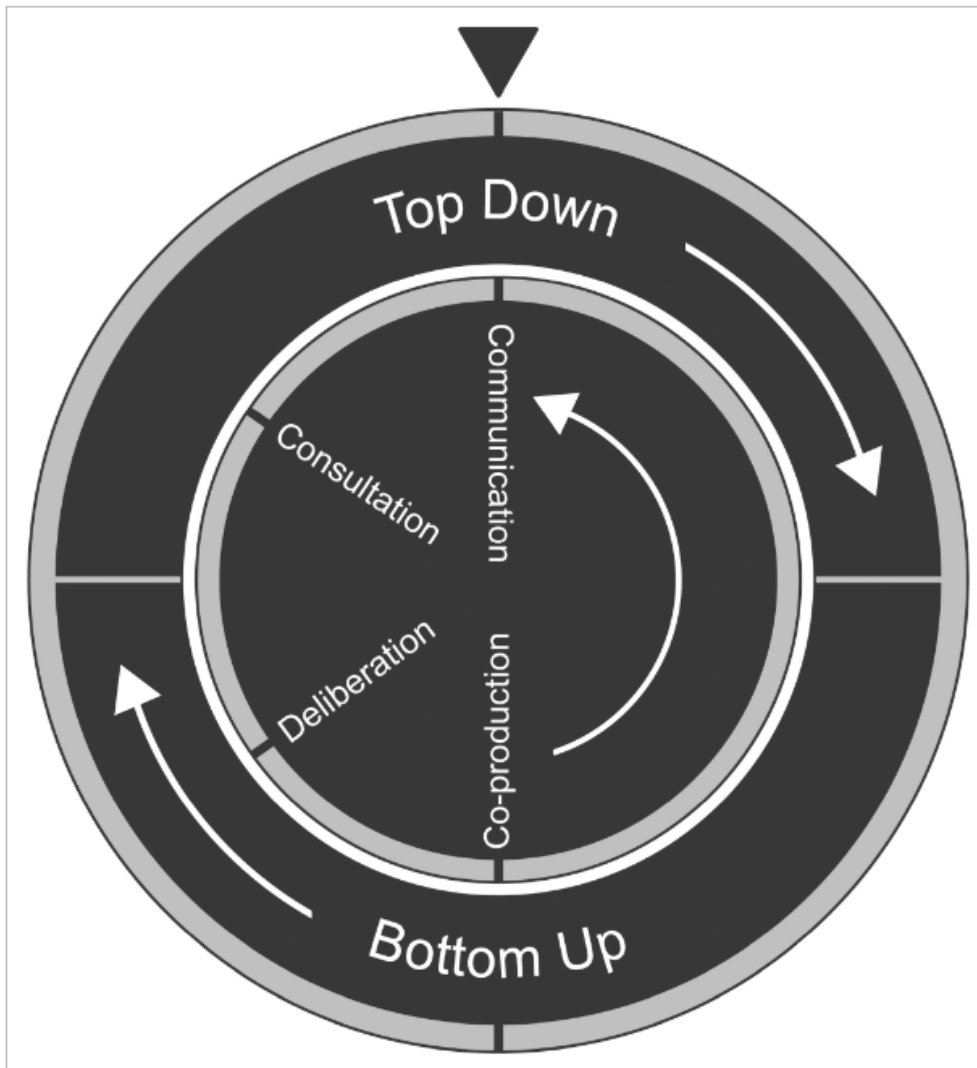
5. JEDI Database Update
  - a. Dave Klinges has been working with Jody to set up a workflow for keeping track of changes to EFI membership demographics over time.
  - b. Dave can join the group on the December call to discuss what can/do we want to do with this information. Right now it is used for reporting the Steering Committee. But can we use it in other ways that are beneficial. Given Dave/Jody's time limitation, what is the best way use of our time for specific projects/analyses, etc.
  - c. From Antoinette: We could always write some reflection paper/blog about the success or pitfalls of dei efforts
  
6. If you didn't see it on Slack, here are the resources from Nick about "Stakeholders". Jody added these resources to a section on the EFI DEI Bibliography as well.
  - a. The word probably has complex origins, but some origins are connected to taking of indigenous land, as well as extractive corporate practices. You can dig in a little more here:
  - b. <https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/post/why-we-shouldn-t-banish-the-word-stakeholder?postId=1a6b9631-56a5-416e-a796-86d6dfb30d87>
  - c. And here (and links therein):<https://researchimpact.ca/featured/switching-from-stakeholder/>
  - d. Like many business buzzwords, it's also vague and can work against the "stakeholder"'s interest. This article cites different origins of the word, but gets at that point:
  - e. <https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5020149/>
  - f. The vagueness of the word can disempower. For example, the article below points out that: *Indigenous Peoples are "rights and title holders" not "stakeholders" so avoid this term at all costs.*
  - g. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/9-terms-to-avoid-in-communications-with-indigenous-peoples>
  - h. Many of these links and more in this thread from Virginia Shutte:
  - i. [https://twitter.com/vgwschutte/status/1640711701518778373?s=46&t=l2d4mdAhLz9yHLUIZiTz\\_w](https://twitter.com/vgwschutte/status/1640711701518778373?s=46&t=l2d4mdAhLz9yHLUIZiTz_w)
  - j. Reed, Mark S., and Hannah Rudman. 2023. "Re-Thinking Research Impact: Voice, Context and Power at the Interface of Science, Policy and Practice." *Sustainability Science* 18 (2): 967–81. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-022-01216-w>.
  - k. Reed, Mark S., Steven Vella, Edward Challies, Joris de Vente, Lynne Frewer, Daniela Hohenwallner-Ries, Tobias Huber, et al. 2017. "A Theory of Participation: What Makes Stakeholder and Public Engagement in Environmental Management Work?" *Restoration Ecology* 26 (August): S7–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.12541>.

- I. Key points from the readings that Jody pulled together in this notes document
  - i. Stakeholder definition/history
    1. “stake a claim” - using stakes to mark out Indigenous land to be claimed by colonising settlers,
    2. Alternative definition from Freeman (1984) stakeholders as being *“those who are affected by or can affect a decision”*
      - a. The Freeman, 1984 description indicates it was not explicitly linked to its use by colonialists to stake out and lay claim to Indigenous lands. However, it is clear that the word should be avoided when working with Indigenous groups, and there is an argument for avoiding the word more generally as part of the wider decolonisation of research
    3. Lake Superior State University has released a list of banished words (terms in the English language that deserve never to be spoken again). The university's 2016 list included “stakeholder.”
      - a. “stakeholder” has a mercenary connotation. The original meaning of the term is a person who literally held the money of bettors while the game was on. This meaning evolved into a second definition: “a person, company, etc., with a concern or (esp. financial) interest in ensuring the success of an organization, business, system, etc.”
  - ii. Alternative Terms Compiled from the readings above:
    1. Rightsholders, partners, interested parties, interested/affected groups and non-academic partners, interested/affected parties, relevant parties, rights holder, KMB constituents, actant and potential beneficiaries, Those in the circle, Those who do/should care, Partners – although that was acknowledged as having a legal definition, interested parties, potentially interested parties, Partner, shareholder/investor, local/resident, interested/affected party
    2. End Users: This is a term often used in ecological forecasting that was not in the literature above
    3. Listing people invested in or influenced by your research is a good
    4. Good reason to have a good catchall term, but haven't found an alternative to stakeholder
    5. We don't need to find a solution, just to be aware of the term and being thoughtful about alternatives
  - iii. [From Reed and Rudman 2023](#)
    1. Research impact - goal for many academics, institutions, and research funders. “Impact agenda” has generated pressure for researchers to demonstrate evidence of impact for funders, research assessments, and career progression.

- a. Benefits perceived by one group may be perceived as harmful or damaging by another group
    2. It is therefore important to consider factors that may increase the likelihood that outcomes from research are perceived as beneficial (or otherwise) by interested/affected groups and non-academic partners, to help researchers avoid causing potentially harmful impacts, despite their best intentions.
    3. Three considerations for re-thinking how research can deliver such outcomes: (i) sensitivity to context, (ii) representation and legitimisation of diverse voices and (iii) the management of power dynamics.
    4. This requires the co-production of solutions in policy and practice in ways that give voice and influence to a wide range of interested and/or affected groups (we avoid using the term “stakeholders” in this paper as part of a wider attempt to decolonise language used in research; Reed [2022](#)), who are likely to perceive both challenges and solutions in contrasting ways, based on their own values and beliefs, as these influence their interpretation of evidence.
  - iv. [Reed et al. 2018](#) (see Fig 1 below)
    1. Theory of participation
    2. Top-down one-way communication and/or consultation
    3. Top-down deliberation and/or co-production
    4. Bottom-up one-way communication and/or consultation
    5. Bottom-up one-way communication and/or consultation
7. EFI Blog Post to Manuscript Ideas - ***Save this for the November call***
  - a. Check in with Sean about the Design Justice Principles framework for evaluating EFI activities and blog post
    - i. How to use DJP to move toward action. How to assess goals and values (3 boxes from Fig 2) and then connect to Fig 3 and then move to the Table as concrete ways
    - ii. Resources cited in the stakeholders material below that Jody thinks could be useful for the manuscript
      1. [Reed and Rudman 2022](#) has a number of suggestions about engaging with interested and affected parties
        - a. For example: “Reed et al. (in preparation) propose three criteria for identifying and prioritising interested/affected groups: interest, influence and impact. They argue that each should be considered in both its positive and negative form to provide an ethically robust analysis that can just as effectively identify hard-to-reach, marginalised voices as it can identify the “key players”. It asks: who is interested in the issue/research, and who is not; who has the influence to facilitate or block benefits from arising for different

groups; and who is likely to be impacted positively or negatively as a result of the issue/research (whether directly or indirectly).”

2. Wheel of Participation - another participation image to consider from [Reed et al. 2018](#), Figure 1



The wheel of participation is a typology that defines different types of stakeholder and public engagement. It combines four modes of engagement with either top-down or bottom-up agency. It consists of an inner and outer wheel that can be spun in different directions to create different combinations of agency (who initiates and leads the process) and mode of participation (from one-way communication to coproduction). This identifies four types of engagement: top-down one-way communication and/or consultation; top-down deliberation and/or coproduction; bottom-up one-way communication and/or consultation; and bottom-up deliberation and/or coproduction. Rather than always aiming for bottom-up and coproductive types of engagement, the wheel of participation can be used to match the appropriate type of engagement to the purpose and context in which engagement is needed.