

February 23, 2024 DEI Working Group Call

Attendees: Diana Dalbotten, Antoinette Abeyta, John Zobitz, Alyssa Willson, Saeed Shafiei Sabet, Mary Lofton, Jody Peters, Anna Sjodin
Regrets: Dave Klinges, Rachel Torres

Agenda/Notes:

1. Plans/timeline for putting together the slides providing and overview from the DEI working group for the EFI 2024 Conference - Jason will present at the Conference
 - a. Thanks everyone for the feedback on the abstract!
 - b. Decisions about if the abstract is accepted will come out March 1.
 - c. Google folder with conference materials

2. Book Group Plans:
 - a. [Stolen](#)
 - b. Draft description to include in the
 - i. "About the Conference" section on the [Conference website](#)
 - ii. Will also go in the Feb 28 and Mar 27 newsletters (there is no newsletter in April) so people can start signing up
 - iii. Will add it to the EFI website - homepage table, DEI working group page, book group page

3. List of Activities the Working Group Could Work on - let's discuss what people are most interested in working on for the next couple of months
 - a. Reminder about the [EFI DEI Working Group Strategic Plan](#) - 5 steps identified
 - i. Identify and clarify the problem - what are the basic barriers we face in diversifying EFI?
 - ii. Identify barriers that prevent students from underrepresented groups to participate in ecological forecasting as a career
 - iii. Identify possible solutions that could be taken
 - iv. Identify which solutions identified above to start with
 - v. Identify who else needs to be involved in the process
 - vi. Form collaborations and seek funding
 - b. Potential Ideas of Activities**
 - i. Assess and compile list of things the DEI working group has done related to the 5 steps from the Strategic Plan
 - ii. JEDI Database - compiling, exploring measurements of diversity within the ecological forecasting community. This is something Dave is interested in and has been slowly working on as he has time
 1. What else could the analyses be used for other than using the database for internal updates for the Steering Committee or conferences?

- a. Use this to define what it means to be “successful” in diversifying EFI
 - b. Use this to write some reflection paper/blog about the success or pitfalls of dei efforts
 - iii. Preparing for the EFI 2024 Conference presentation
 - iv. Barriers to Inclusivity in Ecological Forecasting - moving from blog post material to a publication
 - 1. Perhaps we are not ready for a full manuscript. But maybe we could take just one step to think about how to share the table? Antoinette has had ideas in the past, so it would be best for her to provide guidance
 - v. Read and discuss papers
 - 1. Follow up on the [Bacon-Bercey 1978 paper](#)
 - a. From Anna, I would be curious to go through some of her suggestions about increasing numbers of Black scientists, and discuss which are seen elsewhere and whether or not any have been successfully implemented (and if not, why?). Maybe some of the papers that have cited her work have looked into this too.
 - vi. Further develop guidelines for being inclusive in EFI. Here is the start to a document started in 2022. Would need to revisit/update the guide and then discuss ways to share it with the community
 - 1. Goal of the doc: Develop 2 documents. One for internal use within EFI with concrete suggestions about ways for EFI to be inclusive when hosting panels, organizing meetings, or co-hosting events with other organizations. The second with a short checklist of suggestions for EFI panelists and seminar speakers.
 - 1. Further develop the 1-pager with suggestions for seminar speakers on ways to make their seminars more inclusive
 - vii. Flyer for Meetings/Conferences - have this version from ESA 2023 (pdf, ppt).
 - 1. Is there anything we want to update for the upcoming AIHEC meeting on March 9-13
- c. Notes from the dicussion/Zoom chat
 - i. Do we, as a small group, have any capacity for adding projects that would take new funding?
 - ii. Do we want to become more integrated with the larger EFI community in some way? How effective are our efforts at reaching them or making change?
 - iii. Can we match some of our diversity partners with others in our research community to support new projects and funding?
 - iv. Or should we concentrate on continuing the efforts such as blogging and papers that reach out in that way?

- v. Blogs/paper can layout the theory and matching diversity partners with research can be the application. It could make for a nice cycle
- vi. We have done a good job with making partners through Sloan and there is the AIHEC meeting coming up in March that Jason, Diana, etc are attending and presenting a workshop on Indigenous computing
- vii. How do we find the capacity to do all the work we have done?
- viii. Sloan funded work has provoked collaborations that get translated into components that are more on the communication side of things
- ix. 2 challenges -
 - 1. Capacity
 - 2. Creating real partners and addressing concrete tasks - generates ideas
- x. How to be consistent with current work and priorities - how to write a proposal that helps you do what you want to do
- xi. Homework - put out a version or draft kernel of an idea that would be a cool project that would align with this group and could imagine collaborators
- xii. Existing NSF proposals can request additional supplements to add on a DEI or outreach initiative. If we want to build on existing work.
- xiii. Broaden the table and think of us as connectors
 - 1. Have programmatic themes that EFI elevates that show direction and focus. Is there anything we can create like and EFI DEI challenge - where we pose the questions and bring in new members and we would serve as the connectors to bring people to the table.
 - 2. How much does this group interact with the other working groups?
 - 3. Forecasting challenge that focuses on a topic of interest in a community that is not represented in forecasting would be good to get started on. Would take time to get the partners and not drive it/assimilate people
 - a. I think adding a theme to existing challenge designed to engage a group that's currently not involved is a good idea
 - 4. Thinking about RCN renewal proposal - if we created partnership and have trust and people buying in to use/design a new forecast challenge that addresses needs to minority partners
 - a. RCN ends in 2025 so work on the renewal will be coming up
- xiv. Jason is working with Diana to hold an Indigenous computing 1-day workshop - lots of people signed up right away. Think there are lots of people who want to know more about modeling and computing and know how to make that culturally relevant to them
 - 1. Can start the training and then open the discussion to how do you make these tools relevant, how do you make EFI processes relevant?

- xv. Carl, Quinn, Mike who have been leading the code writing part of forecasting care about this a lot
- xvi. Think Native FEWS Alliance would be interested in writing a proposal
- xvii. Would it make sense to have a mini funding for a listening session to connect the two groups and have a reciprocal conversation - rather than we want to write a proposal and we want you to participate on the proposal
- xviii. Jason/Diana will start a conversation. John will also be attending the meeting. So good to start the conversation about what is the first step from AIHEC/Native FEWS perspective
- xix. This discussion might point towards a forecast challenge, but maybe not.
- xx. For Antoinette - biggest challenge - R1 doesn't understand the needs of community college/Tribal college face due to the different subset of students - more personal, individual, more connections. Big university see students as independent.
- xxi. Knowing the difference in resources that universities have - smaller college may not have the resources of infrastructure to start up research projects.
- xxii. This goes along with expectations about pace of projects and being aware of that. The pace isn't always conducive to highly competitive, quantity over quality that can be found in some academic settings
- xxiii. Building and expanding capacity is definitely a priority
- xxiv. Also maybe relevant workshops and round tables also useful?
 1. Provide link between what the students have done and opportunities
 - a. Provide opportunities for students to have practice explaining what they are working on
 2. Jody/Diana did something similar to this last Fall -
 - a. Undergrad showcase where students were able to practice presenting their research
 - b. Round table in the fall focused on "what did you this summer"
 - c. Could have 3 students per hour
 - d. Diana would like to expand outside to other students of her REU
 - e. Doesn't have to be about summer research - could be on any project/activity students have done
 - f. EFI is very academic so if it is possible to expand out from academic research, that would be good to help diversify the conversation and think outside the academic box
- xxv. Maybe another blog/paper to consider is how to engage or build partnerships?
- xxvi. Developing connections and support for undergrads - set up a club. One on one can be intimidating.

1. Learning collective or research collective
 2. Can't lead an undergrads research, but happy to guide research
 3. Collaborative work could be a way for students to dip their toe in research
- xxvii. Also find out what students want - do they want more perspective on the field as a whole, do they want the computing experience, do they want more the social aspect
- xxviii. Students don't know that science is an option - so helping them know what is available
- xxix. Identify research priorities in individuals fields - developing ideas for how to involve undergrad and grad students to get involved. Are there funding in our individual fields of research to provide opportunities for undergrad students to experience academia and participate in undergrad research projects. International community to provide opportunities from undergrad to grad to upper level academia
- xxx. Next call:
1. homework to propose ideas of projects that overlap with what individuals are working on that overlap with EFI activities that broaden diversity
 2. Look at broadening participation in computing at NSF as a potential funding opportunity
 - a. Every computer science proposal has to have a broadening participation component
 - b. Create document that people can add potential funding mechanisms (not that we will necessarily)
 - c. Add NSF opportunity listed above and add a new program from Sloan
- xxxi. An idea Anna suggested at the end of the call - create a blog post to provide the status of the strategic plan
1. Create a document that gives an update about where we are at with the Strategic Plan - what has been done
 2. Jody can create this and send it out to the group to fill in what they have done
 3. Also explicitly state why we didn't accomplish some parts of the strategic plan. What made this hard? What steps could we take?
 4. This will also be useful as we prepare for the DEI working group presentation at the 2024 Conference