

November 14, 2024 DEI Working Group Call

Attendees: Jason McLachlan, Rachel Torres, Jody Peters, Alyssa Willson, Diana Dalbotten, Antoinette Abeyta, Dave Klinges

Regrets: Anna Sjodin

Agenda/Notes:

1. Take time to support each other and celebrate our collective efforts to build connections and work to increase the accessibility and leadership in forecasting and data science of underrepresented individuals and communities
 - a. Any fun cat videos or other things that have brought you joy lately?
2. EFI2025 (19. May - 22. May, 2025) Conference Updates:
 - a. The conference webpage is live <https://bit.ly/efi2025>
 - b. Now accepting submissions for abstracts, working group and workshop activities, travel scholarships/visa requests
 - i. Deadline to apply: January 22, 2025
 - ii. Registration opens: February 14, 2025
 - c. See the Conference handbook in the "About the Conference" section of the conference website for more information
 - d. Working group activities
3. Article discussion: How are groups handling new legislation and the impact on funding? How do we prepare for or deal with political outcomes? What are proactive ways for handling changing realities?
 - a. To help facilitate the discussion, we asked the group to look at the following 3 articles (plus any other articles they were interested in or had time to get to)
 - i. [Chronicle of Higher Ed: DEI Legislation Tracker](#)
 - ii. [Inside Higher Ed: The Reeducation of DEI](#)
 - iii. US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation Press Release, [New Cruz Investigation Reveals How Biden-Harris Diverted Billions from Scientific Research to DEI Activists](#)
 - b. Make sure we support each, focus on forecasting, education, and research within this group and in our other communities
 - c. Rachel/Dave - trying to look for opinions/op eds on how do we move forward -
 - i. Didn't find much, but that is the Inside Higher Ed
 - d. Everyone should feel permitted to engage on how it works best for you
 - i. Do want to be aware of what is going on
 - ii. There are a range of activities - highly engaged or not
 - iii. In culture changing moment may feel you need to act/feel a certain way
 - iv. Feel impassioned to do the level of engagement that is appropriate for you

- v. Jason's Tong Dynasty fisherman story - wash feet in the muddy water and wash hat strings in the clear water. Take care of yourself
- vi. Get engaged in the way that is sustainable for you
- vii. Look for the opportunities for the things we can still do
- viii. more happens by relationships and connections than by \$\$\$
- e. Being able to disengage is a tenet of white supremacy, so do keep that in mind
 - i. Have obligation to do something that fits for yourself
 - ii. Where we make the most growth, the most important legislature did not come from a place of comfort. They came from a place of despair but hope for a better future
- f. Ted Cruz article reacting to explicit activist language in titles of the proposals. This is a trend of NSF encouraging and people stepping up in being more political language e.g., "colonization"
 - i. May need to use other terms "outreach"
 - ii. Foundations can't be pushed over like senate can
 - iii. Interesting to see the whole land scape. For example - Sloan is very interactive with people they fund and as you are putting in the proposal to align with what the funder is interested in
 - iv. Important to understand why DEI was threatening
 - 1. People thought equity was an attack on them
 - 2. Need outspokenness at the right moment and being understanding
 - v. Panels won't change. People reviewing the grants won't change. NSF will need to be careful about how they frame RFP. But reviewers are still there
- g. With this landscape, there is an increased importance of creating generalized knowledge for broad audiences. Science and data literacy is increasingly important. (and political literacy)
- h. Are there pathways where focusing on the education of what the government has the capacity to do, then might help with thinking about hypotheticals and constrain what is realistic about future options
- i. What are pathways of education we could start with or start with educating ourselves
 - i. What do you want to accomplish?
 - ii. Advocacy: Educate on who has the power and capacity
 - iii. Local/People level: talk about it on personal level - make it relevant
 - 1. Antoinette's example of climate change and drought as a big topic vs specific examples of Colorado River
 - iv. American Dissection podcast - had conversation in distrust in scientist around the pandemic
 - 1. Lab leak - scientists automatically disclaimed this and people were frustrated because there wasn't the same curiosity
 - v. The episode was called "Trauma Trust and Why we still haven't processed the pandemic" - the discussion is at the end with the Q and A at the end of the episode. I think the prompt was around RFK

- vi. Book: [High Conflict](#)
- 4. Next time - Sloan proposal review
 - a. Note or Jason: quick table of what we did, what we plan
- 5. Full list of Articles (anyone in the group can add to this list)
 - a. DEI in Higher Ed: recent policy and actions
 - i. [Chronicle of Higher Ed: DEI Legislation Tracker](#)
 - ii. [CRTForward Database](#) (also see [this interview](#) with the database leader)
 - b. How did we get here? (recent history)
 - i. [Trump Executive Order 13950 in 2020](#): applied to federal contractor but set forth language for states to adopt similar measures
 - ii. Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom white paper: [Manufacturing Backlash: Right-Wing Think Tanks and Legislative Attacks on Higher Education, 2021–2023](#)
 - c. Surveys and studies
 - i. UCLA School of Law Williams Institute, [The Impact of Anti-DEI Legislation on LGBTQ+ Faculty in Higher Ed](#)
 - ii. US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation Press Release, [New Cruz Investigation Reveals How Biden-Harris Diverted Billions from Scientific Research to DEI Activists](#)
 - d. Opinions on the future of DEI on campuses
 - i. <https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/views/2024/05/07/reeducation-dei-opinion>
 - 1. DEI initiatives do not need to be rebranded, they need to be reformed. Suggestions about how to incorporate DEI into education rather than training
 - 2. Pdf version [2024-05-07 InsideHigherEd The reeducation of DEI \(opinion\).pdf](#)
 - ii. <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/edcast/23/10/future-dei-higher-education>
 - e. Actions made by universities published in the last year:
 - i. [The University of Michigan Doubled Down on D.E.I. What Went Wrong?](#)
A decade and a quarter of a billion dollars later, students and faculty are more frustrated than ever
 - 1. Pdf version: [2024-10-16 NYT UM-DEI-article.pdf](#)
 - ii. [A contrasting article about the U of Michigan robotics program](#) - this was shared during a call with a group of projects funded by the same Alfred P. Sloan Foundation program that funds the work Jason, Rachel, and others in EFI are doing to create culturally relevant educational modules and support student mentoring and research opportunities to prepare and support underrepresented students in graduate degrees
 - iii. [Elimination of DEI across Florida public universities, focusing on University of Florida](#)

iv. [UNC shifts DEI funding to public safety](#)