

LTER Network DEIJ Committee Report (2023-2024)

Reporting on activities from June 2023-May 2024

1. **Date of report:** May 2024
2. **Name of Committee:** DEIJ
3. **Name and site affiliation of the Committee Chair (or co-chairs or Executive Team):**
Nameer Baker - co-chair KBS
Mariah Patton - co-chair SEV
4. **List of current members:**
Approximately 52 members that includes a mix of site representatives and ad hoc members
5. **How membership is determined (identified by sites, voluntary, appointed by the Executive Board, etc)**
Identified by sites for representative members, voluntary for ad hoc members
6. **Meeting frequency:**
Monthly
7. **Major activities or accomplishments for the year:**

Continued regular collaborative conversation with NSF Program Officers

- Opportunity to leverage LNO to affect change in DEIJ across LTER network, resulting in funding for a full-time network-level Inclusion and Access Coordinator position to facilitate DEIJ activities and their assessment.
- Provided feedback to NSF's interest in enhancing DEIJ across the network, resulting in language requiring a commitment to broadening participation in the most recent LTER renewal solicitation.

The DEIJ committee regularly meets monthly.

- Meetings consist of discussion of DEIJ topics that are of concern at our individual sites, guest presentations that are relevant at the network level, and updates from separately-meeting working groups,

Working groups established separate meetings and accomplishing specific tasks

- By working independently outside of the monthly DEIJ committee meetings, progress on multiple issues can occur at a faster pace.
- This setup also allows for more focus toward specific goals and tasks to accomplish goals.

- A cross-site collaborative RaMP proposal was submitted.
- A successful series of accessible community-building online seminars took place and more are being planned.
- Shared resources allowed for a greater push for sites to incorporate effective codes of conducts.
- Shared living spreadsheet for LTER-wide aggregated field and safety plans was created.

8. Currently active subcommittees or working groups:

Field and Community Safety

The Field Safety WG facilitates the production of effective, inclusive field safety plans at each site across the network. As the new NSF supplement requirement for each LTER to submit a Plan for Safe and Inclusive Field/Vessel/Aircraft Research goes into effect this WG will be focused on helping sites fulfill this requirement using best practices.

Community-Building

The Community-Building WG is creating networks of community for scientists from historically-excluded backgrounds from across LTER sites, leveraging the network to provide the critical mass needed for a sense of community for LTER folk that would otherwise struggle to find such an environment in their home site.

Fundraising

The Fundraising WG collects and disseminates funding opportunities for DEIJ efforts that are well-suited to the strengths of LTERs or the LTER Network, and also facilitates multi-site proposals in response to select calls (REST, RaMP).

9. Planned activities for the coming year:

- Continuing meetings with NSF Program Officers
- Continuing working groups (get updates/plans from individual groups)
- Community Building Seminar Series
- Entering Mentoring training and Community of Practice

10. Any recent or upcoming changes in leadership, purpose, or process:

We have cut back on the number of working groups as the commitment required outside of our regular meeting times was too demanding for our members. We are realigning around some core working groups and capacity-building in an attempt to be more sustainable, a process that has been aided by the addition of Molly Phillips as the new Inclusion and Access Coordinator.

11. Do you have specific questions, problems, or proposals for the LTER Science Council for actions that could improve the quality or quantity of research,

education, engagement, or inclusion in the LTER Network? (Please include adequate background for a non-specialist.)

We would like to reiterate the four suggestions that we made last year:

- Every site should have a representative to the DEIJ committee that is actively participating in meetings.
- All sites should have discussions with local Title IX offices and LTER members/staff to come up with worst-case scenario plans and have specific pathways in place.
- DEIJ efforts really depend on our leadership setting an example and while many here are doing that, we would encourage the others to do so as well. To help achieve this goal, what can we do to help facilitate DEIJ efforts at your sites?" How can we help? What do you need from us?
- In this same vein, participation in and support for DEIJ efforts is noticed by all that engage in these activities. If sites want to be known for their DEIJ efforts, the lead PI needs to be visibly supportive of these efforts (i.e., attending trainings) and holding those that are not accountable.

In addition, we have one suggestion and two concerns we would like to raise:

- We ask that site PIs promote engagement with Dr. Heather Branch's accessibility review being undertaken across the LTER network.
- Some sites were told to choose between requesting a DEIJ supplement or infrastructure supplement, which is at cross-purposes with enhancing inclusion.
- The new RFP asks for increased DEIJ investment but essentially assumes that this will come from reallocated service obligations from site personnel, which feeds into equity issues given who is most likely involved in these efforts.