

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan

Applicant Reference Guide

This guide is applicable to the Marine Energy Systems Innovation at Sea (DE-FOA-0002793) funding opportunity announcement.

As part of the application, applicants are required to describe how diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives will be incorporated in the project. Specifically, applicants are required to submit a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan that describes the actions the applicant will take to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment, support people from groups underrepresented in STEM, advance equity, and encourage the inclusion of individuals from these groups in the project; and the extent the project activities will be located in or benefit underserved communities (also see Section I.A.iii.). The plan should include at least one SMART milestone per Budget Period supported by metrics to measure the success of the proposed actions, and will be incorporated into the award if selected. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan should contain the following information:

- **Equity Impacts:** the impacts of the proposed project on underserved communities, including social and environmental impacts.
- **Benefits:** The overall benefits of the proposed project, if funded, to underserved communities; and
- How diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives will be incorporated in the project.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions that can serve as examples of ways the proposed project could incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion elements. These examples should not be considered either comprehensive or prescriptive. Applicants may include appropriate actions not covered by these examples.

- a. Include faculty or students from Minority Serving Institutions as PI/co-PI, senior personnel, and/or student researchers, as applicable;
- b. Enhance or collaborate with existing diversity programs at your home organization and/or nearby organizations;
- c. Collaborate with students, researchers, and staff in Minority Serving Institutions;
- d. Disseminate results of research and development in Minority Serving Institutions or other appropriate institutions serving underserved communities;
- e. Implement evidence-based, diversity-focused education programs (such as implicit bias training for staff) in your organization;
- f. Identify Minority Business Enterprises, Minority Owned Businesses, Woman Owned Businesses and Veteran Owned Businesses to solicit as vendors and sub-contractors for bids on supplies, services and equipment.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan must not exceed 3 pages. Save the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan in a single PDF file using the following convention for the title "ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_DEIP".

Criterion

Criterion 4 (10%)

This criterion involves consideration of the following factors:

- The quality and manner in which the measures incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion goals in the project; and
- Extent to which the project benefits underserved communities.

Additional Elements of a strong DEI Plan

- Includes metrics, milestones, and measurable goals
- Reflects the project activities, rather than the organization's high-level corporate policies
 - Integration of organization-wide diversity and equity policy should be complemented by project-specific goals
- Discusses the team's diversity or plan to diversify the team
 - Teams who aim to increase capacity through hiring should explore and discuss recruitment strategies for reaching individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Recruits Minority, Women, or Disadvantaged-Owned Businesses, businesses located in HUB zones, or disadvantaged communities as vendors, subcontractors, or partners on the project
- Considers the cultural, historical, and socio-economic context of the project work for projects involving Indian tribes, affect tribal natural or cultural resources and/or otherwise impact tribal lands
 - Plans should also reflect how the applicant intends to communicate with tribal leaders to gain feedback on project work and to assist in understanding how the applicant's proposed actions would impact or benefit the Indian tribe, tribal natural resources, and/or tribal lands
- Provides employment and/or educational opportunities for underrepresented students or groups
- Collaborates with students, researchers, and staff in Minority Serving Institutions
 - For example, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Institution
- Engages local, remote, or disadvantaged communities
- Conducts outreach activities with local schools, government, or community-based organizations
- Implements activities/practices that foster a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Considers how the technologies being developed could impact communities and groups
 - Quantifies how disadvantaged communities could benefit or be harmed by project activities, especially for projects that are characterizing energy, data, or other resources

Potential Weaknesses

- Restates the organization’s high-level corporate policies related to justice, diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Relies on non-specific statements/logic such as “climate change disproportionately impacts disadvantaged communities, therefore addressing climate change is a DEI impact”
- Uses non-committal language such as “we will consider,” or similar, in relation to goals and proposed activities

Common Terms and Definitions

- **Diversity:** psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among individuals; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist
- **Equity:** the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to disadvantaged communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. *Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government” (Jan. 20, 2021). “*
- **Inclusion:** the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people
- **Underserved Communities:** populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list of in the definition of “equity.” *Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government” (Jan. 20, 2021). “*

Point of Contact

Please contact systemsinnovation@ee.doe.gov with any questions about this FOA.