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# Vision & Mission



We envision a more resilient and connected world where all humans sustain healthy relationships with ourselves, one another, and our planet. We manifest this vision by creating pathways, providing resources, and innovating strategies that support the outdoor and environmental sector in their evolution toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (collectively, DEIJ). Specifically, we provide this sector and its leaders with learning experiences, assessments, implementation planning, mentorship and coaching, intentional convenings, and resources.

## DEIJ

**DIVERSITY** describes the differences between us based on which we experience systemic advantages or encounter systemic barriers in access to opportunities and resources.

**EQUITY** entails redistributing resources to ensure everyone has access to the same opportunities.

**INCLUSION** means fostering a sense belonging by celebrating, centering, and amplifying the perspectives, voices, values, and needs of marginalized people and communities (those who experience systemic barriers, mistreatment, or disadvantages based on their identities).

**JUSTICE** involves dismantling barriers to opportunities so that everyone can live a full and dignified life.

# Our **Approach**

- We lead with equity and justice (not diversity).
- Diversity isn't just about race/ethnicity; it is about a multitude of identities.
- We adopt an intersectional approach because we realize oppression is interconnected, and depending on the context we may need to center certain identities.
- We don't approach DEIJ as an add-on - it should be part of the DNA of an organization.
- We seek opportunities with people and organizations who have a willingness and readiness for change; this is where we have the most impact.
- We meet you and your team where you are and then build scaffolding for growth and action.
- We believe healthy conflict and productive discomfort are essential to doing this work.
- We adopt a strength-based approach (not a deficit based approach) and aim to celebrate your successes.
- DEIJ work isn't just for a DEIJ leader or passionate staff member; we aim for all of our clients' staff to feel ownership and be held accountable for the work.
- We seek to provide you and your organization with the skills and knowledge to do your own work well after our contract ends.
- We believe in the power of frameworks, concepts, and names to give truth and context to our experiences, and we don't just stay in the clouds and believe in translating theoretical DEIJ concepts to the day-to-day work of our clients and their staff (through role playing scenarios, tailored workshops, and more).

# Our Values

- We value actions, connections, and interactions that are based on love, and not fear, rage, resentment, or the need to fill a void in ourselves.
- We value the interconnectedness between land, water, wildlife, and communities, and hope for a more reciprocal and healthy relationship between all of those entities.
- We value a sense of place and belonging, where people feel connected not only to where they are, but to one another and the movement.
- We value humility; an awareness that we are all growing and learning together and are beautifully imperfect in our work.
- We value self-care, self-love, and self-forgiveness.
- We value boundaries, which Prentis Hemphill defines as “the space between us where I can both love you and love myself.”
- We value decolonization in all its forms and compassion for colonizers who have lost their tether to place, people, and ways of knowing.
- We value collaboration and abundance (not competition and scarcity)
- We value harnessing our connective marginalities to work toward collective liberation; oppression is interconnected.
- We value the fractal, yet integrated nature of the work; where individual change leads to institutional change, which leads to social change.

# Our Team



**Aparna Rajagopal-Durbin, J.D.** (she/her) is a former engineer and lawyer who shifted gears nearly a decade ago to supporting outdoor and environmental organizations with their DEIJ efforts. Over the years she has facilitated workshops on DEIJ topics for thousands of outdoor educators, nonprofit leaders, outdoor industry professionals, land managers, conservation grantors, natural resources and environmental scholars, and conservationists. As a thought leader in the DEIJ space, she has helped organizations that work on engagement, connection, caring, and management of “more than human nature” evolve to actively having difficult conversations about topics such as bias, privilege, oppression, equity, justice, and accompliceship. She and her work have been featured in California Lawyer magazine, Backpacker magazine, Outside magazine, Sierra magazine, the Adventure Gap book, and SNEWS (among others) as well as the She Explores and Outdoor Voices podcasts, and she has contributed to the Harvard Business Review, Earth Island Journal, the Journal of Leisure Research, and National Geographic Magazine’s adventure blog. She has also spearheaded projects that amplify stories and connections of black, indigenous, and people of color in nature, including Expedition Denali: Inspiring Diversity in the Outdoors. Most recently, Aparna co-founded and has served as director for the People of the Global Majority in the Outdoors, Nature, and the Environment Summit (pgmone.org).

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**Ava Holliday, M.A.** (she/her) is a founding partner of the Avarna Group and has devoted the last eight years to researching and working in this field. As a graduate student at the University of Washington in the department of Anthropology, Ava was able to deepen her understanding about justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts and challenges in environmentalism, conservation, and outdoor recreation. At UW, she taught courses covering topics such as power, identity, environmentalism, health, and wilderness. She left graduate school to put theory into practice at the Avarna Group. She has also supported the LGBTQ Outdoor Summit and serves on the Next 100 Coalition. Throughout her academic and professional career, Ava has supported thousands of people and hundreds of organizations in service of deepening understanding of and cultivating skills to address oppression in environmentalism, conservation and outdoor education.

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**José G. González, M.A.** (he/him), is an Avarna Group facilitation and thought partner, is founder of Latino Outdoors and a former K-12 public educator, environmental and outdoor educator, and university adjunct faculty member. His work has been featured in the High Country News, Outside, Earth Island Journal, and Latino USA, he has supported White House Council on Environmental Quality, U.S. Department of Interior, and the National Park Service, and he has been honored by the National Wildlife Federation, Grist Magazine, and The Murie Center. He received his B.A at the University of California, Davis, and his M.S at the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources & Environment.

# Our Team



**Sophie Sarkar, M.S.** (she/her), is an Avarna Group facilitation and thought partner. She most recently worked as an Equity Fellow for the City of Philadelphia's Office of Sustainability, managing their efforts to mitigate urban heat inequalities through community-led climate adaptation planning. Sophie has an MSc in Regional and Urban Planning from the London School of Economics where her research examined experiences of social bias in urban planning education and urban development initiatives. She has worked for the National Park Service, co-founded the PGM ONE Summit, and was recognized on the inaugural Outdoor 30 Under 30. She is also a visual artist and mindfulness facilitator.

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**CJ Goulding, M.A. Ed.** (he/him), an Avarna Group facilitation and thought partner, is passionate about facilitating growth in three things: people, community, and leadership. In his work with the Children & Nature Network and Fresh Tracks, CJ trains, mentors and supports a national network of over 330 leaders who are changing systems and creating equitable access to nature in their communities. He completed a MaED in Urban Environmental Education with IslandWood and Antioch University, where he studied the power of community and its connection to nature in urban settings. CJ has been featured in the Outdoor Industry's inaugural "30 Under 30" list highlighting game changers in the outdoor industry, and his essay "Why I Wear Jordans in the Great Outdoors" has been published and featured in culturally relevant outdoor curriculum across the country.



# Your DEIJ Journey

To have the greatest equity and justice impact, organizations need to invest in deeply, holistically, and for the long-term. One-time workshops do not have significant or sustained impact for creating real organizational change. Your journey may look different based on your needs. Here's a map to support you in planning yours.





## 1 Building Your Team

### 1 Building Your Team

### 2 Laying the Foundation

### 3 Taking Stock

### 4 Assessments

### 5 Board Engagement

DEIJ work is best shepherded by a DEIJ task force or committee within your organization. Before you dig into the work, we can support you in establishing structures necessary for sustainable DEIJ work. This includes:

- ✓ (1) ensuring you have a team with diverse representation across roles, hierarchies, departments, locations, and identities;
- (2) helping you clarify your committee charter or mission;
- (3) laying out roles and responsibilities of your committee members;
- (4) establishing group norms to ensure everyone feels seen, heard, and valued; and
- (5) supporting you with decisionmaking rubrics so you aren't processing in circles and unable to take action.

#### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- Consulting hours to support your committee
- Facilitating committee meetings
- Supporting committee chairs to facilitate effective meetings
- Supporting committees navigate difficult conversations or make decisions where there are conflicting opinions.



## 2 Laying the Foundation

1 Building Your Team

2 Laying the Foundation

3 Taking Stock

4 Formulating a Plan

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10 Implementing a Plan

We lay a foundation for DEIJ work including: (1) defining what justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency; (2) identifying why environmental and conservation organizations prioritize DEIJ work; and (3) providing a framework for approaching DEIJ planning.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- The What & Why of DEIJ: In this foundational webinar, we define justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency, and lay out the reasons why this work (which we collectively call DEIJ or DEIJ) is important to organizations, agencies, foundations, and institutions operating in outdoor/placed based education, conservation, land trusts, land management, parks and recreation, environmental advocacy, outdoor engagement, and similar fields.
- The How of DEIJ: In this webinar, we map out a universe of DEIJ strategies on a four-quadrant framework that frames out internal and external work as well as individual and institutional work. You will leave the webinar with a map that helps you identify priorities for your organization and areas



# Your DEIJ Journey

## 3 Taking Stock

1 Building Your Team

2 Laying the Foundation

3 Taking Stock

Assessments

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Board  
Engagement

We spend time learning about your organizational structure, strategic vision, and any DEIJ work you've already done so we can build off your past work and operationalize your successes. This is to minimize duplicating efforts or shelving any work you've already done.

6 Inquiry

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- Consulting hours to review organizational strategy and policy documents.
- Collaboration with consultants supporting the organization in other realms (e.g., marketing, branding, leadership coaching, strategic planning)

9 Building a Plan

10 Implementing a Plan



## 4 Formulating a Vision

1 Building Your Team

2 Laying the Foundation

3 Taking Stock

4 Formulating a Vision

Assessments

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A plan cannot be built without a vision and a clear statement of commitment, which we call a DEIJ Commitment Statement. We work with leadership to build a vision for DEIJ at the organization, articulate a clear statement of why DEIJ is a priority, and crystallize overall goals or outcomes that lives in the plan.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- Building a DEIJ Commitment Statement webinar: This webinar walks you through the process of building a DEIJ statement, stepping through the anatomy of a statement and providing examples of statements published by similar organizations. You will leave with a worksheet with guiding questions and tools to build a statement for your organization.
- Visioning session: Through a series of online engagements (typically 4-5 one-hour calls), we work with leadership and DEIJ change agents within organizations (typically a DEIJ committee or equivalent group) to build a vision for DEIJ at the organization. The session provides the opportunity to galvanize leadership around a clear vision, establish boundaries as to what the organization can and cannot do to promote DEIJ work, build consensus around why DEIJ is important to the organization's mission, and set out some high level 3-5 year commitments. This session sets the organization up for drafting a clear commitment to DEIJ and beginning to craft more granular strategies and tactics that might support these commitments. The deliverable is a DEIJ Commitment Statement the organization can use as its North Star.



## 5 Assessments

1

Building Your Team

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Laying the Foundation

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Taking Stock

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We use tools to collect quantitative (and some qualitative) data related to organizational culture and inclusive workplace environments. This data gathering process provides a snapshot of your organization's DEIJ successes and opportunities for growth. Assessment tools can be replicated frequently to measure your organization's progress toward becoming a more inclusive culture and workplace.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- Culture Assessment: We provide a baseline understanding of staff's buy-in, confidence, and competence with integrating DEIJ into their daily work, perceptions of your commitment to DEIJ, experiences of inclusivity (or exclusivity) at your organization, and finally, their assessment of your organizational culture. We also ask survey respondents to volunteer their demographic information to ascertain whether experiences and perceptions vary across identities such as race, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, and ability. This is an anonymous assessment and we only report themes and aggregate data. This assessment not only gauges readiness, but also provides baseline data to track inclusion and can be replicated every year or 18 months to gauge progress toward becoming a more inclusive organization. The deliverable is a report identifying bright spots, pinch points, and resource needs for your organization.
- Built Environment Assessment: For organizations who provide programming or services in a fixed location (such as camps or parks), we administer a built environment assessment that audits inclusivity and accessibility of your physical locations. This is not an ADA accessibility audit. Instead, we touch on aspects of inclusivity not typically considered by the ADA. For example, we examine signage, lighting and safety aspects, structures that honor multiple ways to connect to the place, décor, amenities for overnight locations, inclusive bathrooms, changing rooms, and showers, and more. The deliverable is a report recommending modifications to your built environment that will make it more welcoming and accessible to a greater diversity of people.





In this phase we conduct listening sessions with key personnel to discuss strengths, challenges, and needs as it relates to DEIJ efforts. This helps us corroborate data from the culture assessment as well as build a bottom-up plan informed by staff that contains strategies relevant to their day-to-day work.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

- Listening sessions with staff in various departments (e.g., human resources, marketing and communications, development, policy and advocacy, litigation, programming, community engagement, etc,)
- Focus/affinity group sessions with staff who hold marginalized identities (e.g., women staff, BIPOC staff, LGBTQIA+ staff)
- The deliverable is a report identifying themes in bright spots, pinch points, and resource needs expressed by interviewees. The report is anonymous and themes are reported in aggregate.



# Your DEIJ Journey

## 7 Knowledge, Awareness & Skill Building

1 Building Your Team

2 Laying the Foundation

3 Taking Stock

4 Formulating a Vision

5 Assessments

6 Inquiry

7 Knowledge, Awareness & Skill Building

8 Building a Plan

10 Implementing a Plan

We can facilitate workshops to support staff in building knowledge and awareness around unconscious bias, privilege, power, white supremacy, the history of conservation, and more, as well as practice skills to have difficult conversations and engage in allyship and accompliceship.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

Workshops we can offer at this waypoint are described below. All workshops can be offered in person or online.



1 Building Your Team

2 Laying the Foundation

3 Taking Stock

4 Formulating a Vision

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Of the myriad ways to connect with a board, one philosophy that remains constant is that boards can and should be engaged early and often. We provide options for board engagement including updating the board on progress, providing education on how to create a more inclusive board, and providing education on unconscious bias.

### POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENTS

Board can attend staff webinars or we can run separate training for boards. These engagements are highly customized and depend on the board composition, the board's DEIJ awareness and buy-in, the board's role (governing board v. working board), the board's relationship with staff, and board bandwidth to engage in learning.

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Implementing a Plan



# Your DEIJ Journey

## 9 Building a Plan



Using the information collected along our journey with you, we build a plan that reflects the voices, needs, and concerns of staff and constituents of your organization. Plans generally include approximately five commitments or goals, accompanied by strategies, tactics, metrics, and a plan for accountability. We create a draft for your organization's staff to review, comment, and edit, and usually engage in 2-3 revision cycles before finalizing the plan.



### 1 Building Your Team

### 2 Laying the Foundation

### 3 Taking Stock

Staff often need support implementing specific strategies or tactics not in their wheelhouse. To support implementation of specific DEIJ strategies surrounding areas such as recruitment and hiring, development and fundraising, program and curriculum development, risk management, and marketing and communications, we provide modules (either through toolkits, webinars, or consultation). Additionally, we often provide on-going education for staff and partners.

#### WEBINAR OPTIONS

Full descriptions available on the following page.

- [Forging Equitable Partnerships](#)
- [Effective Community & Stakeholder Engagement](#)
- [Having Difficult Conversations Across Value Divides](#)
- [Adding a DEIJ Lens to Marketing & Communications](#)
- [Recruiting & Hiring for Equity](#)
- [Inclusive Practices for Outdoor Program & Field Staff](#)
- [Inclusive Risk Management](#)

# Webinar Options

## **Forging Equitable Partnerships**

We go through basic guidelines for building equitable partnerships, rooted in ensuring relationships are reciprocal (or mutualistic), and not unilateral (or paternalistic and parasitic). The webinar lays out how equity plays in partnerships, how to identify which equity measures to engage in with a partner, and what power structures may be at play. You will leave with tools to build more effective coalitions that amplifies the good work of your organization.

## **Effective Community & Stakeholder Engagement**

For organizations and agencies who rely on engaging communities in projects or decisions, this webinar steps through the process of more effectively engaging communities (and in particular, marginalized communities and tribes). These steps include (1) identifying who you are and are not engaging; (2) learning about the communities you're trying to engage; (3) forging relationships and building rapport with communities and their leaders; (4) planning and facilitating meetings that allow communities to effectively provide input in a culturally relevant manner; and (5) integrating community input in a way that feels authentic and not like you are merely paying lip service or utilizing communities in a tokenizing fashion.

## **Having Difficult Conversations Across Value Divides**

In this webinar, we describe how to engage with organizations or individuals whose partnership is vital to fulfilling your organization's mission or a particular project, but who may have different values than your organization's values. This webinar will lay out the power dynamics that may be at play in these conversations, then guide you through a rubric for deciding whether engaging with this person/organization is necessary. We cover tips and tools on how to have difficult conversations with these persons/organizations when they may have very different values, and specifically, values that seem to conflict with DEIJ.

## **Adding a DEIJ Lens to Marketing & Communications**

In this webinar, we support people engaging in marketing and communications (including social media) in casting a wider net in an authentic manner and building equity and inclusion into messaging and communications. This webinar covers the entire process from identifying your audience, to deciding what formats and channels to use for disseminating information, to adding a DEIJ lens to visuals and videos, to adding a DEIJ lens to design (including color schemes, font and logos), to messaging and language, to marketing campaign strategies. The webinar can include an analysis of one piece of your organization's collateral to provide a tangible example of how to apply the strategies we present.

# Webinar Options

## **Recruiting & Hiring for Equity**

We support you in building inclusion and equity into your recruitment and hiring efforts by stepping through a customized version of our free toolkit available online at <https://theavarnagroup.com/resources/hiring-practice-better-practices/>. In this webinar we discuss equitable recruitment efforts (including internship and bridge programs), crafting inclusive job descriptions, building rubrics for screening and interviewing candidates, interviewing in an equitable manner, and mitigating bias in selecting final candidates for the position. The webinar ends with an analysis of a job posting from your own organization.

## **Inclusive Risk Management**

For outdoor program and field staff we lay out frameworks for integrating emotional risk into standard risk management practices. When emotional risk is integrated into physical risk and given the same weight, organizations can address the threats of environmental factors like lightning or river crossings with the same level of care and compassion as emotional factors such as exclusionary behavior and bullying and trauma that results from intergenerational or community based oppression.

## **Inclusive Practices for Outdoor Program & Field Staff**

For outdoor program and field staff who are responsible for building inclusive programming for all participants, we can run a webinar that examines all the aspects of programming, which includes application materials, tent or tarp arrangements, transportation, program length, program outcomes, gear, medical protocol, risk management, and more. We will essentially run through the toolkit available online at <https://theavarnagroup.com/resources/inclusion-tips-for-program-and-field-staff/> but customize it to your organization.



# Workshops



All workshops are currently facilitated live and virtually, but can be facilitated in person (pandemic depending).

Workshops typically consists of two-hour modules that, when facilitated virtually, ideally are facilitated on separate days over the course of multiple weeks to maximize retention and build time for reflection and homework. In reimagining how we can best support organizations virtually, one idea that arose was “flipping the classroom.” By dedicating about 30-60 minutes of time between modules to do your own work, we can use our time online to engage more deeply and interactively. This also allows you to reflect upon, process through, and integrate your learnings between modules. We also maximize interaction using breakout rooms, polls, and collaborative documents.

## Unconscious Bias Workshop

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

In a six-hour in-person or online workshop on unconscious bias, we set the groundwork for participants to grapple with their unconscious biases to foster a more inclusive work environment for their colleagues and have difficult conversations internally and externally. This workshop occurs over 3 two-hour modules with reading, reflection, and discussion assignments between modules or an in-person 6 hour engagement (including all three modules described below presented seamlessly).

### Module 1

#### Awareness and Individual Bias

We build participants' awareness that unconscious/implicit bias exists, that we all have it, and that it manifests in several different ways. We discuss the basic neurobiology of bias, and how we can rewire our brains to mitigate bias. In the second half of this module, we specifically describe how bias shows up in our assumptions and interactions with others through microaggressions and stereotypes and provide initial information about how bias intersects with power. We leave participants with some readings on bias and power.

### Module 2

#### Power, Privilege, Oppression, & Identity

We dive deeper into concepts of power. We begin by defining oppression and the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internal manifestations of oppression. We describe the various ways power is held across identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, class, education, more. We facilitate activities to help participants examine how their identities are related to power, privilege, and oppression. We also discuss the concept of intersectionality and how it relates to all of these concepts. We leave participants with some reflection on intersectionality and oppression as well as some readings on allyship for the next module.

### Module 3

#### Allyship, Accompliceship, & Difficult Conversations

In the third module we discuss current understandings of allyship. We distinguish between being a mere actor to engaging in allyship, to engaging in accompliceship. We will provide a framework for participants to map out the feelings that arise when confronting privilege and bias so we can all engage in more compassionate conversations and name our feelings when they arise. We then support participants in engaging in allyship and accompliceship through tools having for difficult conversations, and have participants actually apply these tools to specific scenarios that typically arise in conservation/outdoor organizations.

# Workshops

## Addressing Colonialism and Oppression in Conservation & the Outdoors

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Prerequisite: *What & Why of DEIJ webinar, Unconscious Bias Workshop*

We discuss the overlapping history of conservation, outdoor recreation, and environmentalism and dive deeper into how settler colonialism, exploitative colonialism, and other forms of systemic oppression intersect with the work of your organization. This context helps explain why conservation and outdoor recreation are still homogenous and unwelcoming spaces for BIPOC. Below are proposed modules, though we work with clients based on their needs to combine modules to create a learning experience tailored for you.

### Module 1

#### History of Conservation, Outdoor Recreation, & Environmentalism

We juxtapose more widely known conservation/land history with social history (such as removal of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands) to draw connections between the history of environmentalism and the continued marginalization and exclusion of Black, Indigenous, and people of color. In particular, we examine concepts of settler colonialism and enslavement as concepts on which land stewardship was originally based. We encourage participants to actively engage in discussions of local histories that can be braided with the national history.

### Module 2

#### Reimagining a more Equitable and Just Conservation/Land Stewardship Model

We continue the conversation from Module 1 and present some case studies of how various organizations have approached the concept of addressing legacies of colonialism by shifting the ways they engage in land stewardship work (e.g. repatriation/repatriation of land, Indigenous led fire management, reparations for Black farmers). Using these case studies as jumping off points, we spend the rest of this module exploring how you can reimagine your own work with a justice and equity lens.

### Module 3

#### Addressing Internal Organizational Culture

We pivot from the programmatic practices of conservation and environmental advocacy to the cultural hallmarks of organizational culture often found in conservation organizations. We start with some work around cultural hallmarks that impede organizations from engaging in deeper DEIJ work, including: perfectionism, a sense of urgency, the right to comfort (which is connected to the fear of conflict and defensiveness), quantity over quality, attachment to the written word, either/or thinking, paternalism, and individualism. Participants will then have opportunities to discuss how these hallmarks manifest in their own organizations (we will have administered an assessment on this between Modules 2 and 3 that will support this discussion). Participants will spend the remainder of this module exploring how they can shift culture within their own organizations to better support equity work.

## Building a Deeper Understanding of Identity

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Prerequisite: *What & Why of DEIJ webinar, Unconscious Bias Workshop*

We dive deeper into individual work, exploring various identities. This workshop would be highly tailored to your organizations needs and feedback received from the previous engagements. However, the focus of this particular workshop would be supporting individuals understanding the basics of different identities and how power impacts our experiences, views, and perceptions of different identities.

The topic may include:

- Defining different identities (e.g. race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, body size, indigeneity, class, and more)
- Understanding some of the unique experiences of oppression for each identity
- Understanding how those unique experiences can help inform and shape your overall DEIJ individual behavior as well as policies and practices within the workplace.



## 3R Curriculum, Programming, & Interpretation

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Prerequisite: *What & Why of DEIJ webinar*

A workshop on building 3R-or culturally relevant, responsible, and responsive-curriculum, programming, and interpretation, we can support nature educators, teachers, and interpretation staff in adding a DEIJ lens to their work. "Relevant" connotes how you connect lessons to your learners' lives. "Responsible" connotes how you tackle bias to present multiple and balanced perspectives. "Responsive" connotes how you employ participants-centered instructional methods to reach all learners. This workshop translates multicultural education models used in elementary and higher education to the world of place-based education and interpretation. We ask participants to bring a sample lesson plan, piece of curriculum, or interpretive material to this workshop, as they will literally be workshopping through their own materials.

### Module 1

#### The Framework, Cultural Relevancy

In the first two hours we introduce the framework and dive into the concept of cultural relevancy. We use a sample piece of curriculum to discuss how lessons do and do not exemplify cultural relevancy by connecting to the learner's lives. We provide guiding questions on culturally relevant curriculum. Then we have participants workshop through their own materials using this framework in small groups. We debrief afterward so participants can learn from each other how they would modify their current programming to be culturally relevant to a broader audience.

### Module 2

#### Cultural Responsibility

In the second two hours, we discuss the concept of cultural responsibility, which includes presenting multiple perspectives and addressing bias in your materials such as stereotyping, exoticizing, or marginalizing people based on their identities. We will provide examples of curriculum bias and provide a 4-quadrant framework for participants to analyze their own materials. Then we have participants workshop through their own materials using this framework in small groups. We debrief at the end so participants can learn from each other how they would modify their current programming to be culturally responsible.

### Module 3

#### Cultural Responsibility

In the final two hours, we discuss the concept of cultural responsiveness, which involves ensuring instruction and assessment of learning are happening in a way that reaches all learning styles. We provide guiding questions on how to modify the facilitation of your lessons to better reach participants who might learn in different ways. Then we have participants workshop through their own materials using this framework in small groups. We debrief at the end so participants can learn from each other how they would modify the facilitation/presentation of their programming to be culturally responsive.

# Affinity & Accountability Workshops



Some DEI/J learning is best achieved in affinity spaces or accountability spaces. Both spaces allow people to process through the feelings that arise when confronting privilege and/or experiencing oppression in a supportive environment. Affinity spaces are spaces for people with marginalized identities, and accountability spaces are spaces for people with dominant identities.

## BIPOC Affinity & Healing Workshop

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

In an eight-hour in person or virtual workshop for Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), BIPOC facilitators at the Avarna Group will hold space for BIPOC staff who have been engaging in DEI work or who need a supportive healing space to process through experiences of marginalization.

### Module 1

#### The Fundamentals of Racism

We talk about how racism manifests through the framework of the 4 “I’s” of oppression: ideological (e.g. ideologies surrounding white supremacy and light skinned superiority), institutional (laws, policies, systems), interpersonal (interactions with each other), and internal (within ourselves).

### Module 2

#### Name it to Tame it

We describe various concepts that have been used to explain manifestations of racism, including (but not limited to) in-group and out-group stereotyping, respectability politics, tone policing, microaggressions, cultural appropriation, gaslighting, and false allyship. We use storytelling to discuss our relationships to these concepts.

### Module 3

#### Cultural Responsibility

We talk about how racism has impacted BIPOC, discussing concepts such as code switching and assimilation, internalized oppression, and imposter syndrome. We map ourselves out on the cycles of grief we experience when healing from experiences of oppression, whether it’s denial and gaslighting ourselves, minimization, guilt and shame, anger and rage, or depression. We learn how to listen—really truly listen—to each other.

### Module 3

#### Intersections and Healing

We talk about how even BIPOC hold privilege based on gender class, education, and other identities, and built tools for collective liberation through intersectional anti-oppression work. We map ourselves out on a similar cycle of grief that we experience when confronting our own privileges and engage in more listening. We end with a discussion on how we can all heal from these experiences using different modalities.

## White Accountability Workshop

IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Through tailored virtual or in-person workshops for people who identify as white or who are white passing, we build awareness surrounding concepts of whiteness, white supremacy, white identity politics, white fragility, and white privilege and how these concepts interact with conservation. The workshop is designed for people who have already engaged in extensive DEIJ work in their personal or professional lives.

This workshop is comprised of the following topics:

- Understanding basic concepts (e.g. race, racism, whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy);
- Understanding the intersection of settler and exploitative colonialism and conservation/outdoors (this would be very similar to the Module 1-3 in the Decolonization & Anti-Oppression in Conservation & the Outdoors, though more condensed);
- Understanding white supremacy culture in workplaces and how to move toward a culture of anti-racism;
- Building tools to be able to name and process emotions that arise when doing anti-racism work and confronting white supremacy;
- Building tools for providing our white colleagues empathy and guidance in joining us in doing anti-racism work.