

# State Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines in Action

## September 3, 2020

This document identifies specific actions and potential future actions the Coastal Conservancy believes will help make progress towards the agency's JEDI Guidelines. This document describes a constantly evolving effort and is not exhaustive.

### 1. PARTNERSHIPS

#### **Implemented and Ongoing Actions**

- Hosted six open-access webinars about equity-related issues in 2019-- featuring the work of community-based organizations, equity and justice experts, and project partners-- to educate Coastal Conservancy staff and external webinar attendees.
- Competitive Coastal Conservancy grant rounds required grantees to consult with the California Conservation Corps on contracting their services for construction projects.
- Joined the Environmental Education Funders Collaborative to build relationships with foundations and to learn about equity practices from other funders.

#### **Potential Future Actions**

- Expand and improve outreach efforts to potential applicants.
- Proactively engage organizations that work in areas identified as underfunded by the Coastal Conservancy.
- Expand and improve technical assistance provided to potential applicants, including feedback before and after grant rounds.
- Support non-profits developing skills and capacities necessary to successfully manage state grant funding.
- Work with local transportation authorities, counties, and cities to support public transportation to the coast.
- Work with workforce development organizations at the state, county, and city level to identify and increase where and how Coastal Conservancy programs provide pipeline to employment opportunities in environmental and conservation fields.

### 2. FUNDING PROGRAMS

#### **Implemented and Ongoing Actions**

- Instituted two-stage grant application process, starting with a pre-application followed by opportunity for agency feedback to applicants, to reduce labor on applications.
- Developed external Advisory Board for 'Explore the Coast' grant program and engaged that Board throughout 'Explore the Coast 2019' program development and application review.
- Reorganized Coastal Conservancy website grants page to improve clarity and accessibility.
- Gathered internal and external input from public survey and Greenlining Institute on potential barriers to applying for Coastal Conservancy funding and/or carrying out Coastal Conservancy grants.

### **Potential Future Actions** *(stemming largely from identified barriers)*

- Evaluate and report out on Explore the Coast Advisory Board process.
- Continue to improve the Coastal Conservancy website to ensure accessibility.
- Review and revise application scoring criteria to ensure consistency with Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines, such as points for meaningful community engagement and benefits to underserved and/or frontline communities.
- Solicit further feedback from potential applicants on Coastal Conservancy grant applications and processes.
- Continue to simplify grant applications.
- Develop consolidated onboarding packet for all grantees to ensure consistent grant management guidance is provided to all grantees.
- Develop recorded video introducing Coastal Conservancy grant application and process that improves approachability of the application process to a broader pool of applicants.
- Develop land acquisition project requirement list for potential grantees, to explain and assist community-based organizations and smaller non-profits who may be new to acquisition work and seeking to develop an acquisition project.
- Develop policy for advancing funds that is responsive to the financial realities of community-based organizations and smaller non-profits.
- Explore creating separate funding track specifically for community-based organizations.

## **3. MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Implemented and Ongoing Actions**

- Developed “Tips for Community Engagement” best practices guide and posted on the Coastal Conservancy website.

### **Potential Future Actions**

- Create new or modified agency outreach materials, including translation of documents into other languages and/or culturally relevant content delivery.
- Support messaging that demonstrates and shows what diversity of coastal access experiences looks like; elevate coastal stories and histories told by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- Develop and implement ‘Community Benefits Criteria’ as part of the Coastal Conservancy’s grant application scoring process.
- Develop public-facing job board for conservation jobs in California.
- Expand funding for community engagement led by community-based organizations.
- When supporting community outreach, use local vendors, that understand the community’s needs to the extent possible, such as food, childcare, audio visuals, facility rentals.
- Work with local authorities to create a safe, welcoming environment for all beachgoers.

#### 4. WORKING WITH CALIFORNIA'S TRIBES

##### **Implemented and Ongoing Actions**

- Developed and implemented a [Tribal Consultation Policy](#) for all Coastal Conservancy projects and programs.
- Instituted 'Tribal Liaisons' within each Coastal Conservancy regional work group to increase relationship building efforts with California's Tribes.

##### **Potential Future Actions**

- Continue to build the Conservancy's relationships with tribes
- Assist in connecting and supporting tribal relationships among other partner agencies, non-profits, and community groups to increase coordination and collaboration with tribes
- Continue to ensure consultation with tribes occurs early in project development and throughout project implementation; ensure tribal concerns are respected and archaeological and cultural resources are protected.
- Seek solutions to state contracting issues that affect the sovereignty of tribes.
- Continue to assist tribes to regain access to their ancestral lands on the coast through the Conservancy's land conservation or access programs. Work with tribes to enable traditional stewardship practices on ancestral land and co-management of their ancestral lands.
- Ensure programs include indigenous voices, leadership, and perspectives, including traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous stewardship, and educational programs.

#### 5. COASTAL CONSERVANCY STAFF AND BOARD

##### **Implemented & Ongoing Actions**

- Developed draft JEDI Guidelines, with robust public comment process.
- Board members participated in public JEDI workshop at February 2020 meeting.
- Planned for and contracted external consultants to provide implicit bias training to all staff.
- Established an internal JEDI committee, with staff participants from across depth and breadth of the agency. The JEDI committee and various subcommittees implement the actions described in this document.
- Joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) in 2018. Staff take part in GARE cohorts, conferences, and membership calls.
- All agency hiring processes begin with JEDI committee review of the hiring materials. Hiring panels include a JEDI committee member and undergo brief training at start of hiring process to review JEDI goals.
- Reinstated environmental services internship and changed hiring classification for some entry level project manager positions to expand diversity of Coastal Conservancy applicant pool.
- Developed 'Path to Promotion' documents for new hires that identify desired and/or required skills and competencies for promotion within the Coastal Conservancy; implement ongoing in-house training to support staff developing these skills and competencies.
- 'Career Development Guidelines' developed and shared with all staff, particularly to promote new employees' awareness of and access to available professional development resources.

### **Potential Future Actions**

- Board adopt JEDI Guidelines.
- Conduct employee engagement survey to allow for an anonymous feedback on workplace.
- Develop internal staff mentoring to support new hires.
- Support ongoing cultural humility and equity workshops for Coastal Conservancy staff.
- Continue to broaden staff recruitment of individuals with expertise in environmental justice or community-based knowledge; improve pathways for employment at the Conservancy for individuals from underserved communities.
- Increase Coastal Conservancy staff interactions with community-based organization to learn more about their interests, needs, and community engagement methods.
- Continue to share resources, including training and networking opportunities, with other state agencies who are also working to increase equity and environmental justice on the California coast, including the Coastal Commission, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and State Lands Commission.

## **6. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

### **Implemented and Ongoing Actions**

- Established quantitative metrics for environmental equity and justice objectives in the Coastal Conservancy's Strategic Plan, which are tracked and reported on annually:  
**Objective 16: Ensure that the work of the Conservancy promotes environmental equity and justice.**
  - Prioritize projects for funding that are located in disadvantaged communities or directly benefit disadvantaged communities. Target: 35% of funding.
  - Increase the resilience to climate change impacts of communities along the coast of California or in the San Francisco Bay Area that lack capacity due to systemic inequities. Target: 15 Projects.
  - Increase coastal access for all Californians, by supporting organizations that provide coastal experiences to underserved populations, by increasing physical access for persons with disabilities, by providing information about visitor-serving amenities on the coast, and by reducing barriers such as the cost of lodging. Target: 50 Projects.

### **Potential Future Actions**

- Collect and analyze data on types of organizations, geographies, and programs where Coastal Conservancy has made investments in order to identify potential gaps.
- Conduct equity impact review of Coastal Conservancy programs.
- Conduct analysis on housing displacement potential of Conservancy-funded projects and seek partnerships to preserve affordable housing near project areas.
- Explore developing an external Advisory Committee, based off the Explore the Coast Advisory Committee model, to support and guide the Coastal Conservancy's ongoing JEDI efforts