

Frequently Asked Questions for the State Coastal Conservancy's Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines

Q: What is the State Coastal Conservancy (the Conservancy)?

A: The Conservancy is a state agency, established in 1976 to protect and improve natural lands and waterways, to help people access and enjoy the outdoors, and to sustain local economies along California's coast. The Conservancy provides technical assistance and grant funding to local communities, nonprofit organizations, other government agencies, businesses, and private landowners to implement multi-benefit projects.

The Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future Californians. We act with others to protect and restore, and increase public access to, California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Q: Why is the State Coastal Conservancy developing Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines (JEDI)?

A: All Californians have the right to access the coast and should live in a healthy environment. However, the management of natural resources, including the California coast, has been fraught with exclusion, displacement, injustice, and extractive practices. The environmental burdens of development and industry are often borne by under-resourced communities, while environmental preservation and restoration primarily benefit the affluent.

The Conservancy recognizes its role in a history of inequity along the California Coast; these Guidelines will give the Conservancy the framework to transform the agency and work to recognize and redress these inequities in an equitable, inclusive manner.

Q: What do the Guidelines focus on?

A: The Guidelines focus on ways the Conservancy will:

- Improve its policies, programs, and practices to advance equitable access to the environmental, social, and economic benefits of California's coast and coastal watersheds.
- Regularly evaluate and modify program priorities, grant funding, contracting, hiring practices, communications, and community engagement practices, to address existing inequities.
- Increase the involvement and role of frontline communities in decision making by the Conservancy.

Q: Are the JEDI Guidelines a policy?

A: Several California state agencies have developed policies to guide their decisions on social and racial equity both within their organization and through their programming. Although the Conservancy's JEDI Guidelines are not a policy, they are a commitment to integrating the principles and practices of Justice, Equity, Inclusion and Diversity into all of the Conservancy's programs, projects, funding opportunities, staffing, and Board recruitment.

Q: Once the SCC board adopts the JEDI Guidelines, what is the next phase(s) in the process?

A: The JEDI Guidelines are accompanied by a document titled, "[Appendix A: State Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines in Action](#)," which identifies specific actions and potential future actions the Conservancy believes will help make progress towards the objectives in the JEDI Guidelines. This document describes a constantly evolving effort and is not exhaustive, but rather lays out the steps the Conservancy will take in the near term to implement the Guidelines.

The Conservancy reports out annually on the existing Environmental Justice objectives in its current [Strategic Plan](#) to:

- Prioritize projects for funding that are located in disadvantaged communities or directly benefit disadvantaged communities.
- 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.
- 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.

Q: How will these guidelines be used to inform programs and projects?

A: The "State Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines in Action" document lays out the Conservancy's current thinking on how to implement these Guidelines. The Conservancy will be conducting workshops to gather ideas on specific actions, such as barriers to applying for and managing grants. The "JEDI Guidelines in Action" document outlines six areas:

- Partnerships
- Funding Programs
- Meaningful Community Engagement
- Working with California's Tribes
- Conservancy Staff and Board
- Accountability and Transparency

This is a living document, and the Conservancy welcomes your ongoing feedback on it, and the efforts to accomplish the tasks it lays out. To provide feedback, please email: JEDI@scc.ca.gov.

Q: How will the JEDI Guidelines be used to inform internal processes, as they relate to employment and staff education at the State Coastal Conservancy?

A: The Guidelines acknowledge the need to improve the Conservancy's internal processes to bring them into alignment with the JEDI aims. Specific tasks within the "State Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines in Action" document include:

- Conduct employee engagement survey to allow for anonymous feedback on workplace topics.
- Develop internal staff mentoring to support new hires.
- Support ongoing cultural humility and equity workshops for 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 under-resourced communities.
- Increase Conservancy staff interactions with community-based organizations to learn more about their community engagement methods.