

**State Coastal Conservancy**  
**Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Guidelines Workshop**  
**February 2, 2020**  
**Oxnard, CA**

**Attendees**

**Conservancy Board Members**

Doug Bosco, Chair  
Ann Notthoff, Vice-Chair  
Steve Padilla, Chair of the Coastal Commission  
Bryan Cash, Natural Resources Agency  
Gayle Miller, Department of Finance

**Participants (list may not be complete)**

Patrice Baker, Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek  
Carla Camacho, Ocean Discovery Institute  
Lesford Duncan, Outdoor Outreach  
David Grubb, Sierra Club, San Diego Chapter  
Lucas Zucker, CAUSE  
Randolph Torres-Van Vleck, City Heights Community Development Corporation  
Amy Lethbridge, Mountains Recreation Conservation Association  
Elena Eger, Mountains Recreation Conservation Association  
Mario Sandoval, Mountains Recreation Conservation Association  
Bruce Heyman, Los Angeles Maritime Institute  
Marissa Llanes, Community Nature Connection  
Rocio Lozano-Knowlton, MERITO Foundation  
Maripaula Valdes-Betritz, MERITO Foundation  
Vianey Lopez, Oxnard City Council and staff to Assemblymember Monique Limon  
Michelle Sevilla, staff to Assemblymember Monique Limon  
Jeff Lambert, City of Oxnard  
Laura Davick, Crystal Cove Conservancy  
Kate Wheeler, Crystal Cove Conservancy  
Dan Gee, Crystal Cove Conservancy  
Asma Mahdi, Better World Group  
Chuy Flores, Better World Group

**Conservancy Staff**

Trish Chapman (Group 1 facilitator)  
Shalini Kannan (Group 1 notetaker)  
Rodrigo Garcia (Group 2 facilitator)  
Avra Heller (Group 2 notetaker)  
Chris Kroll (Group 3 facilitator)  
Emely Lopez (Group 3 notetaker)

Moirá McEnespy (Group 4 facilitator)  
Alexis Barrera (Group 4 notetaker)  
Linda Tong (Group 5 facilitator)  
Joel Gerwein (Group 5 notetaker)  
Sam Schuchat  
Amy Roach  
Mary Small  
Amy Hutzel  
Megan Cooper  
Karyn Gear  
Julia Elkin  
Rachel Couch  
Sam Jenniches  
Anulika White  
Andrew Auyeung

## **Group 1 Notes**

### **Why do you think it is important for the Coastal Conservancy to develop JEDI Guidelines?**

- To ensure long-term coastal protection and access for all.
- “JEDI” should be a part of everything we do, and so far it’s not. For example, hiring in environmental field used to be highly biased and we’re better today, but there’s still a lot of room for improvement in these processes.
- As funder, Conservancy has an important role. Guidelines are important for Conservancy to connect better with the communities they try to serve.
- Many kids in California don’t see themselves in coastal spaces. To truly protect the coast, there’s also a need to get everyone involved – which involves cultural shift.
- A guidelines document ensures that these principles will guide Conservancy’s future work.
- At first, all the definitions that come with talking about JEDI were overwhelming. After digesting, sees the meaning and intent behind all the terms and knows they are important. Guidelines give us a structure for this work to measure against what we’re doing.
- History is all about ownership of land and property ever since Spanish arrival in California, and much of it filled with injustice. And today so many kids who live near the coast don’t even get to it.

**There are currently six areas covered in the guidelines (Partnerships, Funding Programs, Meaningful Community Engagement, Working with California’s Tribes, Staff and Board, and Accountability and Transparency). Is there one key element/theme that stood out and are there any missing elements?**

- Partnerships stands out because it's important to work with the people on the ground who really know how their communities work. Meaningful Community Engagement is important because the Conservancy needs to let people know the opportunities that are out there for them.
- Should we be pulling together more groups of partners for funding (rather than individual grantees)?
- The Conservancy should think about how to make funding programs that encourage groups to collaborate in order to get the funds. How can the Conservancy entice organizations to come to the table together? This could be a stepping-stone to building capacity for smaller organizations.
- The Conservancy can invite organizations to collaborate on the grantmaking process, to let communities help shape grant programs. The Conservancy should do a gap analysis of where funds have gone, and which communities haven't gotten funding (geographical and type of grantee/project). Can think of unique groups to fund.
- Thinking about a shift in Conservancy's mission – from conserving lands to improving public access. There are nonphysical, intangible barriers that keep public from the coast – how can the Conservancy address these, where could funding go?
- Representation and kids seeing themselves in a space is important. Workforce development is worthy of funding; for example, kids who participate for a few years can join the leadership program. The Conservancy should invest in programs that create pipelines for people to take leadership roles.
- People face intangible barriers to coastal access. For example, some communities of color have no access to swimming pools/swim lessons, which makes an ocean visit dangerous. For some, there have been no positive messages about the coast, only images of fear/danger. For example, some kids have only seen the coast in the movie Jaws.
- Previous mentality around public access that "If we build it, they will come" but now think about how there's a whole realm of more work needed for the Conservancy to get involved with (regarding the intangible barriers to access).
- Working with tribes stands out; work with the administration to get funds in the next bond dedicated for land acquisitions for tribes?

**How do you see these guidelines incorporated into the work of the Conservancy? What specific actions do you want to see happen?**

- Access for tribes to the coast in a culturally relevant way.
- Dedicated money for tribes would be good.
- Question for participants about whether the Conservancy should be looking for new partners (more community based) versus encouraging existing partners to work with other orgs/ communities?
- Addressing more intangible barriers to enjoy the coast with Explore the Coast program

- We've been talking about meaningful engagement for Explore the Coast projects, but what about for remote, restoration type projects?
  - All kinds of projects can benefit from involving the public more. Multi-year funding allows for more leverage and investment at the outset and more naturally brings an ecosystem of people together.
  - The Conservancy might need to find a way to incorporate more community engagement into capital infrastructure/ restoration projects.
  - Restoration projects can be an opportunity for job training and getting the public to feel a sense of ownership/ investment & want to steward them in the future. This type of training shifts leadership/ representation in the future.

**What are the 2 or 3 takeaways from this breakout group that you want reported back to the whole board and public?**

- Importance of meaningful community engagement – by Conservancy and our grantees. Involving them more in grantmaking process.
- Non-physical barriers. “If we build it, they will come” isn’t enough.
- Cycle of engagement in the outdoors and workforce development.
- Conservancy should do a gap analysis to see where and who we haven’t funded enough.

## **Group 2 Notes**

**Why do you think it is important for the Coastal Conservancy to develop JEDI Guidelines?**

- Importance of relationship building to remove various barriers to accessing the coast
- The Conservancy touches and works with organizations throughout the State, the Conservancy is in a position to lead this work and can set expectations (requirements) for partners and grantees to meet them in this work.
- Important for Conservancy’s JEDI work to not only focus on coastal access, but on other open space access.
- Ways for the Conservancy to get involved with increasing equitability in modal access to the coast and other open spaces.
- Conservancy is gate keeper to accessing California state funding – can embed justice and equity outcomes within the grant making and management process.

**There are currently six areas covered in the guidelines (Partnerships, Funding Programs, Meaningful Community Engagement, Working with California’s Tribes, Staff and Board, and Accountability and Transparency). Is there one key element/theme that stood out and are there any missing elements?**

- Need for accountability and transparency – participants wanted clarity on how Conservancy is quantifying, measuring, and tracking “achievement” of various JEDI goals / objectives.
- Asking for clearly defined (SMART) objectives and ranking criteria as potential applicants to future Conservancy grant rounds.

- Appreciate as grantees being required to track specific metrics, would want to see clear guidelines for grantee's future work and metric tracking.
- Importance of staff and board becoming representative of the broadest range of Californians.
- Need and necessary for staff to continue investing in relationship building with community-based organizations, tribal relationships.

**How do you see these guidelines incorporated into the work of the Conservancy? What specific actions do you want to see happen?**

- Want action guidelines to guide grant programming and selection.
- Include a requirement for an anti-displacement/gentrification plan to be included in all applications and project implementation – use applications to push applicants to consider JEDI implications of their work that they might not otherwise.
- Community based organizations need ongoing technical support both to put together an initial application and to be successful in administering a grant if awarded.

**Next steps for these guidelines, after incorporation of public comment and board adoption, will be workshops on specific actions, such as barriers to grants: Is this enough? What else would you like to see? What should the process be for community input on implementation of the guidelines?**

- Create a network system in which successful grantees partner with / mentor other organizations within their region / community to broaden the reach of the Conservancy's funding – take on some of the needed technical assistance.
- Finding ways for organizations to cross-coordinate programming and deliverables.
- Create grant environment that encourages collaboration among organizations.
- Making space for grant funding to be able to be applied to policy issues / advocacy regarding systemic change.
- Conservancy serving as a mediator / collaborative force between grantees (discussed Integrated Regional Water Management Plans as a potential collaborative project model).
- ALL of this while acknowledging the inherently competitive nature of grants/funding availability.

**What are the 2 or 3 takeaways from this breakout group that you want reported back to the whole board and public?**

- Need to include clear, MEASURABLE JEDI metrics within the JEDI guidelines or potentially more clearly in the strategic plan itself.
- Encourage/create collaborative/mentorship relationships between successful grantees and potential applicants
- TRANSPARANCY in grant selection process
- Technical support – increase small organizations' capacity to apply for and meet grant requirements – use Conservancy grants to provide funding for more staff.

## **Group 3 Notes**

### **Why do you think it is important for the Coastal Conservancy to develop JEDI Guidelines?**

- The JEDI guidelines help us see the environment in ways we haven't taken into consideration in the past.
- There are environmental education aspects that get brought into communities that need environmental access.
- It is a way for government and agencies to implement and take operation in different directions.
- Seeing social bias in the environment and addressing these inequities.
- There is a community disconnection and we need to build assets and make sure community knows it exist for them.
- Stakeholder can get involved when they realize everything is interconnected, for example, coastal facilities, outdoor education, body systems and animals are all wonderful for community inclusion and integration.
- It provides us a source to look into the future because the time to do nothing is over. We need to do what's best!

### **There are currently six areas covered in the guidelines (Partnerships, Funding Programs, Meaningful Community Engagement, Working with California's Tribes, Staff and Board, and Accountability and Transparency). Is there one key element/theme that stood out and are there any missing elements?**

- What is the application of the guidelines? What are the metrics and accountability? What is the award timing and how does project look like when it is on the ground?
  - Whoever get the grants, it becomes tricky especially for newer grantees.
    - Reporting and post project reporting is difficult. Grantees need more guidance (a template?). Can the Conservancy give more direction on what is needed for reporting?
  - Conservancy needs to focus more on capacity building. Conservancy funds projects that are ready to go but low-income community need more project capacity building.
  - There needs to be some form of advocacy for these issues. The Conservancy needs to fund engagement and community outreach. Let's pay for capacity building.
  - Senate Bill 1000: focuses on the environment. How can cities connect to the environment and this work? There needs to be a better connection.
  - Conservancy should show examples of good projects.
    - Example: "This is who got the grant, this is what they do and are doing for the community."
- Share a potential newsletter-with ongoing projects and not just grant updates. Periodic newsletter updates on the website. This will help guide the communities on projects they can get involved in.

**How do you see these guidelines incorporated into the work of the Conservancy? What specific actions do you want to see happen?**

- Challenge with capacity building.
- Expand outreach to people to be more equitable and include translation.
- There is a Climate Justice Network working on a lot of capacity building.
- How do we move from potential project to future actions?
- Expand outreach to more people.
- Outreach to non-governmental organizations and boards, local non-profits to do outreaching.
- How do we find people we don't know who can benefit?
- In the JEDI guidelines, the 2<sup>nd</sup> page 1<sup>st</sup> bullet needs to be highlighted/ set as a priority.
- What is the Conservancy's capacity? What is the bandwidth?
- With more outreach, we need more resources. We need to prepare for this.
- We need to provide small grants to newer grantees. Small grants can go very far for a nonprofit because they know the community and how to impact with a small grant.
- We gave a Santa Clara River grant but what about the Oxnard School District (they are underserved)?

**Next steps for these guidelines, after incorporation of public comment and board adoption, will be workshops on specific actions, such as barriers to grants: Is this enough? What else would you like to see? What should the process be for community input on implementation of the guidelines?**

- More workshops on applying for Conservancy grants.
- Gathering metrics and facilitations.
- Translation on a project by project basis; more is needed.
- If we don't know the community, why do we expect the community to come? We should go to them.
- Piggyback on meetings that are ongoing.
- Go to them because they will not come to us until the trust is build.
- Have a certain percentage of grant to go to outreach.
- Can Conservancy staff attend more meetings?
- The public needs a page where they can find grants and how to maximize funds. What is required for the grant, so the grantee know what they are getting themselves into. A Grant resource hub that is categorized.
- Grant deadlines sometimes conflict.
- Are we asking for too much if everyone uses the same Request for Proposals?

## **Group 4 Notes**

**Why do you think it is important for the Coastal Conservancy to develop JEDI Guidelines?**

- So that Conservancy can adequately serve Californians.

- Access for ALL to the coast and other green spaces.
- Local access for residents and tourists increases environmental stewardship.
- Ensuring environmental education is accessible to promote understanding and future careers in conservation, especially for underrepresented students.
- Projects should have multiple benefits, including prioritizing equitable access for all.
- Increase diversity across all levels of government.
- Increase grant opportunities to organizations led by a minority person.
- Process more equitable, especially for smaller non-profit organizations.

**There are currently six areas covered in the guidelines (Partnerships, Funding Programs, Meaningful Community Engagement, Working with California's Tribes, Staff and Board, and Accountability and Transparency). Is there one key element/theme that stood out and are there any missing elements?**

- Meaningful community engagement and EARLY community ownership.
- Conservancy staff and board knowledgeable in both community and science.
- Partnerships – expand to local governments and ports.
- Guidelines related to Community Engagement and Partnerships work together.
- Ensure early engagement.
- Public investment and ownership over life of project (not just a one-off).
- SCC role could be to encourage regional collaboration, and partnerships among/within groups or geographies (not just relationships directly with Conservancy).
- Engage communities so they have a voice (on same par with “scientists” and other experts).
- Put equity on par with conservation purposes.

**How do you see these guidelines incorporated into the work of the Conservancy? What specific actions do you want to see happen?**

- Ensuring projects that the Conservancy supports/funds have done meaningful community engagement.

**What are the 2 or 3 takeaways from this breakout group that you want reported back to the whole board and public?**

- Meaningful community engagement needed over the life of the project.
- Expand partnerships.
- Increase staff and board diversity.
- Consider equity and conservation equally.

## **Group #5 Notes**

**Why do you think it is important for the Coastal Conservancy to develop JEDI Guidelines?**

- Importance of incorporating tribal voices and improving access for the disabled.



- JEDI guidelines are a key first step. Low cost accommodations are a part of Crystal Cove Conservancy's mission. Implementation will require complex partnerships.
- Some coastal communities are in industrial sacrifice zones. Excited to see investments in restoring those areas and providing access to them. CAUSE worked with State Lands Commission on developing their access policy and is excited to continue working with Conservancy.

**There are currently six areas covered in the guidelines (Partnerships, Funding Programs, Meaningful Community Engagement, Working with California's Tribes, Staff and Board, and Accountability and Transparency). Is there one key element/theme that stood out and are there any missing elements?**

- Importance of building relationships that aren't transactional and just based on individual projects and grant agreements. The Conservancy should build long term relationships with community groups that will inform project development and implementation. Tribal involvement needs to be more than an afterthought. Need free, prior and informed consent from tribes for projects.
- Meaningful community engagement is very important and difficult. You need a variety of partners. Crystal Cove example involved a public vision process which was really important at arriving at a common vision that everyone shares.
- Avoid a situation of "Here's our plan- let's get feedback on it." Instead, develop the plan together and think about the many related processes and projects. For example, Ormond Beach access is tied up with the superfund site and power plant issues.
- The appendix to the guidelines is great because guidelines are good but recommended actions are where the rubber meets the road. Pre-applications are a good way to reduce the burden of preparing full proposals on community-based organizations. Many community-based organizations wouldn't think of applying for Conservancy grants, but outreach and technical assistance would allow these groups to apply. Break the cycle of groups that traditionally got grants continuing to get all the funds.
- It would be great to set a goal of a specific percentage of funds for restoration in low income communities like Long Beach and Wilmington.
- Echoed points about getting participation and engagement early, not when plans are fully formed.
- In Guidelines 2, 3, and 4 is where we could add language stressing the importance of this approach. Technical assistance is critical for co-visioning. It's good to recognize how the different guidelines sections relate to each other and fit together.
- Agrees on technical assistance as key to co-visioning. This idea could be incorporated into Sections 2 and also 1.
- Projects come to Conservancy at all stages. Sometimes they are already designed and just need implementation funds. But early ideas/conceptual projects are a great opportunity for co-visioning.
- It helps to have a community presence, which is challenging because the Conservancy is in Oakland. Rely on partners to do community engagement.
- Importance of making government documents accessible and not intimidating.

- Education can be key to building engagement between government and community. Partnering is so key and there are barriers due to a lack of familiarity with government language and process.
- Wants to lift up the partnership between Conservancy and CAUSE as a positive example. Years of Conservancy funding for engagement that looked different than typical government engagement materials. There is a need for face-to-face engagement that meets the community where it is.
- Helpful to record meetings and make them available online to watch for those who can't attend. Good to do the webinar.
- There is a need for technical assistance. Can Conservancy staff help community-based organizations write their grants?

**What are the 2 or 3 takeaways from this breakout group that you want reported back to the whole board and public?**

- Meaningful community engagement means co-visioning, not presenting a plan that has already been developed for input. That requires building relationships over time.
- Technical assistance (in grant application and project development) is critical.
- Including tribal voices from early stages of project development is critical (including to understand use of the land).
- Proactive resources for community engagement to address barriers to providing input and attending community meetings. Need to meet people where they are by funding community-based organizations to do engagement.

## Photos of the Breakout Groups









