



**KERN RIVER**  
CONSERVANCY

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**EQUALITY**  
**DIVERSITY**  
**&**  
**INCLUSION**

**KERN RIVER CONSERVANCY**  
**Diversity Strategic Plan**  
**2020**



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## **Diversity and Inclusion Vision**

We are an organization that values the intrinsic worth of its members and volunteers, recognizes our shared qualities, and embraces our differences. We appreciate all persons as a key character of our community, foster a spirit of openness and active engagement, and strive to be diverse and inclusive in every aspect of life. In doing so, we ensure opportunity for all who work and volunteer with Kern River Conservancy.

We believe that reflective, thoughtful, and respectful examination of the differing dimensions of diversity educates and empowers all who work and volunteer here to be advocates for inclusion and equality.

All members of Kern River Conservancy share in cultivating, sustaining, and continuously developing an environment in which equality is intentionally sought and inclusiveness is practiced. Kern River Conservancy is a powerful example of a community enriched by diversity in all its forms, and the challenges and rewards that come with diverse representation, thought, and expression.

### **What is inclusion?**

Inclusion is a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment that increases the participation and contribution of all employees and volunteers.

### **What is Diversity and Inclusion?**

It is our organization's mission and practice to support a diverse workplace and leverage the effects of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to achieve a successful foundation.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Best Practices:**

- fair treatment
- equal access to opportunity
- teamwork and collaboration
- a focus on innovation and creativity
- organizational flexibility, responsiveness, and agility
- conflict resolution processes that are collaborative
- evidence of leadership's commitment to diversity (e.g., appointing a Chief Diversity/Equality Officer)
- representation of diversity at all levels of the organization
- representation of diversity among internal and external stakeholders
- diversity education and training

Mainstreaming EDI is our overarching goal. We identify four specific objectives to help us achieve this and recognize there is a business, moral and legal case for EDI. We focus on six main areas: age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion or belief and sexual identity/orientation. This focus helps us give due regard to key aspects of EDI and use our resources effectively. We appreciate that these areas do not stand alone but can and do intersect. We are conscious of the role socio-economic inequality plays in systemic discrimination and in holding people back due to circumstances beyond their control. Efforts to acknowledge and address social disadvantage are strongly encouraged as we strive for greater inclusion across our staff and volunteer groups and to widen opportunities for access and engagement across our programs and services.

## **1. Inclusion Culture**

To achieve this we intend to make concerted efforts to reduce key barriers, informed by data led interventions: improve the representation of KRC minority, ethnic and disabled people and sustain the improvements in the representation of women at senior levels.

We will work to reduce any unfair, unjustified and unnecessary hierarchical divisions based on contract type, most notably between KRC staff and our volunteers. We will nurture an organizational culture where people working and engaging with us feel respected and comfortable being themselves, free from unjustified discrimination, offensive behavior or bullying.

The result will be an organizational culture that is experienced as more, if not wholly, inclusive, fair, allows for speaking up, manages disagreement and conflict constructively and is empowered, optimistic and aligned to our values. Our participant profile will be representative of the broader societies in which we work. In addition, there will be expanded opportunities for under-represented groups internally and externally to participate and contribute to informing and shaping the organizational culture. There will be alignment with how we engage with EDI internally and how EDI is reflected and addressed in the delivery and content of our programs and services as part of our cultural relations offer.

## **2. Developing Leadership**

Leaders exist in different roles and particularly, but not exclusively, in senior positions. They are crucial in driving progress, achieving fairness and enhancing our working culture, reputation and impact. Therefore our emphasis will continue to be on nurturing and developing engagement, role models and leadership capability in EDI, as well as diversity amongst senior leaders.

The result will be more confident, capable and committed leaders, particularly at senior levels, and people with specific expertise in facilitating EDI who are able to promote diversity as an integral part of cultural relations and demonstrate the benefits of doing so. These include reducing unconscious bias, enhancing our people management and working culture and using the experience of our own journey and competence to position us as making a notable contribution to international aspects of EDI, as well as being a partner of choice.

## **Tools:**

- EDI activities for leaders
- EDI Champions
- Accredited Diversity Facilitators within regions
- EDI Leads for regions, countries and business areas
- EDI performance deliverables against which to measure progress and attainment
- Web, intranet and other sources of information including core skills for leaders and managers and specific guides
- Promoting and sharing our work and learning about international aspects of EDI with others, including through storytelling

## **3. Performance, Impact and Legal Compliance**

Measuring our performance and identifying our success in achieving a more inclusive organizational culture and making a leading contribution to international aspects of EDI is crucial in evaluating our effectiveness and impact. We will therefore identify mechanisms for measuring the return on our investment (ROI) in EDI and the extent and quality of the contribution and distinct impact we aim to make through EDI. In addition, we will ensure we comply with our legal obligations and where possible and appropriate, go beyond the legal minimum.

The results will be improved performance against our own EDI standards derived from national and international benchmarks. This includes external recognition. There will be strong compliance with legal obligations and where possible and appropriate these will be exceeded for vulnerable groups. Equality, diversity and inclusion related risks will be anticipated and well managed.

# KERN RIVER CONSERVANCY

## Diversity Strategic Plan



The strategic goals and objectives of the diversity strategic plan are designed to serve as a vehicle to help move Kern River Conservancy from its current state with regard to diversity practices toward the future state to which we aspire. Arranged in priority order, the plan outlines strategic goals and objectives to accomplish this.

**Goal 1.** We will increase the recruitment and retention of volunteers and staff from underrepresented minority groups.

- Expand Kern River Conservancy's structural diversity by increasing the number of staff and volunteers from underrepresented minority groups.
- Develop quality experiences for underrepresented minority groups of volunteers and staff.
- Promote the success and retention of underrepresented minority individuals.

**Goal 2.** We will create an organizational environment that fully welcomes and supports social diversity.

- Enhance professional development training and co-curricular programs that engage community members in the challenges and rewards of valuing diversity and multi-culturalism.
- Support continued development of training that addresses issues of social diversity and multi-culturalism.
- Address the gains, opportunities, and challenges of becoming a more diverse organization.

**Goal 3.** We will improve working and business relationships with race/ethnic and other diverse groups within our community.

- Build additional mutually beneficial relationships with race/ethnic and other diverse communities in Kern River Conservancy
- Develop supplier and business relationships with the various minority communities.

**Goal 4.** We will be accountable for implementing the diversity strategic plan and working toward achieving diversity goals.

- Regularly assess climate for diversity to assist with diversity strategic planning and its implementation.
- Create an institutional structure to provide oversight and support for diversity strategic plan implementation.
- Implement a strategic communication plan around diversity issues in order to make visible our strengths and bring diversity concerns into the dominant discourse of the Kern River Conservancy.
- Conduct an assessment of current personnel, project budgets, and resources dedicated to EDI strategic plan.

We Aspire:

To create respect for and appreciation of all persons as a key characteristic of our community.

To increase the diversity of all parts of our community through commitment in our recruitment and retention efforts.

To foster a spirit of openness to active engagement among all members of our community.

We Acknowledge:

The richness of commonalities and differences we share as a community.

The intrinsic worth of all who work and volunteer here.

We Act:

To achieve an environment that welcomes and supports diversity.

To ensure opportunity for all who teach and learn.



EQUALITY

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