

Stanford Doerr

School of
Sustainability



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION AT THE DOERR SCHOOL

Vision, Goals & Action Plan 2021-2024

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AT THE DOERR SCHOOL

Vision, Goals, and Actions for the Next Three Years

VISION

Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability (SDSS) aims to integrate Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) throughout the fabric of its educational mission. As a school focused on climate and sustainability, we seek to build a community of students, postdocs, staff, and faculty that reflects the demographics of our society and values empathy and well-being along with academic and professional achievement. With a diversity of backgrounds and identities represented, this community will reflect different worldviews and be attuned to the environmental justice and social issues that are fundamental to fruitful learning and research. By embedding DEI concepts and actions within all our programs and processes—from research, mentoring, and teaching to planning fieldwork and making curriculum choices—we hope to dissolve the social and cultural barriers that obstruct educational opportunity and equity for many, and in particular BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) individuals, along with women, persons with disabilities, first-gen, low-income students, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and other underrepresented individuals in the sciences. We believe that paying attention to the experiences of those historically underrepresented in our community will help us build a more inclusive school for everyone. We also believe that having a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive school will lead to better scientific solutions for our planet.

FROM VISION TO PRACTICE

Building on the work established by Professor Emeritus Jerry Harris and the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) in diversifying the geosciences pipeline, our expanded vision now plays out under the heightened awareness of racial injustices and the legacy of systemic structures of discrimination in society. Against this backdrop and within the field of sustainability, we are determined to improve and expand SDSS DEI practices and to create an inclusive school for all. We listened to students, staff, and faculty in developing the priorities listed below and we understand that this is an ongoing conversation. We look forward to gaining further input from our community.



We have identified four major priorities that will inform our school-wide DEI efforts:

1. **Educate** more members of our community about DEI issues and practices.
2. **Enhance** support and resources to create an inclusive environment, particularly for historically underrepresented groups in STEM.
3. **Engage** and partner with minority-serving institutions, organizations, and diverse networks to recruit and share educational and career opportunities at SDSS.
4. **Expect** accountability for DEI across research groups, departments/programs, and administrative units.

We believe that everyone can practice these four “E’s” and take part in the work of large-scale change and thereby lessen the burden on historically underrepresented individuals to lead DEI efforts. Addressing these needs and priorities as voiced by our community, and making them the basis for our action-oriented goals, is the first of many steps in helping us move forward in achieving our collective vision for a diverse, equitable, and inclusive school. Setting concrete goals and aligning them with Stanford’s [IDEAL](#) initiative, evaluating the impact of our policies, engaging in self-reflection and self-education, and having the willingness to recognize and address setbacks will be critical to improving and adjusting our plans over the next three years.

We can all play a role in making the future of this school more inclusive and ensuring that our vision is realized and sustained. This DEI action plan centers on students, staff, faculty, and others who are most underrepresented in academia and vulnerable to educational and inclusion barriers, and is designed to enrich and enhance the experience of every member of our community. We are excited to move forward in this important vision together.

—DEI Director Lupe Carrillo and Associate Dean Paula Welander



GOAL 1: EDUCATE

Create a culture that is attuned to the systemic barriers and inequities that exist in academia and in the fields represented in the SDSS by providing educational resources.

We aim to build an inclusive environment where everyone has the opportunity to become well-informed and educated about the systemic inequities that exist in academia and the Earth sciences. The scope of SDSS's educational offerings will include topics related to the intersection of environmental justice and sustainability, along with opportunities for people to become educated on anti-racism and anti-oppressive practices.

IMPLEMENTED

- Create school-wide policy on respectful and inclusive behavior and a committee to regularly solicit feedback and review its impact.
- Expand educational resources, such as events and reading clubs, a DEI [reading and resources list](#) and support for Sustain 203: Diversity and Inclusion in the Geosciences (DIG)

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

- Develop and implement anti-bias educational workshops for faculty in collaboration with Stanford University DEI leaders.
- Build educational and effective DEI practices workshops for faculty and the full SDSS community (e.g., anti-bias training, inclusive teaching, inclusive fieldwork, cultural competency, mentoring across difference, and anti-racism).
- Add “mentoring across difference” training to current faculty mentorship workshop.
- Support the buildout of an expanded curriculum in the new school with environmental justice courses and programming.



GOAL 2: ENHANCE

Build a truly inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive by enhancing and expanding resources and support.

We aim to build an inclusive environment at the Doerr School where everyone has the opportunity and resources to thrive and feel a sense of belonging by enhancing and expanding resources, particularly for minority students, staff, faculty, postdocs, and other underrepresented members of our community who are most vulnerable to systemic inequities. Arriving at true inclusion means creating a community where diverse leaders are in decision-making roles and where everyone feels seen, heard, and respected.

IMPLEMENTED

- Establish the [Dean's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program](#), providing two-year postdoc positions over the next five years for two scholars who contribute to diversity at SDSS.
- Establish the [Dean's Graduate Scholars Program](#), providing first-year tuition and additional financial support for incoming underrepresented graduate students.
- Create awareness events and media representation of BIPOC and other underrepresented students, staff, and faculty:
 - SDSS Celebrates event series and news stories, honoring and celebrating the many communities and identities within the school and sustainability.
 - Collaboration with partners across Stanford on diverse speaker series (e.g., co-sponsor of Race, Science, and Technology series in 2020-2021).
- Hire an assistant director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and expand the reach of the DEI office.
- Support early career faculty, especially women and minority faculty, with a comprehensive “multi-mentor” program and connection to Stanford resources.

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

- Partner with the Branner Earth Sciences Library to amplify DEI topics and underrepresented scholars in the Earth and environmental sciences.
- Evaluate inclusive physical and virtual environments and how they adhere with universal design and represent diverse cultures and perspectives.
- Broaden school DEI student positions to work with the DEI office (i.e., SURGE, outreach, organizing speaker series, DIG projects).
- Collaborate with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs to implement the [Research University Alliance NSF grant](#) and other professional development geared toward underrepresented STEM postdocs.
- Collaborate with the Earth Systems Program to help implement their DEI plan within their student community.
- Support the formation and development of affinity groups and [employee resource groups](#) for staff, students, and faculty.
- Collaborate with IDEAL Staff Advisory Committee to create DEI resources and initiatives for staff.



GOAL 3: ENGAGE

Diversify school and broader fields of sustainability by engaging with diverse networks, organizations, and minority-serving institutions.

We aim to create a truly diverse community at SDSS that reflects the demographics of our country and world and where everyone plays a role in sharing educational opportunities and creating access both within and outside of Stanford.

IMPLEMENTED

- Create broad faculty searches and actively recruit scholars who will enhance diversity at the school (e.g., 2021 [tenure-track faculty position](#)).
- Reach diverse graduate students by expanded recruiting at targeted universities and organizations.

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

- Invite BIPOC and other underrepresented seminar speakers and feature their scholarship in curriculum.
- Support and seek more permanent funding for the SURGE program.
- Ensure awareness of **SDSS** academic programs and opportunities across Stanford through expanded outreach to campus cultural [community centers](#) and diverse student organizations.
- Expand **SDSS** outreach programs that serve local and underrepresented communities and bring DEI best practices and cultural competency to outreach training.
- Build relationships and partnerships with minority-serving institutions, including Hispanic-serving institutions and Historically Black Colleges/Universities, as well as organizations that support underrepresented students.



GOAL 4: EXPECT

Build accountability for institutional change by expecting local DEI efforts.

We aim to sustain change by expecting DEI plans and results not only at the school level but also within individual departments. Our DEI office can help departments design and develop local department goals, while also measuring progress of our school-wide initiatives. We want to create a culture of transparency and accountability, while also building community to collectively share our challenges and progress.

IMPLEMENTED

- Incorporate a DEI service category in annual faculty reports that will inform compensation and promotion decisions.
- Connect SDSS departments with Stanford University's IDEAL data dashboard in order to develop goals and targets for recruitment, holistic admissions, and enrollment, while also educating departments about the limitations of the GRE as an effective measure for graduate admissions.
- Partner with IR&DS (Institutional Research and Decision Support) to inform school leadership about available university data considered for DEI decisions and school climate programming.
- Expand holistic processes for graduate admissions and postdoctoral and faculty hiring with support from Associate Chairs for Diversity and Inclusion (ACDI) in each unit.

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

- Expect and support SDSS departments/programs to create and implement local DEI goals informed by the school's action plan.
- Develop a data-informed process to assess progress toward DEI goals and action items, collaborating with IR&DS.
- Create "Excellence in DEI Service Award" to recognize individuals, departments/programs, and school successes.

- Add a DEI question in annual staff self-evaluation form, especially to enable recognition and consideration for Excellence in DEI award.
- Make transparent reporting processes for DEI grievances and, as appropriate, interventions and consequences, while also creating accountability structures to keep track of progress and improvements:
 - Expect individual departments/programs to meet annually with school leadership to report on progress, plans, and needs.
 - Create DEI advisory process/council to engage diverse and underrepresented voices in major DEI school-wide discussions and recommendations, inviting staff, faculty, students, alumni, and postdoc representatives.
 - Establish an annual Respectful Community dialogue event to discuss school DEI successes and failures, including how leadership will adjust strategies and goals based on performance.