



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN

2024 – 2029

Woodland Park Zoo saves wildlife and inspires everyone to make conservation a priority in their lives.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

These are the lands of the Tribal signatories of the Treaty of Point Elliott (1855), whose stewardship for the waters, plants, land and animal relatives in the Northwest has continued since time immemorial. Woodland Park Zoo acknowledges this stewardship, the sovereign rights of the Tribal signatories, and our responsibility to join with these Tribes to inspire and advance the restoration of relationships between humans and the living world around us.

Lushootseed Language

g'əł dibəł, ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix', tiʔə? dəx'xubateb ʔə ti tud'ix'qscəł ti tliiti ʔal bəkəltiu (1855). sg'ałčəł swatix'tədčəł. ləcutiχdub ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' tulʔal tudi? tud'ix' pədtəb ti swatix'təd ʔi ti swətix'təd, ti q'ʊ? ʔi ti x'əlč, ti tatačulbix' ʔi ti titčulbix'. sux'təb ʔə ti Woodland Park Zoo tiʔə? cədił ləcustiχdx' ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' ʔi ti sg'ałs šəłxəčəbs dx'ʔal ck'aqid. huy, ʔuyayus ti Woodland Park Zoo ʔəsq'ʊ? ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' dx'ʔal k'i tʊbəshəli?tx's ti swatix'təd ʔi ti bək' ʔucətdalb ʔal ti swatix'təd, ʔal ti q'ʊ? ʔi ti x'əlč, ʔal ti šqulg'ədx'. ti Woodland Park Zoo g'əl ʔabyid ti tatačulbix' ʔi ti titčulbix' ʔə k'i shəli? ʔəsxaχtub ʔə ti Woodland Park Zoo g'əpa?cutəs k'i bək' g'at dx'ʔal k'i sk'ax'ads tiʔə? qič syayus.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all the Woodland Park Zoo employees who took the time to share their personal lived experiences through one-on-one conversations, surveys, focus groups and meetings. Thank you to all the individuals and groups that have worked tirelessly to advocate and organize for the zoo to become an antiracist organization, lead with DEAI, support staff wellbeing, be collaborative, and do better.



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Woodland Park Zoo DEAI Plan Executive Summary

2024-2029 DEAI Implementation Focus

Woodland Park Zoo (WPZ) believes all people should have safe access to the zoo and culturally affirming and responsive experiences with our staff, programs and curriculum. WPZ strives to create an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members feel represented and valued for their identities and lived experiences. We examine how power, bias, race, and other aspects of identity impact our organization. We work to build a culture of continuous learning and improvement toward a vision of equity and belonging for all staff,

volunteers, and audiences. In doing so, we are committed to acting and taking responsibility for creating a responsive organization that learns from our failures and is held accountable to do better.

WPZ's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Plan was informed and developed with our Woodland Park employee community, staff Diversity & Inclusion Council, employee resource groups, independent consultant reporting, feedback sessions, and DEAI-focused programs and roles. For the next five years, the plan includes details

on the planning process, DEAI Framework, history and context of the plan, goals, implementation plan, and attachment and key terms. WPZ's staff will be involved in various ways, including learning and development, reporting, work groups, evaluation, implementation, continuous improvement, and feedback.

The implementation of this DEAI Plan aligns with WPZ's vision, mission, and values and is consistent with the direction of moving toward being the zoo of the future.



DEAI High-level Goals

1. Staff and volunteers impacted, especially those from over-excluded populations, trust leadership to represent and be responsive to their perspectives and needs and hold themselves and others accountable to DEAI goals.
2. Woodland Park Zoo utilizes data to establish and maintain an organizational culture wherein staff and volunteers prioritize transparency, accountability, employee wellbeing, antiracism, and DEAI in organizational norms, policies and practices.

Plan Areas: People, Practices, & Places

Woodland Park Zoo uses a framework divided into three focus areas, people, practices, and places, directly connected with our strategic plan.

WPZ DEAI Plan Areas

PEOPLE	PRACTICES	PLACES
We will invest in long-term DEAI support, education, learning and development tools for all staff. This includes leading with wellbeing practices, building culture, and improving social dynamics and relationships among staff, volunteers, guests, and partners.	We will implement better ways to collect data to help us track our progress toward our DEAI goals while avoiding any negative impact on affected groups. DEAI will be fully integrated into all aspects of our people, culture and organizational practices.	We will invest in physical infrastructure and technology that prioritize universal design and accessibility, promoting equity and addressing the DEAI needs of people. We will also continuously improve and expand how people experience zoo spaces.

Focused Work

Woodland Park has developed two high-level goals to focus our DEAI culture change and progress as an organization, which centers on people, practices, and places. We have outlined key DEAI target outcomes for movement within each of these areas.

DEAI objective areas include:

1. Assessment & Evaluation
2. Learning, Development and Understanding
3. Improvement of Business Practices
4. Improvement for Over-excluded/Marginalized Groups
5. Improvement of Wellbeing
6. Increased External Connections
7. Improvement of Built and Virtual Environments



We work to build a culture of continuous learning and improvement toward a vision of equity and belonging for all staff, volunteers, and audiences. In doing so, we are committed to acting and taking responsibility for creating a responsive organization that learns from our failures and is held accountable to do better.

Letter from the CEO

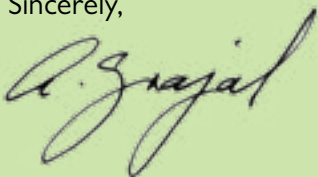
As the President and Chief Executive Officer and a conservation and zoological professional, I am honored to present our inaugural Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) Plan. This Plan was developed in partnership with zoo staff, board members and volunteers. It takes shape through the efforts of diverse voices that make our organization what it is, from folks working directly with animals, to visitors and volunteers who give tirelessly to a great conservation purpose.

Our DEAI Plan aims to accomplish the following:

- Considers our future and our responsibility to environmental and social justice.
- Acknowledges the history of colonization in society and our field.
- Acknowledges effects of systemic oppression and racism embedded in our world, community, and organization.
- Strives to achieve long-term improvements for wildlife and their habitats.
- Measures the impacts and experiences to ensure that we measure progress and hold ourselves accountable.
- Recognizes that success will require our collective commitment to examining our practices, places, and people.

I recognize this is an ongoing journey. Our DEAI Plan acts as a strategy to inform and guide our efforts. It also defines actions that directs our zoo community to act and do better. I hope you find this plan inspiring. This also represents my personal commitment to support and drive DEAI efforts at Woodland Park Zoo as we push ourselves and our conservation work forward.

Sincerely,



Alejandro Grajal (he, him, his)
Woodland Park Zoo President and CEO



DEAI at WPZ

About Woodland Park Zoo

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo has sparked delight, discovery, and unforgettable memories for generations of Northwest families. People who experience the wonders of the natural world are inspired to protect it. That's why every year, we lead more than 1 million people on a journey that inspires a lifelong love of animals, makes science come alive, and gives people the tools to take conservation action.

VISION

Woodland Park Zoo envisions a world where everyone lives sustainably with wildlife and their habitats.

MISSION

Woodland Park Zoo saves wildlife and inspires everyone to make conservation a priority in their lives.



VALUES

TRUST

We commit all our actions to scientific principles, transparency, honesty, and sound financial stewardship.

INCLUSION

We value and welcome visitors, partners, staff, and volunteers from all backgrounds, cultures, abilities, and perspectives. We commit to identifying, embracing, listening to, and collaborating with diverse voices, individuals, and communities.

CARE

We treat each other, all members of our community, our employees and volunteers, and all animals in our care with the highest level of compassion and respect.

TRANSFORMATION

We are a learning organization driven toward creative approaches, innovative thinking, and transformative solutions.

COLLABORATION

We encourage cooperation, teamwork, and partnership, recognizing individual and collective contributions to wildlife conservation.

HOPE

We approach complex problems with a spirit of hope and possibility, and we share that spirit with our visitors and community members.

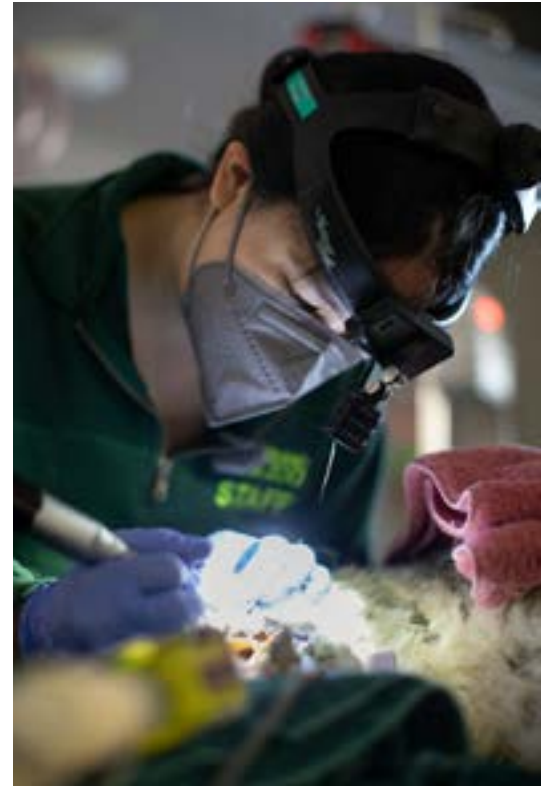
WPZ believes everyone should have safe access to the zoo and culturally affirming and responsive experiences with our staff, programs, and curriculum. WPZ strives to create an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members feel represented and valued for their identities and lived experiences. We examine how power, bias, race, and other aspects of identity impact our organization. We work to build a culture of continuous learning and improvement toward a vision of equity and belonging for all staff, volunteers, and audiences. In doing so, we are committed to acting and taking responsibility for creating a responsive organization that learns from our failures but is held accountable to do better.

WPZ's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

WPZ believes everyone should have safe access to the zoo and culturally affirming and responsive experiences with our staff, programs, and curriculum.

(DEAI) Plan was informed and developed with our Woodland Park employee community, staff Diversity & Inclusion Council, employee resources groups, Soul Light Collaborative independent consultant reporting, feedback sessions, and DEAI-focused programs and roles. The plan includes details on the planning process, DEAI Framework, history and context of the plan, goals, implementation plan for the following five years, and attachments and key terms. WPZ's staff will be involved in various ways, including learning and development, reporting, work groups, evaluation, implementation, continuous improvement, and feedback.

Implementing this DEAI Plan aligns with WPZ's vision, mission, and values and is consistently evolving to be a DEAI-centered zoo.





DEAI History and Background

Zoos have struggled to acknowledge their shortcomings in achieving equity and inclusivity throughout history. Our efforts to preserve wildlife and their habitats are closely tied to addressing environmental and social justice issues. To make progress, it is important to acknowledge the past of our industry and the impact of our current systems and cultures. We must recognize the long-lasting effects of colonialism and white supremacy culture on conservation and the zoo and aquarium industry. We also acknowledge that systemic racism is present in

our structures, culture, and organizations, and we are dedicated to making positive and lasting changes that break down these barriers.

Woodland Park Zoo has a history of community and employees asking and working to push our organization to embed more equitable practices that help move forward DEAI efforts. This has taken shape over time through individual and collective efforts such as building relationships with Tribal partners, enacting public benefits resources in partnership with the City of Seattle,

implementing the Empathy Initiative, guest inclusion, accessibility assessments and implementation efforts, the diversity and inclusion council, advocacy for representation, DEAI-related education, and advocacy.

In 2021, WPZ increased formalized efforts to enhance DEAI through the implementation and support of the staff Diversity & Inclusion Council, Board DEAI Task Force, and the implementation of a DEAI Advisor role. In 2022, to help make the DEAI vision a reality, WPZ engaged an outside consultant to review the zoo's existing and previous DEAI recommendations and activities and to facilitate a reflective inquiry process to engage internal parties involved in informing an action plan with a specific focus on diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in the workplace. The consultant identified trends and findings at the zoo and provided a set of recommended strategies to put in place to support the successful implementation of the DEAI action plan.

Through this time, the zoo experienced significant changes in staffing, which included the DEAI Advisor and key leadership roles in the organization. DEAI recommendations began to make small strides forward with the support of key zoo collaborators, Learning & Innovation, and a new Chief People & Culture Officer. Actions were drafted, and following recommendations, WPZ began targeted efforts with managers and created a new zoo-wide Director of DEAI role. Meanwhile, a new People & Culture team began employee listening sessions to help inform, update, and develop new practices, procedures, and resources to support greater DEAI efforts.

Parties Involved

All members of our zoo team are responsible for our DEAI Plan. We are all committed to ensuring that every aspect of our organization embeds DEAI practices into our work and engagement with visitors, volunteers, staff, and the zoo community. All of us at Woodland Park Zoo are expected to recognize the importance of DEAI and act on our DEAI work. Some groups may have targeted engagement in our outreach as we operationalize our efforts and better understand the impact our efforts have on groups that are over-excluded or most harmed by oppression. In the first few years of this plan, this work will continue to be outlined and clarified to understand engagement and role clarity. Additionally, operationalizing our plan will happen in collaboration with departments and teams based on the work outlined in our objectives.



DEAI Plan Foundations

The zoo has a priority in implementing a plan and strategy that will foster long-lasting cultural change and transformation. A foundation of this is naming and recognizing what DEAI means to us as Woodland Park Zoo and understanding our greater impact as a conservation organization in the United States.

WPZ recognizes that:

- Zoos and aquariums were built on the beliefs and practices of white dominant culture, colonialism, and imperialism. We are committed to prioritizing environmental, racial, and social justice in our work and strive for a more equitable and inclusive future.
- Systemic racism and oppression are deeply rooted in our structures, culture, and organizations. We are committed to breaking down these barriers and working alongside BIPOC and minoritized communities to develop anti-racist and equitable ways of being and existing.
- Indigenous communities have been harmed in the name of conservation. Indigenous knowledge has been passed down through generations and continues to be dynamic. It is the knowledge that refers to observations, traditions, innovations, practices, and customs that include a holistic relationship between community and environment. We commit to recognizing and respecting Indigenous knowledge as science.



DEAI Vision

Woodland Park Zoo aims to create an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members feel represented and valued for their identities and lived experiences. We examine how power, bias, race, and other aspects of identity impact our organization. We work to build a culture of continuous learning and improvement toward a vision of equity and belonging for all staff, volunteers, and audiences. All people should have safe access to the zoo and culturally affirming and responsive experiences with our staff, programs, and curriculum.

We have added an internal commitment to antiracism and wellbeing as these elements are foundational to how DEAI works at WPZ. Leading with antiracism is essential because systemic racism is a pervasive problem that affects individuals and communities across the globe. By acknowledging and addressing this issue, we can work towards creating a more just and equitable world where everyone can thrive. This means understanding and explaining how race overlaid with oppression has implications for long-term impacts on community, society, and ecosystems. By leading with antiracism and racial equity, we center on communities most impacted and work in partnership to change and build better futures as our lives are interconnected.

DEAI work can be taxing emotionally, mentally, and physically. As we weave DEAI efforts into every aspect of our pre-existing workload, which already carries its own stress level, we acknowledge additional support is needed to enable all staff to remain well and resilient. The zoo aims to provide extra support by caring for our employees' holistic wellbeing through initiatives and work we do as an organization.

ANTIRACISM COMMITMENT

WPZ is committed to being an anti-racist organization centering on the experiences of people and groups most impacted by oppression, advancing racial equity, and developing equitable policies, practices, programs, and ways of being.

WELLBEING COMMITMENT

WPZ is committed to increasing employee wellbeing as an aspect of DEAI, focusing on reducing organizational barriers to wellbeing and providing grief support, wellness coaching, training, and programs for improved wellbeing.



What Does DEAI Mean for WPZ?

As an organization, it is crucial for us to communicate what DEAI means to us. This helps our zoo, partners, staff, visitors, and community understand and work towards our goals. However, we also recognize that these definitions are not set in stone, and there is still much more work to be done. We must remain open to new ideas and perspectives as we strive to improve and do better.

DIVERSITY

Workforce Diversity is the workforce composition that all impacted people, especially underserved and marginalized populations, trust to be representative and accountable. Diversity is achieved through actions that explicitly counter present-day and historical inequities and meet the unique needs of people.

- *We ensure our workforce, community partnerships, and alliances always reflect the diverse communities we serve.*

Guest & Community Diversity – WPZ prioritizes the diversity of our guests and community and strives to ensure everyone feels represented and has a sense of belonging. We understand that certain groups, mainly those over-excluded and marginalized, may require special attention and accommodation to ensure they have a positive experience.

- *To achieve this, we take deliberate actions to counter present-day and historical inequities and address the unique needs of all populations. We believe that fostering an inclusive environment is the right thing to do and enriches the overall experience for all our guests and community.*

EQUITY

Equity is the measured experience of individual, interpersonal, and organizational success and wellbeing across all populations and the absence of discrimination, mistreatment, or abuse for all. Equity is achieved by eliminating structural barriers resulting from historical and present-day inequities and meeting individuals' groups and organizations' unique needs.

- *We reduce economic, cultural, ability, and geographic barriers to engaging in conservation action.*

We also recognize that these definitions are not set in stone, and there is still much more work to be done. We must remain open to new ideas and perspectives as we strive to improve and do better.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is the achievement of our organizational culture and built environment to be free from structural (including technological) barriers to participation and full engagement for all impacted groups, especially people with disabilities. Disability is an aspect of human diversity, and we value the perspective and voice of people with disabilities.

- *We maintain the zoo as an urban oasis and a safe place for communities, particularly those that have been historically over-excluded and marginalized, while providing introspection, fun, respite, and inspirational encounters with the natural world.*
- *We inspire wonder, curiosity, and a sense of possibility in people of every age and from every background, which can spark a deeper sense of understanding, empathy, and engagement that leads everyone to develop a commitment to conservation.*

INCLUSION

Inclusion is achieving an environment that all individuals impacted, especially underserved and marginalized populations, trust to be respectful and accountable. Inclusion is achieved through actions that explicitly counter present-day and historical inequities that meet the unique needs of all people.

- *We make our zoo a place of inclusion where people of all backgrounds and abilities feel a welcoming sense of belonging and inspiration.*
- *We engage and listen to over-excluded and underserved communities to design programs that bring equitable and just environmental solutions.*



Evolving With DEAI

To evolve and make positive changes, we believe it is essential to define our goal of becoming a “zoo of the future.” For Woodland Park Zoo, this means being an organization that is dedicated to conservation, protecting wildlife and wild places, and incorporating environmental and social justice into our work. As we strive towards a better future, it’s important to acknowledge the historical impact of colonization in our society and our field. This means recognizing our responsibility to contribute to greater social change and to consider the impact of systemic oppression and racism that are deeply ingrained in our systems, structures, and cultures on all levels. We must also move beyond recognition and act. Just like we work to be leading efforts for wildlife conservation, we must also act to account for impacts on people. Overall, we must do more to address the growing threats to our planet and its inhabitants.

We are part of a conservation movement applying DEAI for long-term ecosystem and wildlife resilience. This requires us to consider the impacts and experiences of those who have been over-excluded and ensure that the voices and experiences of these communities are central. This means acknowledging and addressing racial equity and its intersection with all forms of oppression. It is crucial in conservation because it ensures all communities have equal access to and ownership of natural resources. Otherwise, we will continue to see marginalized communities suffering disproportionately from environmental degradation and climate change, leading to further economic and social inequalities. By prioritizing a racial equity lens to the experience of marginalized communities, we can work towards a more just and sustainable future for everyone. DEAI is critical for the zoo as an organization contributing to greater efforts of a global community. We must embed ourselves as part of bigger systems of change to achieve our goals.

Our mission to save wildlife and inspire everyone to make conservation a priority in their lives requires us to build upon our record of innovation and leadership and embrace a rapid metamorphosis of our internal mindset. As part of our zoo’s transformation to an anti-racist organization, we are taking proactive measures to share our learnings, mistakes, advancements, and growth.

By prioritizing a racial equity lens to the experience of marginalized communities, we can work towards a more just and sustainable future for everyone.



DEAI Framework

The zoo has established a framework to reinforce our commitment to DEAI and is intentional about connecting with multiple aspects of organizational change. It is dependent on building trust and is reliant on the zoo creating a trauma informed and psychologically safe environment where all members can feel they are able to participate and share their perspectives honestly and without fear of reprisal.

Overarching Goals

The following high-level goals highlight the areas in which we intend to progress while implementing this DEAI Plan. We know that there are many areas to make progress as an organization, and we must be intentional about moving our efforts forward with a strategy that will not try to do everything at once. To this end, the following goals will help guide our efforts during the longevity of this plan.

GOAL 1:

Staff and volunteers impacted, especially those from over-excluded populations, trust leadership to represent and be responsive to their perspectives and needs and hold themselves and others accountable to DEAI goals.

GOAL 2:

Woodland Park Zoo uses data to establish and maintain an organizational culture wherein staff and volunteers prioritize transparency, accountability, employee wellbeing, and DEAI in organizational norms, policies, and practices.

These two high-level goals will guide our efforts and aid in holding us accountable as an organization to determine if progress is being made as intended. The following section on outcomes dives more into details of what is expected during the duration of this plan.





DEAI Framework Areas: People, Practices and Places

Woodland Park is dedicated to fostering a culture of inclusion where everyone feels seen, heard, and respected. We have developed high-level DEAI goals at the forefront of our mission so that we intentionally foster meaningful culture change. This type of DEAI cultural transformation

focuses on People, Practices and Places. These areas come from research-based culture change work by José Causadias (2020),¹ which defines these three areas as the following:

PEOPLE – population dynamics, social relations, and culture in groups

PRACTICES – participatory dynamics, community engagement, and culture in action

PLACES – environmental dynamics, institutional influences, culture in contexts

People, practices, and places are interconnected in changing culture and highlight the interdependency of these aspects upon each other and upon systems to operate as a whole. To evolve and change as an organization, we must operate as a collective to overcome how racism and oppression operate by looking at parts of systems in addition to how types of power operate within these structures.

To drive culture change within our organization and leverage people, practices, and places to guide our efforts, WPZ is prioritizing the needs of our internal staff in this initial plan. Staff have undergone significant changes and disruptions in the

past few years. The feedback they have shared speaks to a critical need for support and focus. Their voices and their significance to WPZ highlight the importance of investing in and caring for our people so that they thrive and be well-equipped as the front-line folks helping carry out our greater mission and work. Staff impact our greater work through leading our people, practices, and place work and are the ones that influence and guide us as an organization, volunteer engagement, partners, and guests.

Regarding work for the zoo, these three focuses include the following named goals.



¹ Causadias, José. (2020). What is culture? Systems of people, places, and practices. *Applied Developmental Science*. 24. 310-322. 10.1080/10888691.2020.1789360.

PEOPLE

We will invest in long-term DEAI support, education, learning and development tools for all staff. This includes leading with wellbeing practices, building culture, and improving social dynamics and relationships among staff, volunteers, guests, and partners.

PRACTICES

We will implement better ways to collect data to help us track our progress toward our DEAI goals while avoiding any negative impact on affected groups. DEAI will be fully integrated into all aspects of our people, culture and organizational practices.

PLACES

We will invest in physical infrastructure and technology that prioritize universal design and accessibility, promoting equity and addressing the DEAI needs of people. We will also continuously improve and expand how people experience zoo spaces.

Identifying culture change areas of people, practices, and places allows us to have a targeted and intentional process for our DEAI Plan. This also allows us to connect targeted outcomes and reporting to measure and show how progress is made.

Objectives

Woodland Park Zoo must reflect the communities we serve and must practice DEAI from our role as a conservation organization, supporting ecosystems for communities to thrive. This means we are representative of our greater Puget Sound Community and able to provide an international perspective to contribute towards our mission and conservation efforts. The zoo aspires to be a model organization living its values, fostering trust, and belonging, and taking action to advance DEAI. Therefore, the outcomes and objectives that guide our DEAI must be transparent, actionable, and measurable to show we are doing what we pledge. The following objectives and metrics have been developed as a starting point for the initial work of this plan for the next five years.



DEAI Objectives

The following DEAI objectives have been outlined in the plan, and each will include additional focused tasks to support carrying out our DEAI Vision and work.

OBJECTIVE I — Assessment and Evaluation

Develop and implement a comprehensive DEAI assessment, evaluation, and monitoring framework that articulates goals, identifies effective indicators and metrics for measurement, and sets time-bound benchmarks for monitoring progress.

PRACTICES	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact	
	I.1	Contract and collaborate with a third-party external evaluator to design an evaluation plan for Woodland Park Zoo DEAI action plan implementation and next steps.	Q4 2023 – Q2 2024	Ensure the DEAI is being implemented and intended outcomes are being met through a transparent evaluation tool by an impartial third party.
	I.2	Identify appropriate indicators for the DEAI implementation effectiveness for zoo-affiliated parties and impacted groups.	Q1 -Q2 2024	Use DEAI indicators to measure and improve belonging, wellbeing, zoo culture, psychological safety, antiracist and equity practices in all we do.
	I.3	Track, evaluate, and communicate the individual DEAI performance goals and results for all individuals at the zoo.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Implement tracking, reporting and evaluation of DEAI information sharing to be transparent about objectives and progress. Information is acted upon at all levels of the organization.
	I.4	Develop and utilize a decision-making framework to improve Executive Leadership level accountability and oversight that ensures DEAI outcomes are prioritized during decision-making and investments.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Use DEAI data in decision-making, in determining equity-centered priorities and actions, and in choosing zoo investments.
	I.5	Engage zoo-affiliated and impacted parties in regular data discussion, reflection, and revision cycles, gathering valuable insights to understand progress and recommend improvements to DEAI efforts.	Q3 2024 Ongoing Annually	Share and communicate DEAI progress by being transparent with data and insights. DEAI data is incorporated into zoo action planning.

OBJECTIVE 2 — Learning, Development, and Understanding

Improve zoo-affiliated internal parties involved in understanding the zoo’s DEAI action plan and how these actions eliminate barriers to equity.

	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact
PEOPLE	2.1 Provide education and training to all zoo-affiliated and impacted parties to ensure common understanding and commitment to the zoo’s DEAI mission and philosophy (training may look different for different groups involved).	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Zoo staff are able to change attitudes about how power, bias, race, and other aspects of identity impact our organization. Knowledge is used by zoo managers and staff to address systemic barriers and implement actions for change. Behaviors, change, and impact are measured and acted upon.
PRACTICES	2.2 Develop and implement an internal communications strategy centered on the zoo’s DEAI action plan.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Use clear and consistent communication methods to foster transparency and sharing of DEAI information with zoo representatives.



OBJECTIVE 3 — Improve Business Practices

Reduce structural barriers to equity within key business practices, focusing on human resources policies, procedures, and practices.

	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact
PRACTICES	3.1 Adopt a racial equity toolkit to review, analyze, and revise key internal policies, infrastructures, spaces, and systems to eliminate structural barriers to equity.	Q1 2024 – Q3 2024	No one experiences structural racism or oppression. Structural barriers are identified in internal policies, processes, and practices and changes in these are reported as antiracist considerations and tools. Action is taken where barriers are identified.
	3.2 Implement revised recruiting goals and strategies for zoo-affiliated and impacted groups.	Q2 2024- Ongoing	Positive changes in representation and recruiting for marginalized and over-excluded groups.
	3.3 Embed and maintain DEAI as a core goal for zoo strategic priorities, annual performance management, employee recognition, budgeting, and compensation.	Q1 2024 - Ongoing	The zoo’s priorities, processes, recognition, budget, and finance embed DEAI in all considerations.
	3.4 Analyze and compare the current zoo organizational structure and staffing model to the present and future operating plan for zoo staff needs (including succession planning and knowledge transfer/retention).	Q1 2025 – Q4 2025	Positive changes in representation and recruiting for marginalized and over-excluded groups.
	3.5 Analyze, compare, and increase zoo DEAI financial investments and budgetary spending on overall spending, supplier diversity, and department budget breakdowns.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Zoo finance and budgetary considerations reflect DEAI values and are representative in spending, allocation, and supplier selection.
	3.6 Cultivate recruitment pathways to ensure diverse involvement in zoo roles, leadership, management, and board positions.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Levels of representation for marginalized and over-excluded groups are accountable at leadership, board, and all levels of the organization and have an equitable experience.
	3.7 Implement strategies to inform and improve visitor engagements, programs, and practices by collaborating with diverse community groups.	Q1 2026 – Ongoing	Co-create zoo experiences with marginalized and over-excluded communities to provide voices for conservation for these groups.

OBJECTIVE 4 — Improvements for Over-excluded / Marginalized Groups

Improve the degree to which zoo-affiliated and impacted parties are involved, especially staff who identify as members of marginalized communities, experience a sense of belonging at work.

	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impacts
PEOPLE	4.1 Launch and support Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to create spaces for staff members with shared identities to build community and support the zoo’s DEAI work.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Staff from marginalized and over-excluded groups report positive changes in their experience in the zoo community.
	4.2 Integrate relationship and community building into staff onboarding activities.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Staff report a positive experience in their sense of belonging and connection within the zoo community.
	4.3 Develop and implement a process for gathering feedback and insights from zoo-affiliated and impacted parties about how they experience belonging at the zoo.	Q1 & Q3 2024 – Ongoing	Staff report positive experiences that build a sense of belonging and connection within the zoo community.



OBJECTIVE 5 — Improve Wellbeing

Demonstrate measurable improvement across meaningful wellbeing indicators for zoo-affiliated and impacted groups.

	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact
PEOPLE	5.1 Hire an Onsite Wellbeing Support Coach to provide organization-level and individualized support to staff to foster wellbeing.	Q2 2024	Foster a culture of support for staff and measure positive changes in their wellbeing, allowing them to grow both personally and professionally.
	5.2 Identify meaningful indicators of wellbeing and psychological safety.	Q2 – Q3 2024	Use DEAI indicators to improve belonging, wellbeing, zoo culture, psychological safety and antiracist and equity practices in all we do.
PRACTICES	5.3 Based on the development of indicators, develop, and implement a plan to improve employee wellbeing and psychological safety and track progress to inform adaptive management/data-informed decisions.	Q1 & Q3 2025 – Ongoing	Apply DEAI data to improve belonging, wellbeing, zoo culture, psychological safety, and antiracist and equity practices in all decision-making.
PEOPLE	5.4 Provide leaders and managers with training on prioritizing work effectively and set reasonable workloads and performance expectations for staff.	Q1 2024 – Ongoing	Foster a culture of support for staff and measure positive changes in their wellbeing, allowing them to grow both personally and professionally.
	5.5 Develop and implement an employee recognition program that supports a zoo-wide culture of gratitude and appreciation that contributes to employee wellbeing.	Q1 2024 - Ongoing	Zoo staff experience and report improvement in their a sense of belonging, gratitude, and appreciation.

OBJECTIVE 6 — Increase External Connections

Develop and implement an external strategy for advancing DEAI and sharing information about DEAI progress and insights.

PRACTICES	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact
6.1	Applicable zoo staff participate in conferences and other forums with peer organizations to share learnings from others about DEAI.	Q1 2024 - Ongoing	Zoo staff further DEAI efforts beyond the zoo.
6.2	Develop and implement DEAI efforts to external work with community, partners, and engagement.	Q1 2024 - Ongoing	Zoo staff further DEAI efforts beyond the zoo.



OBJECTIVE 7 — Improve Built and Virtual Environments

Develop and implement zoo space inventory and the timeline for built and virtual environments and related support updates that center on DEAL.

PLACES	Activities	Timeline	Intended Impact
	7.1 Develop and implement accessibility and representation in zoo wayfinding, signage, imagery, and language options throughout the built environments.	QI 2024 - Ongoing	Our zoo identifies structural and technological barriers to participation and full engagement from people with disabilities, minoritized and over-excluded groups and measures improvement in overcoming these barriers.
	7.2 Develop and implement strategies to improve technology and virtual/mobile resources to meet accessibility, accommodations, multi-lingual, ease of use, and the diverse needs of staff, visitors, and volunteers.	QI 2024 - Ongoing	Our zoo identifies structural and technological barriers to participation and full engagement from people with disabilities, minoritized and over-excluded groups and measures improvement in overcoming these barriers.
	7.3 Develop and implement a strategy to update the built environment to improve accessibility of space, restrooms, etc. to meet multi-generational and multiple mobility needs, support multi-faith needs, and diverse accommodations	QI 2024- Ongoing	Our zoo identifies structural and technological barriers to participation and full engagement from people with disabilities, minoritized and over-excluded groups and measures improvement in overcoming these barriers.

A list of additional suggested and optional tactics can be viewed in the appendix and references, entitled “Additional tactics.”

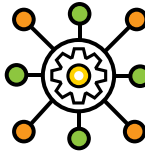
Operating Principles for Implementation

The DEAI Plan applies six operating principles to move DEAI efforts forward. Accountability and Action, Belonging and Connection, Clear and Consistent Communication, Data and Metrics, Learning and Personal Development, and Practices and Tools. These intentionally focus on areas throughout the implementation of the DEAI Plan, practices, programs, projects, policies, and overall implementation.



ACCOUNTABILITY & ACTION

Processes for accountability and action should have clear strategies to show progress and connect to the WPZ vision of the zoo of the future.



DATA & METRICS

DEAI efforts will have clear outcomes that can be measured via qualitative or quantitative data to show progress.



BELONGING & CONNECTION

DEAI efforts will intentionally apply strategies to foster workforce and community belonging and connections to center on relational culture.



LEARNING & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEAI learning and personal development will evolve and include consistent foundations and expand based on lived experiences, roles, and society.



CLEAR & CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

Communication efforts will implement clear and consistent cadences for messaging and updates via multiple methods for accessibility.



PRACTICES & TOOLS

Practices and tools will be developed and implemented to align with our commitments to conservation, environmental justice, DEAI, and antiracism.

These operating principles are guidelines that, in addition to our commitments to leading with antiracism and incorporating wellbeing, will guide our behavior and decision-making. By documenting these operating principles, we are explicitly stating our expectations for accountability.

Accountability

Accountability is crucial to achieving results through our DEAI plan. DEAI is a critical aspect of our operations that impacts our employees, visitors, volunteers, partners, and connected parties. Our DEAI Plan includes overarching commitments, operating principles, specific goals, and metrics that we use to measure progress and hold ourselves accountable and commit to measuring and reporting progress.

Annual Reporting and Updates

ACTION	GROUP(S)
Develop and share individual performance management DEAI goals.	All Employees
Develop annual DEAI plan specific to work and teams around DEAI Plan Objective areas.	Departments/Teams Senior Leadership Zoo Board
List annual DEAI efforts, racial equity toolkit/equity analysis application, and report on progress and learnings.	Departments/Teams Senior Leadership DEAI Councils & Committees Zoo Board
Compile and share annual zoowide DEAI updates and reports.	DEAI Director
Provide regular reporting on zoowide supplier (Women and Minority Owned Businesses) diversity.	Departments Budget & Finance
Provide regular reporting on budgeting and time toward DEAI efforts.	Departments
Provide regular reporting on diversity and demographic representation of partners, guests, volunteers, employees, interns, board members, and groups interacting with the zoo.	Departments/Teams Zoo Board

The above areas for annual reporting should be considered starting places for reporting and tracking progress. The zoo will regularly review and assess our progress toward these goals and look for opportunities to improve and do better. By being transparent and open about our DEAI efforts, we can hold ourselves accountable and inspire others to do the same.

Plan Evaluation

Our DEAI Plan design and evaluation implementation focus on outcomes rather than activities and outputs. As an example, our approach is designed to move beyond delivering training to assessing the efficacy of the training in producing the desired outcome. To accomplish this, the zoo, in collaboration with external expertise, will establish new measurement processes and reporting infrastructure that support short-term iterative improvements and evaluation of our longer-term diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion outcomes. The evaluation of this work will also be grounded in equitable and culturally responsive evaluation principles, ensuring that measurement and learning are also responsive to DEAI. Key aspects of the evaluation include:

Establish a framework, reporting structure, and reflective process for measuring, evaluating, and tracking progress towards DEAI outcomes: We plan to leverage internal and external evaluation expertise to identify key metrics and

progress indicators of our DEAI outcomes. Implementing regular feedback loops that allow for data-informed decision-making and critical reflection on progress and challenges will drive timely improvements. This structure will also promote accountability and internal support for this work.

Leverage both quantitative and qualitative monitoring and evaluation to track progress towards DEAI outcomes: Quantifiable metrics can tell some of the story of our DEAI initiatives and are often leading indicators of progress towards diversity and larger outcome goals. Qualitative data, however, is essential when examining equity and inclusion, as these are grounded more in the experiences and climate of our workplace. Because external evaluation can bring and be perceived by staff to have a less biased lens when evaluating DEAI and organizational change efforts more broadly, they will lead to qualitative evaluation and data collection.



Measure at the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels: In line with our definition of equity, we will develop measurement and data collection strategies across the different levels of this work. Evaluation of the effectiveness of our people-focused strategies will drive learning at the individual and interpersonal levels. At the organizational level, we will evaluate the extent of change in zoo policies and practice and their subsequent influence on DEAI outcomes. Quantitative and qualitative measurement and data collection strategies will likely include questionnaires, focus groups, program and document analysis, and metric monitoring.

Communication and transparency: Communicating results is integral to accountability. We will share results with staff throughout the learning process and communicate findings in different formats to reach all audiences.

Ultimately, we know that our success is measured not only by our financial performance but also by our ability to positively impact people and society. This DEAI Plan alone will not change reality overnight. Our staff is proud of our progress so far, and we recognize that there is always more work to be done to make a more profound impact. We are committed to creating a more diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive workplace and society.

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Next Steps

Woodland Park Zoo's next steps for implementing the DEAI Plan involve investing in comprehensive education, learning, and development tools for all staff, collecting data to track their progress towards our goals, and promoting equity by investing in physical infrastructure and technology that prioritize universal design and accessibility. We have also developed two high-level goals focusing on people, practices, and places and

have outlined key DEAI target outcomes for movement within each area. The staff will be involved in various ways, including learning and development, reporting, work groups, evaluation, implementation, continuous improvement, and feedback. Overall, the zoo is committed to creating an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members feel represented and valued for their identities and lived experiences.

Appendix and References

APPENDIX I: DEAI Key Terms

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of terms and is a dynamic list that will be updated continuously as our work is ever evolving.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is all the ways that individuals are different and includes the characteristics that make individuals and groups distinct from one another. Even when individuals appear the same, they are different.

Adapted from: [UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity](#) and [Definitions of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion – American Alliance of Museums \(aam-us.org\)](#)

What does this mean for WPZ? **WORKFORCE**

Diversity is the workforce composition that all impacted groups, especially over-excluded and marginalized populations, trust to be representative and accountable. Diversity is achieved through actions that explicitly counter present-day and historical inequities and meet the unique needs of all populations.

We ensure our workforce, community partnerships, and alliances always reflect the diverse communities we serve.

GUESTS & COMMUNITY

WPZ prioritizes the diversity of our guests and community and strives to ensure everyone feels represented and has a sense of belonging. We understand that certain groups, particularly those over-excluded and marginalized, may require special attention and accommodations to ensure their positive experience.

To achieve this, we take deliberate actions to counter present-day and historical inequities and address the unique needs of all populations. We believe that fostering an inclusive environment is the right thing to do and enriches the overall experience for our guests and community.



EQUITY

Equity guarantees all individuals fair treatment, advancement, opportunity, and access. This means striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups and ensuring that all community members have access to community conditions and opportunities to reach their full potential and experience optimal wellbeing and quality of life.

Source: icma.org

What does this mean for WPZ? Equity is the measured experience of individual, interpersonal, and organizational success and wellbeing across all populations and the absence of discrimination, mistreatment, or abuse for all. Equity is achieved by eliminating structural barriers resulting from historical and present-day inequities and meeting impacted groups and organizations' unique needs.

We reduce economic, cultural, ability, and geographic barriers to engaging in conservation action.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for each person's characteristics.

Source: [Definitions of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion – American Alliance of Museums \(aam-us.org\)](http://Definitions of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion – American Alliance of Museums (aam-us.org))

What does this mean for WPZ? Accessibility is the achievement of our organizational culture and built environment to be free from structural (including technological) barriers to participation and full engagement for all impacted groups, especially people with disabilities. Disability is an aspect of human diversity, and we value the perspective and voice of people with disabilities.

We maintain the zoo as an urban oasis and a safe place for communities, particularly those that have been historically marginalized, while providing introspection, fun, respite, and inspirational encounters with the natural world.

We inspire wonder, curiosity, and a sense of possibility in people of every age and from every background, which can spark a deeper sense of understanding, empathy, and engagement that leads everyone to develop a commitment to conservation.



INCLUSION

Involvement and empowerment, where all people's inherent worth and dignity are recognized. An inclusive organization promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for its members' talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living.

Source: [Racial Equity Tools](#)

What does this mean for WPZ? Inclusion is achieving an environment that all impacted individuals, especially over-excluded and marginalized populations, trust to be respectful and accountable. Inclusion is achieved through actions that explicitly counter present-day and historical inequities that meet the unique needs of all people.

We make our zoo a place of inclusion where people of all backgrounds and abilities feel a welcoming sense of belonging and inspiration.

We engage and listen to over-excluded and marginalized communities to design programs that bring equitable and just environmental solutions.



Accountability – Accountability is a keystone of racial equity work. Accountability, as used in our DEAI work, refers to creating processes and systems designed to help individuals and groups be held in check for their decisions and actions and determine whether the work being done reflects and embodies racial justice principles.

Source: [Racial Equity Tools, Accountability](#)

Anti-racism – Anti-racism is the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized way to combat racism and is set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Source: [Race Forward, "Race Reporting Guide" \(2015\)](#)

Anti-racist organization – An anti-racist organization comprises INDIVIDUAL team members whose collective beliefs, mindsets,

knowledge, skills, and actions are coupled with the ORGANIZATION'S culture, policies and practices, which are all aligned to liberated principles.

Source: [The Rise Center for Liberation and Philanos Continuum on Becoming an Anti-racist Multicultural Organization](#)

Belonging – A sense of belonging is a feeling of being happy or comfortable as part of a particular group and having a good relationship with the other members of the group. It is a human emotional need to affiliate with and be accepted by members of a group. A sense of belonging can be influenced by various factors, such as peer pressure, family, culture, religion, or shared interests.

Source: [BELONGING | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary and A Sense of Belonging: What It Is and How to Feel It \(verywellmind.com\)](#)

BIPOC – The acronym BIPOC refers to “Black, Indigenous, People of Color.” While “POC” or People of Color is often used as well, BIPOC explicitly leads with Black and Indigenous identities, which helps to counter anti-Black racism and invisibilization of Native communities.

Source: [Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity: A Toolbox for Advancing Racial Equity for Arts and Cultural Organizations](#), Nayantara Sen & Terry Keleher, *Race Forward* (2021).

Decolonization – Decolonization challenges, resists, and dismantles the ongoing “artificial disciplinary demarcations of dominant ways of knowing and being” imposed through colonialism by Western powers. Decolonization is the ongoing process of engaging against and opposing colonialism and must be done through the framework of Indigeneity.

Source: [Decolonization - Learn & Unlearn: Anti-racism Resource Guide - Research Guides at School of the Art Institute of Chicago \(saic.edu\)](#)

Disability – A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions).

Source: [Disability and Health Overview | CDC](#)

Diversity & Inclusion Council – The zoo’s DEAI Council is an employee-led and run group that supports and expands efforts around Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion at WPZ. We work to have staff representation from all zoo areas to advise better, inform, advocate, and create meaningful opportunities.

Source: [WPZ D&I Council](#)

Empathy – Empathy is a stimulated emotional state that relies on the ability to perceive, understand, and care about another person’s or animal’s experiences or perspectives.

Source: [Empathy Glossary – ACE for Wildlife](#) See also: [Empathy Initiative - Woodland Park Zoo Seattle WA](#)

Employee resource groups (ERGs) – ERGs are voluntary employee-led groups that aim to foster community and connection and help create a diverse, inclusive workplace aligned with the shared values of the organization in which they work. They’re usually led and participated in by employees who share a characteristic, whether it’s identity, ethnicity, affiliation, or interest. The groups exist to provide support and help in personal or career development and to create a safe space where employees can connect with folks with similar life experiences.

Source: [Employee Resource Groups \(ERGs\)](#)

Environmental justice – Environmental justice assumes and recognizes community care and Indigenous and First Nations’ knowledge. It acknowledges how privilege, power, and oppression are integral to our understanding of how we are impacted by climate change and our environment. At its core, environmental justice guarantees that all people have equal access to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment and equal protection from environmental harm. Issues of racism and socioeconomic justice are central to the concept of environmental justice.

Source: [Environmental Justice - Greenpeace USA](#)

Environmental racism – Environmental racism is any policy, practice, or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups, or communities based on race.

Source: [What Is Environmental Racism? \(nrdc.org\)](#)

Inclusive culture – An inclusive culture fosters a culture of mutual respect, transparency, collaboration, and belonging, allowing all to feel appreciated, included, and valued.

Indigenous knowledge – Indigenous (also referred to as ancestral wisdom for a sustainable future) knowledge is the collective and dynamic knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and their interactions with the environment.

Source: [Indigenous Knowledge - an overview | ScienceDirect Topics](#)

Marginalize – To marginalize is to treat (a person, group, or concept) as insignificant or peripheral.

Source: [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com)

Minoritize – To minoritize is to isolate or exclude from the dominant culture, perceive or treat as being on the fringes of a society or group.

Source: [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com)

Over-excluded – Over-excluded refers to groups of people in society who are consistently denied access to resources, places, groups, or privileges that consider their specific experiences of the world and needs.

Psychologically safe environment – A psychologically safe environment is an environment in which people believe they can speak up candidly with ideas, questions, concerns, and even mistakes. Research on psychological safety indicates its influential association with learning and performance in teams and organizations. Diverse perspectives cannot be heard if not expressed, which is where psychological safety comes in.

Source: [The Role of Psychological Safety in Diversity and Inclusion | Psychology Today Australia](https://www.psychologytoday.com)

Psychological safety – Psychological safety is a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes and that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking.

Source: [Psychological Safety – Amy C. Edmondson \(amycedmondson.com\)](https://www.amycedmondson.com)

Racial equity - Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus, we also include work to address the root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This consists of eliminating policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.

Source: [Center for Assessment and Policy Development](https://www.centerforassessmentandpolicydevelopment.org)

Racial justice – Racial justice is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice [is defined] as the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all.

Source: [Racial Equity Tools](https://www.racialequitytools.com)

Re-indigenize – Re-indigenization is the process of recovering the Indigenous thought and philosophy of one's ancestral peoples and allowing that consciousness to guide the making and maintenance of place-based relationships leading to the restoration of an Indigenous lifeway, or way of life, in one's ancestral home place/s.

Source: [Re-Indigenize | Awaken the Horse People](https://www.re-indigenize.com)

Relational culture – Relational culture is an understanding that individuals develop through shared, empowering relationships, and relationships are the key to personal development and growth. It is important for people to practice building trust, personal connections, and authenticity between each other. Individuals in relationships gain from shared experiences and connect with a deeper understanding of themselves and the other person's perspective. In practicing relational culture, an organization works to embed practice time and supports personal growth, meaning making, and empowerment. It involves creating inclusive and supportive connections that foster mutual success and wellbeing. This connection and change of approach support the development of relational values and practices in organizational culture.

Source: [Relational Cultural Theory | Psychology Paper Example \(psychologywriting.com\)](https://www.psychologywriting.com), [Relational Culture — Join the Relational Uprising](https://www.jointherelationaluprising.com) and [A Relational-Culture Framework](https://www.a-relational-culture-framework.com)

Social justice – Social justice typically refers to fighting for fairness for historically oppressed people, especially BIPOC, who have disproportionately faced institutional

discrimination or systemic racism. Social justice and equity are connected.

Source: [Equity and Social Justice, Definitions & Resources | United Way NCA](#)

Trauma-informed organization - A trauma-informed organization operates with an understanding of trauma and its negative effects on the organization's employees and the communities it serves and works to mitigate those effects.

Source: [We Need Trauma-Informed Workplaces \(hbr.org\)](#)

Universal design – Universal design is design that's usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without needing adaptation or specialized design.

Source: [What is Universal Design? – The UD Project](#)

Wellbeing – Wellbeing is the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and stress management skills. Wellbeing is the subjective, self-reported assessment of an employee's physical, emotional, psychological, and social health and satisfaction as impacted by the

organizational culture. Increasing employee wellbeing as an aspect of DEAI means we will focus on reducing organizational barriers to wellbeing and provide grief support, wellness coaching, training, and programs for increased wellbeing.

Source: [Well-Being Concepts | HRQOL | CDC](#) and [What Is Well-Being? Definition, Types, and Well-Being Skills | Psychology Today United Kingdom](#)

White-dominant culture – White-dominant culture describes how white people and their practices, beliefs, and culture have been normalized over time and are now considered standard in the United States. As a result, all Americans have adopted various aspects of white culture, including black, indigenous, and people of color.

Source: [Whiteness | National Museum of African American History and Culture \(si.edu\)](#) and [WHAT IS IT? - WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE](#)

Zoo-affiliated internal groups - All individuals whose actions, words, and behaviors are seen as representing the zoo, including, but not limited to, staff (at all levels), volunteers, and board members.



APPENDIX 2: Resource of Additional Plan Actions by Theme

This list is a continually-evolving resource of actions that can be integrated into current or future DEAI work; this list is based on zoo listening session feedback and best practices. Zoo representatives and teams are urged to engage with these ideas and update this list regularly.

OBJECTIVE 1: Assessment & Evaluation

- Develop DEAI evaluation plan strategy, indicators or progress, implementation, and communication
- Develop a DEAI decision-making framework for executive team decisions
- Develop DEAI performance management goal tracking and reporting
- Develop and implement ongoing employee surveys and listening sessions
- Hold regular discussions on data and results to support making informed decisions and updating strategy
- Create and communicate DEAI data and measures for plan and objectives
- Review evaluation, feedback, and data points to make improvements and progress in DEAI efforts
- Develop department and team to create and report on annual DEAI goals

OBJECTIVE 2: Learning, Development, and Understanding

- Develop DEAI material that leads with racial equity and antiracism as an overlay to the experience of over-excluded and marginalized groups
- Develop and implement learning and materials on antiracist conservation learning, practices, leadership, resources, and tools
- Develop and implement learning, development, and resources that center on and support BIPOC and marginalized groups
- Develop and implement career support and develop tools, resources, scholarship, and program
- Develop and implement targeted manager training
- Improve and update zoowide training and development courses and programs
- Invest and offer expanded opportunities for employee development and growth
- Provide individual and group coaching on DEAI topics, trauma-informed care, psychological safety, and skill development
- Create zoowide and department strategies for internal communication and updates on DEAI efforts
- Collaborate with employee D&I Council for recommendations on offering and improving learning, development, and support
- Develop and implement learning and resources that discuss the alignment of conservation, antiracism, and DEAI
- Understand and implement acts of inclusion such as the use of pronouns, accessibility needs check, universal design for learning (UDL), re-indigenized/decolonized practices, who is being centered in learning, etc.

OBJECTIVE 3: Improved Business Practices

- Review and update Zoo People Operations to align with DEAI Plan
- Implement DEAI performance management goals for all employees
- Develop department and team plans to create and report on annual DEAI goals and progress
- Update volunteer DEAI learning, support, recruitment, practices, and expectations
- Departments and teams to engage and consult with the employee D&I Council on ways to improve DEAI efforts
- Implement racial equity toolkit and equity analysis
- Implement targeted recruiting strategy, employee retention strategy, and overall employee support
- Implement equitable and consistent hiring progress and onboarding
- Improve and communicate zoo budgeting processes, spending, vendor selection, contracting, and purchasing to align with DEAI
- Improve and communicate zoo financial investments and processes to align with DEAI
- Align zoo DEAI Plan and commitments to external and internal communications
- Collaborate with employee D&I Council and support employee voice for recommendations on suggested updates and improvements in business practices
- Connect DEAI Plan updates and the creation of the zoo's long-range plan, building projects, and operations
- Actively engage and connect visitors from over-excluded and minoritized communities to the zoo and its programs
- Co-create and develop experiences and programs with input and representation from diverse community groups with high consideration to accessibility, over-excluded groups, relevance, and sensitivity
- Ensure evaluation and research are culturally appropriate and responsive. Use participatory evaluation when appropriate

OBJECTIVE 4: Improvements for Over-excluded / Marginalized Groups

- Develop targeted outreach efforts for diversity recruitment and retention
- Cultivate pipelines to ensure diverse involvement in zoo volunteer positions on all levels (board membership, docents, etc.)
- Cultivate pipelines to ensure a diverse makeup of zoo leadership
- Implement and integrate community and relationship-building at all levels
- Increase the experience of belonging at the zoo for employees, volunteers, and guests from over-excluded and marginalized groups
- Increase availability of zoo programs, materials, and resources in multiple languages (written, spoken, and signed), braille, font size, educational level, etc.
- Increase participation, representation, and collaboration in overall internal and external communication and marketing
- Increase zoo strategies and support to contribute to deeper societal change for over-excluded and marginalized groups
- Increase participation representation and collaboration in overall internal and external events, activities, programs, and offerings
- Collaborate with employee D&I Council and support employee voice for recommendations on suggested updates and improvements in business practices
- Provide funding and support for mentorship, coaching, and career development

OBJECTIVE 5: Improve Wellbeing

- Create and hire a Wellbeing and Life Coach position
- Develop and implement employee wellness and wellbeing programs, activities and events
- Update organization employee assistance resources, tools, and support
- Implement and support employee resource/affinity groups for marginalized employee populations

OBJECTIVE 6: Increase External Connections

- Develop resources and partnerships with external organizations that can provide knowledge share, support, and information on DEAI
- Present and share zoo DEAI progress, unintended impacts, and learnings through external presentations, workshops, and panels
- Make tools, resources, and learning material available to partners as a resource to expand their own DEAI efforts
- Actively engage and host anti-racist conservation leadership and action with the greater field
- Actively form partnerships with diverse community groups, organizations, and leaders
- Collaborate with external organizations to support development, mentorship, and pipelines of marginalized populations in the field
- Apply DEAI Plan and strategies to work with community, partners, and engagement efforts

OBJECTIVE 7: Improve the Built and Virtual Environment

- Develop, implement, and track a list of annual DEAI improvements for accessibility through signage, built environment updates, and virtual/technology updates
- Increase availability of signage, technology, and resources in multiple languages (written, spoken, and signed), braille, font size, information about the physical effort, and access to exhibits
- Provide targeted DEAI and accessibility updates on new and updated built and virtual environment projects
- Invest in technology, software, infrastructure, and tools to increase accessibility
- Improve and increase physical accessibility for items such as all-gender restrooms, senior space, multi-faith, multi-generational, lactation space, parking accessibility, and diverse accommodations
- Use and report on the application of universal design for new projects and updates to facilities



Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo engages more than a million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life in extraordinary experiences with animals, inspiring them to make conservation a priority in their lives. The zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats in the wild through more than 35 wildlife conservation projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

[zoo.org](https://www.zoo.org)