



Best Practices for Engaging Diverse Communities

Build a Brand of Diversity and Inclusivity

1

Develop a Culture of Inclusivity

Think about details and critically evaluate all actions through the lens of inclusivity

Take time to learn about diverse communities and their experiences

Marketing materials should reflect the diversity of the community

2

Create Inclusive Events

Build long term two-way relationships with diverse communities

Create a space for diverse communities to share their stories in their own words

Work with grassroots organizers to dismantle environmental racism

3

Be Intentional About Partnerships

Event team, board, and partners should reflect the diversity in the community

Only partner with organizations and businesses committed to equality and anti-bias

Learn from diverse partners about how to best support them and the communities they represent





Best Practices for Engaging Diverse Communities

1 – Develop a Culture of Inclusivity

Evaluate Details Through Lens of Inclusivity

- Choose dates for events that do not conflict with religious or cultural holidays
- Use closed captioning in videos
- Review ADA rules and recommendations to be accessible to people with disabilities, and be intentional about [using inclusive language](#)
- Offer bilingual options or signage if possible
- Use sufficiently large text on signs and marketing materials
- Use simple colors and consistent layouts
- Use images and diagrams to support text
- Survey attendees after events to understand how to make events more inclusive

Marketing Materials Should Reflect the Diversity of the Community

70%

of millennials indicate they would be more likely to support a brand with diverse and inclusive marketing

- Carefully evaluate marketing imagery and videography
- Research shows people more comfortable seeing themselves reflected

Take Time to Learn About Inclusion and the Experiences of Diverse Communities

Learn from members of these communities

Independently research through community resources

Read stories, blogs, content produced by diverse community members

Train team members on D&I best practices



Best Practices for Engaging Diverse Communities

2 – Create Inclusive Events

Work with Grassroots Organizers to Dismantle Environmental Racism

Critically evaluate who benefits from organization's work

Work to create equitable distribution of funds

Use established platform to support grassroots communities

Bring on team members who are experienced with environmental justice

Incorporate environmental justice into all aspects of organization work

Create a Space for Diverse Communities to Share Their Stories in their Own Words

- Empower community members to share their stories about watershed
- Share stories of individuals impacted by clean water in indirect ways
- Work with local Black activists in event centering relationship between Black community and their experiences with the watershed

Build Long Term Two-Way Relationships with Diverse Communities

Attend events put on by diverse communities in the region

Focus on building a long-term relationship, rather than one-off for an event

Center the voices and experiences of diverse members of the community



Best Practices for Engaging Diverse Communities

3 – Be Intentional About Partnerships

Event Team, Board, and Partners Should Reflect Diversity of the Community

- Network with diverse businesses and organizations
- Ask partners for recommended people and organizations to work with
- Incorporate diverse individuals in event planning, lineup, execution

Only Partner with Organizations and Businesses Committed to Equality and Anti-Bias

- Review corporate policies of potential partner organizations
- Evaluate any recent PR from company related to D&I
- Consider if that company's brand supports inclusive messaging

Learn from Diverse Partners about How to Best Support Them and the Communities They Represent

- Foster ongoing conversations with diverse community partners
- Don't assume how to best support these organizations, just ask
- Utilize their expertise and feedback to grow to be more inclusive



Community Resources

[Choose Clean Water Coalition](#)

- DEIJ Action Guide - for organizations to advance DEIJ efforts
- Anti-Racism & Justice Toolkit – to raise voice against system racism

[Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup](#)

- Resources for cultural humility training, community engagement, recruiting, hiring & workplace development, and anti-racism

[Nonprofit Learning Lab](#)

- Organization committed to teaching nonprofits across dimensions of D&I
- Read through materials and watch/ attend free webinars on D&I topics

Note: each organization name contains link to respective website



Ideas for Events

Leveraging Existing Components

Current State		Future State	
Event Type	Event Examples	Event Purpose	Event Rebranding
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch & Learns Kids Events (i.e. Amphibian and Reptiles) Floating Classroom Series Summer Camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus directly on the need for clean water, not just the idea of a celebration/fun event Gain further support/funding from corporations and businesses Inform the public about educational aspects of diverse communities and their personal impact of clean water initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keywords such as "awareness" and "information gathering" (i.e., 2 most popular keywords tied to response rates for this event type) Highlight inclusivity within diverse communities Work with Riverkeepers to increase presence of this event type
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration via canoe/kayak/rafting Swim the river Trivia Live music/concerts Film festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate local businesses and encourage community participation Highlight different age groups and interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who enjoy the water/sport vs those who do not enjoy the water/sport Young vs old age groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate HBC, Indigenous Communities; groups that can lead events themselves and take ownership of their own impacts with the CWA Diversify outreach
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree Planting Watershed and Stream cleanups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraise and work hands on in the watershed and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue use of keywords focusing on "outdoors" and "cleaning"

Ideas for Events

“Events by Categories” and Standout Ideas



Clean Water Champions – Highlight success stories and listen to voices of local community leaders

- Week-long celebration highlighting different communities each day
- Events that highlight spiritual connection to water
- Shout outs on social media for activists and community workers
- Spotlight on frontline communities
- Educational session on how far we have come since the CWA (and how far we have to go)



Clean Water Celebrations – Honor Clean Water Champions and focus on the promise of clean water for all

- Film Festival
- Trivia night at a brewery (including questions on clean water)
- Engage local sports/teams (specifically water-sports)
- Poetry slam night and/or spoken word
- "Virtual gallery" with online posts and social media tag
- Live music! (ex: Gogo music)



Clean Water Collective Action – Target specific local and regional advocacy actions

- Reach out to local/national news or radio stations
- Non-partisan political engagement
- Here's what to "watch", "read", and "listen"
- Lunch & Learn sessions
- Political action drives to encourage involvement in "small ways"
- Get involved with local classrooms or youth groups (ex: scouting groups)

Ideas for Events

“Events by Categories” and Standout Ideas

From the ideas generated during a design thinking session, we highlighted three standout ideas that follow the key principles of the outreach strategy for engaging diverse communities.



Clean Water Champions – Week of Inclusivity

- Week-long event where each day spotlights a different community (ex: indigenous communities, historic black communities, religious groups connected to water, etc.)
- Community leaders can present messaging in THEIR words by letting them take charge of a day
- Spotlights how diverse communities are all affected by clean water



Clean Water Celebrations – Spoken Word Night

- Arts events allow you to target diverse audience (ex: establishing different age categories)
- Allows speakers to present personal stories that may resonate with other members of the audience
- Can engage and educate new people on ways that clean water affects them and their communities directly



Clean Water Collective Action – "Watch", "Read", and "Listen"

- Leverages social media to promote educational or celebratory material, and allows anyone interested to share with their online community
- Can provide consistent messaging on action items that the campaign wants to promote
- Educates the community on tangential ways that they may be affected by water-related policies