



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

PRINCIPALS' STAFF COMMITTEE

Endorsement Statement

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to diverse communities with rich variation in culture, demographics and perspectives. It is important to embrace this diversity and promote the meaningful involvement, treatment and inclusiveness of all people in the implementation of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. In doing so, we will be better able to achieve healthy local streams and lands, as well as a vibrant Chesapeake Bay that is shared by all people throughout the watershed. Recognizing this, the Chesapeake Bay Program has set a path forward to endorse the recommendations of their Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice—or DEI—Strategy, finalized in 2020. The Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup, which was formed in 2014, started working with a DEI consultant in 2018 to conduct a DEI readiness assessment of the partnership and developed a tailored DEI Strategy that helps the partnership to:

- Grow racial and ethnic diversity from 13% to 25% (including 15% of leadership).
- Help partners to develop as DEI leaders who understand, respect and embrace cultural diversity.
- Provide partners with the tools to continually assess progress towards diversity goals.

The DEI Strategy contains recommendations that are grouped into four DEI framework focus areas. The consultant developed these recommendations based on interviews with Chesapeake Bay Program teams and leadership, a DEI readiness survey, two focus groups, a review of key partnership policy documents and input from the Diversity Workgroup. They provide a visionary framework to be used by the partnership as a guide to help integrate DEI into the implementation of management strategies and inform biennial logic and action plan activities that achieve the outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

1. Strengthen the Authorizing Environment of the Chesapeake Bay Program:

By adopting a succinct DEI statement for the partnership and updating governance documents and management strategies to include language that reflects DEI priorities.

2. Advance DEI Internally

By increasing diversity and inclusion for staff, appointees and volunteer bodies; building a common understanding of, and expanded capacity for, DEI; and institutionalizing efforts to advance DEI internally.

3. Advance DEI through Mission-Related Work

By building relationships with communities of color, low income neighborhoods and other underrepresented groups; incorporating community leaders' input into decision-making and implementation; advancing DEI in management strategies and logic and action plans; implementation of restoration activities and grantmaking; and strengthening DEI in watershed restoration outreach, materials, activities and events.

4. Advance DEI Performance of Partners

By sharing the Chesapeake Bay Program's DEI statement with all partners, including the larger Chesapeake Bay watershed community; increasing access to DEI training and capacity building;

developing and distributing guidance on including DEIJ and environmental justice criteria in grant targets and evaluations; developing and sharing DEIJ communication and distribution guidance; and developing and sharing tracking and reporting guidance.

Continuing our path toward embracing the human diversity in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in our work to restore the Bay, we hereby endorse the recommendations in the Chesapeake Bay Program DEIJ Strategy.

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM PRINCIPALS' STAFF COMMITTEE

FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION



FOR THE STATE OF DELAWARE



FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



FOR THE STATE OF MARYLAND



FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



FOR THE STATE OF NEW YORK



FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



FOR THE STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA



FOR THE UNITED STATE OF AMERICA
on behalf of the Federal Government and the
Federal Leadership Committee for the Chesapeake Bay:
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Department of Defense
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Department of Transportation


