



Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI) understands that quality environmental education is neither effective nor accurate without the expertise, experiences, and perspectives of diverse contributors. In order to fulfill our mission, we must strengthen our organizational goals, programs and practices to include historically excluded communities. We understand that we are lacking in diversity among leadership and members and aim to establish and cultivate relationships to make us a stronger, more resilient organization. In addition to diversifying within the EEAI community, we must also amplify the voices of BIPOC individuals and groups to broaden the outlook and understanding of Environmental Education in Illinois.

This guide is a resource for organizations to utilize when planning and implementing programs, services, and events to ensure inclusion for all. Many of these efforts can be implemented at little to no cost. Keep in mind that this list is dynamic and will evolve.

Programming

- Inclusion and accessibility considerations should start with program development. Seek input from local advocacy organizations.
- Be cognizant of culturally sensitive program dates/hours
- Create a safe environment for participants, staff, and volunteers to identify their personal pronouns and respectfully be addressed by them
- Look for opportunities to collaborate with BIPOC community organizations
- Offer social activities that support social-emotional learning opportunities (i.e., social clubs, arts and crafts, music, dancing, cultural classes)

Marketing/Advertising

- Use inclusive language [[NRPA's Equity Language Guide](#)] when developing flyers, writing program text, and posting on social media/website*
- Enable closed captioning on any video or media posted
- Always use 12pt or larger font; San serif (Verdana, Helvetica, Tahoma) with 1.5 line spacing on all printed materials
- Add messaging to promotional materials or on display in facilities that assure all community members that they are welcome- “We welcome the opportunity to serve visitors with disabilities to enjoy ALL of our facilities, programs and services. For assistance and information on accessibility, contact Customer Service at (555) 555-5555”.
- Add alternative text on images on website and social media platform
- Enable automatic translation when available
- Use translation software [[Say Hi](#)] to communicate more effectively

Representation

- Hire diverse staff and volunteers
 - Signage and additional facility enhancements (artwork, murals, safe zones etc.) that promote diversity and inclusion
 - Celebrate diverse heritages and cultural holidays through programs, partnerships, and media platforms
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Accessibility

- Provide detailed information about trails and pathways; accessible paths and parking, trail terrain and elevation.
- Ensure all programs allow participants to request modifications upon registration- "do you have a disability-related need?"- "Yes, I require____" or "No".
- Consider all abilities when making program and event cancellation decisions due to inclement weather.
- Consider changes to policies, practices and procedures to ensure people with disabilities can participate and benefit from the program, service or activity.

If you have suggestions to add to the list or are interested in learning more about EEAI's JEDIA efforts, contact the **Executive Director, Brekke Bounds at ed@eeai.net.**

** Resources can be found on the EEAI JEDIA webpage at <https://eeai.net/jedia-committee/>*