**Tool No. 4**

**Best Practices for DEI Initiatives**

*The following were developed from information provided in the Survey.*

1. Start by compiling valuable resources for implementing and guiding their DE&I initiative:
   1. Large utility programs
   2. STEM program
   3. Personal experience
   4. Based on WEF experience and leadership
   5. Task force looking at what other associations, agencies, and firms are doing.
   6. Contacted New York WEA to obtain their vision, mission, and guiding principles.
   7. Other organizations
   8. Brookings Institute Report
   9. Initiatives of committee members
   10. External webinars, papers, training, etc.
   11. Resources from WEF/AWWA

1. Be Purposeful - Establish a Mission, Vision, and Objective for your initiative.

1. Seek Board-level participation.

1. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) can have many focus areas. Some ideas for focus areas to get your initiative started:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gender | Operators |
| Race/Ethnicity | Disabled |
| Young Professionals (YP’s) | Immigration status |
| LGBTQ+ | Economic abilities |
| Veterans | Age |
| Differing geographic areas | Religion |
| Other profession typically not at WEFTEC |  |

1. Define baseline metrics and set goals for membership diversity metrics, such as:
   1. Race
   2. Gender
   3. Experience in the water industry.
   4. Success integrating program participants (e.g. INFLOW) into general, active membership
   5. Membership retention
2. Examples of DEI initiatives, programs, or actions taken by MA’s
   1. Designate a DEI representative on the Board
      1. Conducted outreach to other committees to generate interest in DE&I committee membership
      2. Diversity statements,
      3. focus of discussion during committee trainings
      4. Weeding gender specific language out of MA documents.
      5. There are plans to hold a series of D, E & I fireside chats to spark conversation, increase awareness and work together to implement changes
      6. Panel discussion @ annual conference. planned: setting up metrics, webinar series, list of resources, award, outreach.
      7. Breaking down barriers to Civil Service, partnerships with community organizations, professional societies, and other MA committees
   2. Hired a DE&I consultant
      1. Conducted one-on-one meetings with Board and Committee members,
      2. Conducting a survey of a random portion of our members to establish a baseline of our Association's understanding of and performance relative to DE&I issues.
   3. DE&I education as part of your leadership onboarding (board members and committee chairs, etc.)
   4. Started a project to develop diversity moments to start off meetings, what we have nicknamed "J.E.D.I-Openers."
   5. Developed ground rules for conducting meetings
   6. Increasing operator engagement
   7. Women in Water
      1. Women in Water Breakfast at Annual Meeting
      2. Women in Water Programs,
   8. Targeted outreach to schools.
      1. Increasing targeted outreach to youth in underrepresented groups
   9. Scholarship support
      1. Create a scholarship for minority students pursuing water careers
   10. Membership Survey
       1. launching a survey to gauge the level of inclusion our members are feeling
   11. Speakers
       1. hosting a keynote speaker at our annual meeting talk about a DE&I topic
   12. Unconscious Bias Training
       1. We hosted a empathy mapping meeting for the task force with the assistance of the WEF DEI members.
   13. Welcoming Space Internally
   14. Communication
       1. Created a special news landing page dedicated to diversity topics.
       2. Share our stories of diversity in the Newsletter.
       3. Create record of our written education on website
       4. Monthly Newsletter focused on JDE&I.
       5. Dedicated issue of the MA’s magazine to the topic
       6. Tip of the Month
       7. Assisting other committees with publications
   15. Communication tools
       1. Social media
       2. Website
       3. Internal newsletters
       4. Press releases
       5. Email
       6. Podcasts
   16. Sharing Pronouns, education on the topic, inclusion on nametags
   17. Ribbon or sticker for committee members at conferences
   18. DEI committee participation in planning for events, or committee generated checklist for things like vegetarian meal options, and availability of mother’s rooms.
   19. Coordination with Local Arrangements / Program Committee
       1. making changes to our annual conference that would make everyone feel welcome (e.g. adding pronouns to nametags, having a mothers room, providing different meal options for vegetarians, vegans or other dietary restrictions, etc.)
       2. Add D,E,&I session to the annual YP session
       3. Working on a regular book webinar,
       4. Guest speakers at our conference,
   20. Certification Testing