



Equity Strategic Action Plan

Mission Statement

Our mission is to engage people to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities region.

Equity Statement

Friends of the Mississippi River believes that the Mississippi River belongs to all of us and that its ecological, recreational, economic and social benefits should flow equally to all people in our community. We are committed to the ongoing work of becoming culturally competent, welcoming and inclusive of all people both within our organization as well as in the range of issues and challenges that we engage in.

We understand that environmental problems disproportionately burden communities of color, indigenous peoples and low-income communities. We further acknowledge that mainstream environmental and conservation organizations have largely failed to understand and address the systemic underpinnings that are common to both environmental problems and injustice. We are committed to using our resources and influence to redress structural inequality where it intersects with the health and vitality of the Mississippi River.

As our community grows and becomes more diverse we understand that it is imperative that we evolve to include and serve the full breadth of experience and perspectives in order to remain relevant and effective in pursuing our mission. We understand that to succeed in this goal will require us to reach beyond our traditional allies and constituencies, enter new relationships with humility, be prepared to listen, learn, follow the lead of our partners and adapt our methods and practices.

We believe that just as greater ecological diversity makes our ecosystems stronger and more resilient, so too will greater diversity strengthen our organization and our community. We actively work to support, engage and include people with different racial, cultural, economic and religious backgrounds as well as those with varying physical abilities, gender identities and sexual orientations.

The Mississippi River is a treasured asset whose intrinsic value as well as its many uses and benefits are essential and relevant to all people in our community. We are deeply committed to the practice of advancing equity in pursuit of a healthy community and a healthy river.

Equity Plan Purpose

We Will Deliver Results

FMR is responsible for essential protection, conservation and restoration services to nearly three million people in the seven-county Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. As of 2016, Almost 26% of these residents identify as people of color¹.

Because we understand that environmental problems disproportionately burden communities of color, indigenous peoples and low-income communities, this plan focuses on measurably improving a variety of organizational results related to engaging with, serving and learning from these groups. Such results include, but are not limited to improvements in:

- Budgeting and work planning for diversity, inclusion and equity results
- Staff diversity and inter-cultural competency development
- Board diversity and inter-cultural competency development
- Social network diversity and quality

This plan defines what we are doing to achieve our goals, why we are doing those things, what the results should be, and how well we are doing compared to our own past results and the results of others. We believe that we must do our part to make sure every person can benefit from our river, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, language or economic status.

¹ Metropolitan Council, U.S. Census Data, Twin Cities Region (7 county)
https://stats.metc.state.mn.us/data_download/DD_Years.aspx?datasource=cen&comms=&subjects=%27POPRAECEETH%27&level=region

Equity Strategic Action Plan

1. We make financial investments to achieve clear and measurable diversity and inclusion goals.

Goal: FMR has established, practiced and institutionalized its annual process for diversity and inclusion budgeting and work planning. This process includes a regular review of diversity and inclusion results, as well as a review of the process itself to ensure the process is as effective as it can be.

Benefits:

- Making staff, board and other stakeholders aware of connections between investment and outcomes, so we become champions for improvement.
- To better identify actions, efficiencies, partnerships, innovations, and resources that can deliver on or improve results.
- Improving trust in the organization – especially with potential new partners and funders.
- Aligning financial resources with the policies, practices and situations to achieve our goals – ensuring we “walk our talk”.

Oversight: Executive Director

Responsible: Senior Leaders

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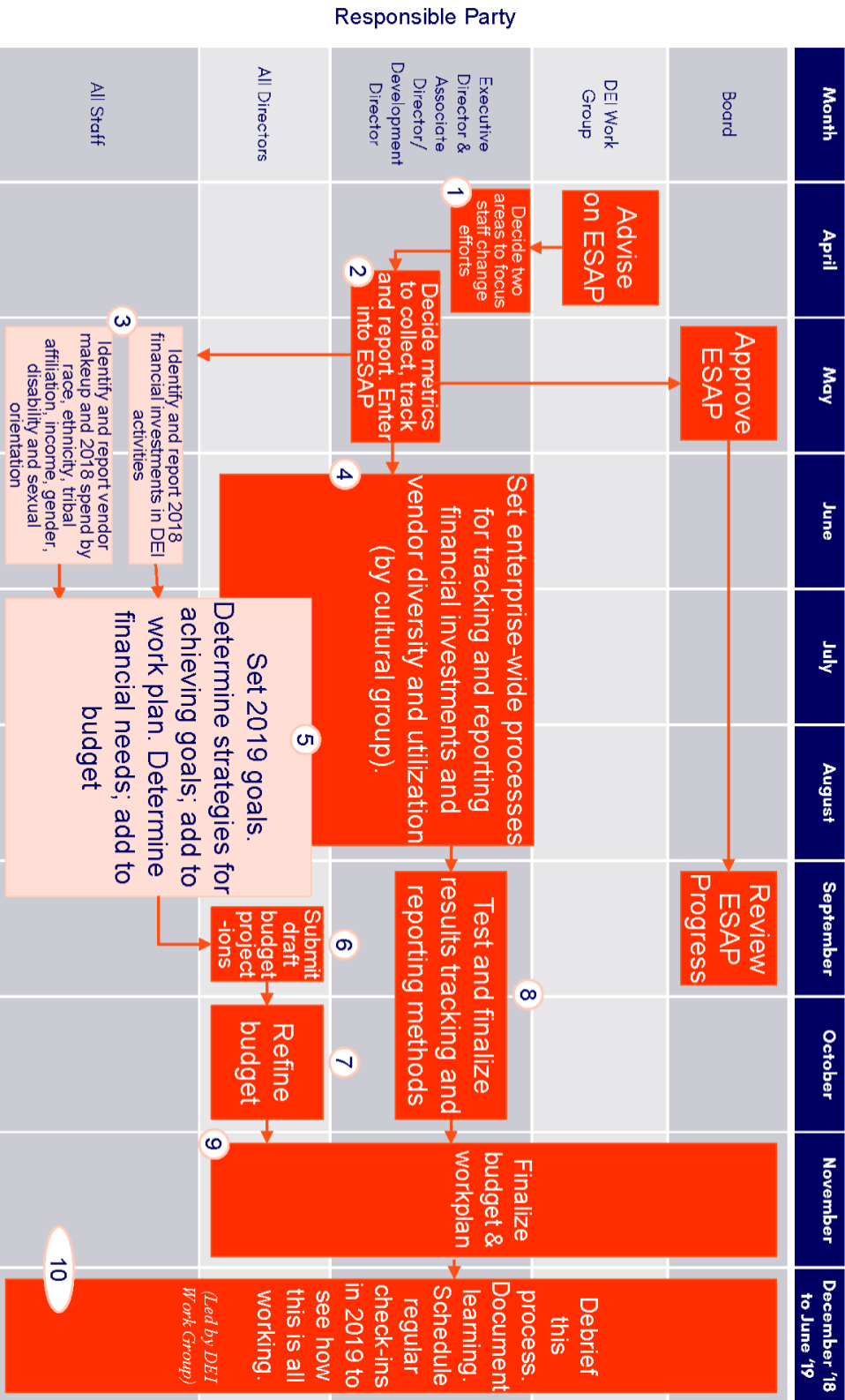
Financial Investment Milestones	Responsible	Deadline	Resources Required
Identify two opportunity areas on which to focus staff's financial inclusiveness improvement efforts over the next year. <i>[E.g., A.) understand and improve financial investments in existing DEI activities and B.) understand and improve vendor diversity and utilization.]</i>	Executive Director & Associate Director/ Development Director	April 30, 2018	• 2 staff hours
For each area of improvement, decide what <u>few</u> wildly important metrics the organization will collect, track and report over the next year. Share with all staff.	Executive Director & Associate Director	May 31, 2018	• 4-6 staff hours
A. Identify and report financial investments being made in existing DEI activities (2018). For each activity, include current results for the pre-defined metrics. Provide report to Directors. B. Identify current vendors and purchasing by race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, income, gender, disability and sexual orientation.	All staff	June 30, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Based on report results, set 2019 goals for individual efforts within each opportunity area. Report these to Directors.	All staff	July 30, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Establish/refine enterprise-wide process for tracking and reporting financial investments by race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, income, gender, disability and sexual orientation. Do the same for vendor diversity and utilization. Establish/refine process for adding new vendors to the list. Share with all staff.	CFO & Directors	August 30, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Based on report results, set 2019 goals for individual efforts within each opportunity area. Report these to Directors. Determine strategies for achieving goals for each opportunity area; insert into draft 2019 work plan. Analyze existing and new funding options needed to achieve goals; insert into draft 2019 budget. <i>Submit funding requests to Sara as appropriate.</i>	All staff	September 17, 2018 & Ongoing	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Submit 2019 draft budget projections to CFO.	Directors	September 17, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Submit 2019 draft budget to Directors.	CFO	October 19, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Test and finalize the results tracking and reporting methods.	CFO & Directors	October 31, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Finalize 2019 budget and workplan.	Board & Directors	November 30, 2018	• <i>n</i> staff hours
Debrief this entire process with staff. Document learning. Schedule regular check-ins on the process in 2019 to see how it is working.	Directors	December 31, 2018	• 4 staff hours
Operationalize new financial processes, and biannually check in on tracking.	DEIWG	ongoing	

Financial Investment Change Process (2018)

Updated April 10, 2018

We make financial investments to achieve clear and measurable diversity and inclusion goals.

By June 30, 2019 FMR has established, practiced and institutionalized its annual process for diversity and inclusion budgeting and work planning. This process includes a regular review of diversity and inclusion results, as well as a review of the process itself to ensure the process is as effective as it can be.



2. We have strong, mutually beneficial intercultural relationships with individuals, organizations and institutions.

Goal: Every FMR employee and volunteer leader is actively working with at least one cross-cultural network. These relationships are delivering meaningful and significant equity results to FMR, the partner(s), and to key cultural communities.

Benefits:

- Building staff and volunteer leaders' cultural competence through direct practice.
- Ensuring cross-cultural relationships deliver equitable outcomes.
- Broadening the pool of cross-cultural resources by connecting internal functions (like accounting) to the communities.
- Making new and existing partners aware of the level of our commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity.
- To better identify actions, efficiencies, partnerships, innovations, and resources that can deliver on or improve results.
- Improving trust in the organization – especially with potential new partners and funders.

Oversight: Sara DeKok

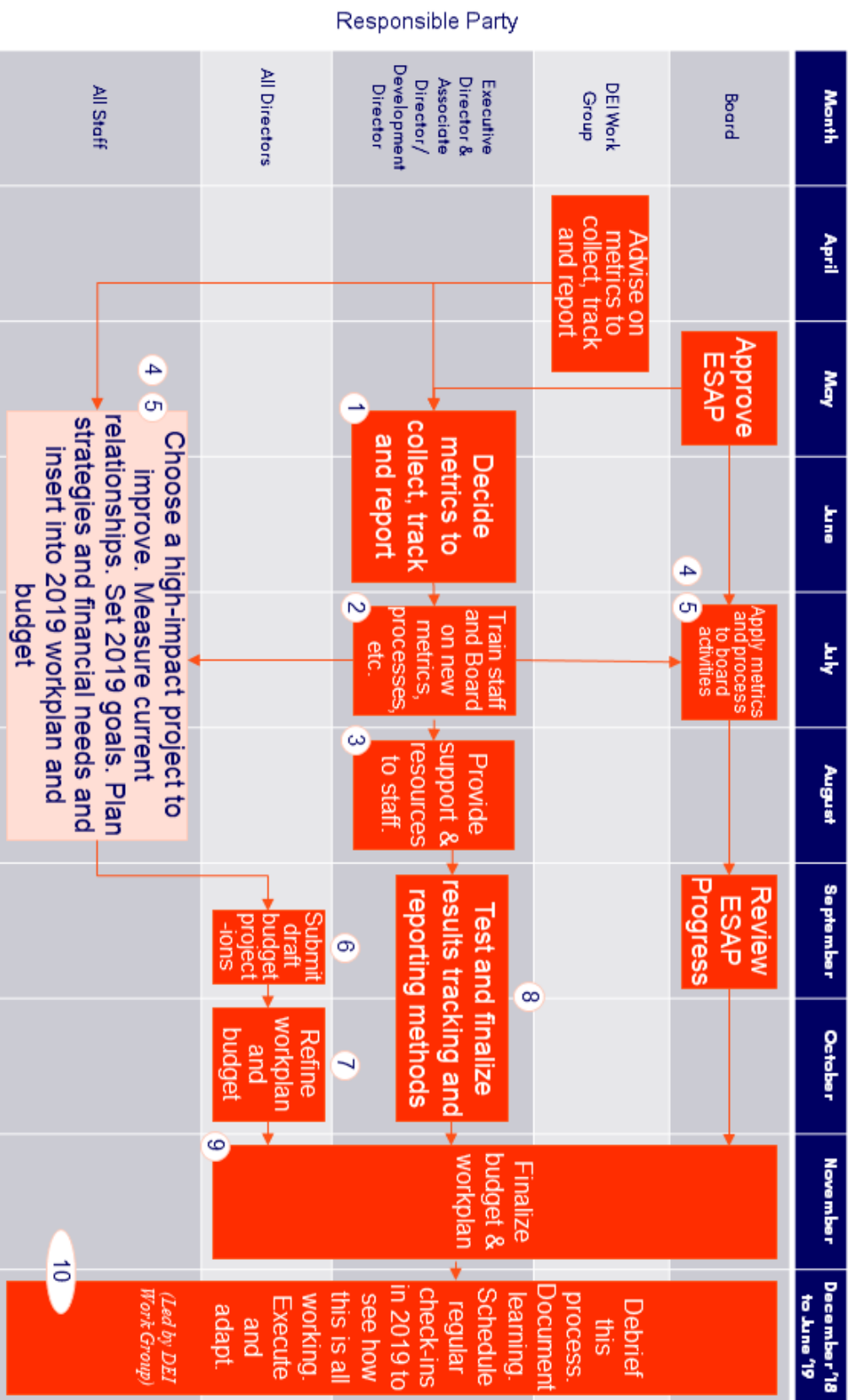
Responsible: DEI Working Group

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Social Capital Milestones	Responsible	Deadline	Resources Required
Decide what <u>few</u> , wildly important, <u>common</u> metrics (including relationship quality) the entire organization will collect, track and report over the next year.* *Although every program will have the same metrics to measure and report, its goals will likely be different. For example, every program would measure the quality of a relationship against a standard scale. However, depending on each program's desired outcomes and how it achieves them, the goals for relationship quality may be different .	Executive Director & Associate Director/ Development Director	June 30, 2018	• 6 staff hours
Train staff and Board members on the intent, new metrics, tracking and reporting processes, responsibilities, and expectations for results. Identify support and resource needs.	Executive Director & Associate Director	July 31, 2018	• 4 staff hours
Provide organizational support and resources so staff can effectively: a. identify, analyze and measure improvement opportunities. b. develop strategies for improving the number and quality of their social networks. *May need to invest in 3 rd party technical or consulting assistance.	Executive Director & Associate Director/ Development Director	August 31, 2018	• n staff hours
Each staff and board member chooses one project for which they will develop or improve a culturally diverse social network. Measure the current relationships against metrics. Report to Directors.	All staff Board of Directors	August 31, 2018	• n staff hours
Based on the results, set 2019 goals for relationships. Determine strategies for achieving goals; insert into draft 2019 work plan. Analyze existing and new funding options needed to achieve goals; insert into draft 2019 budget. <i>Submit funding requests to Sara as appropriate.</i>	All staff	September 17, 2018 & Ongoing	• n staff hours
Submit 2019 draft workplan and budget projections to CFO.	Directors	September 17, 2018	• n staff hours
Submit 2019 draft workplan and budget to Directors.	CFO	October 19, 2018	• n staff hours
Test and finalize the results tracking and reporting methods.	CFO & Directors	October 31, 2018	• n staff hours
Finalize 2019 workplan and budget.	Board & Directors	November 30, 2018	• n staff hours
Debrief this entire process with staff. Document learning. Schedule regular check-ins on the process in 2019 to see how it is working.	Directors	December 31, 2018	• 4 staff hours
Operationalize new processes, and biannually check in on tracking.	DEIWG	ongoing	•

Social Capital Change Process (2018)

Created April 11, 2018
 We have strong, mutually beneficial intercultural relationships with individuals, organizations and institutions.
 By June 30, 2019, every FMR employee and volunteer leader is actively working with at least one cross-cultural network. These relationships are delivering meaningful and significant equity results to FMR, the partner(s), and to key cultural communities.



3. FMR is a culturally inclusive workplace that is reflective of, and effectively engages, the diverse communities we serve.

Goal: FMR has established priorities, processes, and programming to increase the diversity of our staff, board, and stakeholders over time.

Benefits:

- The voices that guide and implement FMR's work – our board and staff – reflect the diverse voices of the communities we serve.
- A greater number of young people of color are pursuing environmental careers.
- A greater diversity of stakeholders is engaged in our work.
- FMR's work remains relevant into the future.
- Our work serves all people who care for and are impacted by the river.

Oversight: Sara DeKok

Responsible: DEI Working Group

Human Development Milestones	Deadline
Identify internal and external opportunities for advancing our human development goal.	January 2020
For each area of improvement, define metrics for tracking success.	January 2020
Collect data for metrics and define our baseline.	February 2020
Define a goal for each metric.	February – March 2020
Determine strategies for advancing metric goals.	February – April 2020
DEI Working Group defines small work groups to oversee each metric and advance strategies.	April 2020
Metric groups define a timeline and action plan for advancing their respective strategies	May 2020
Small groups work their action plans.	May – August 2020
DEI Working Group reviews progress and prepares annual DEI report to the staff and board.	August – September 2020
Continue to implement action plan.	September 2020 - ongoing
Operationalize programming and processes to continue this work.	Spring 2021

Metrics:Internal

- **Staff and board demographics (Lead staff: Sara)** – our aim is for the demographics of our staff and board to more closely align with the demographics of the Twin Cities metro area.
Strategies:
 - When open positions arise, utilize FMR's hiring manual to attract and hire diverse candidates.
 - Prioritize cultivating and nominating board members of color to diversify the voices that guide our work.
 - Annually report internal demographics to the board and staff.

- **Career pathways (Lead staff: Betsy, Sophie, Karen Solas)** — Increase opportunities for youth and students of color to gain professional experience in the environmental field.
 - Create internship opportunities for youth and students of color across FMR programs and departments.
 - Engage with external internship programs such as Capitol Pathways to provide internship opportunities to youth and students of color.
 - Expand and enhance the Youth Empowerment Program to create clear, direct paths from engagement to employment in environmental fields.
 - Engage youth in advising and shaping the ongoing development of career pathways components of youth programming.

External

- **Stakeholder demographics (advocates, volunteers, members, event participants) (Lead staff: Sophie, Ashley)** – our aim is to engage a greater diversity of stakeholders in our work through community engagement practices.
Strategies:
 - Meet and collaborate with new community group partners to organize and diversify existing FMR programming.
 - Offer partner and volunteer feedback surveys immediately following volunteer events.
 - Revisit our community engagement practices annually to incorporate community feedback and keep FMR programming relevant.