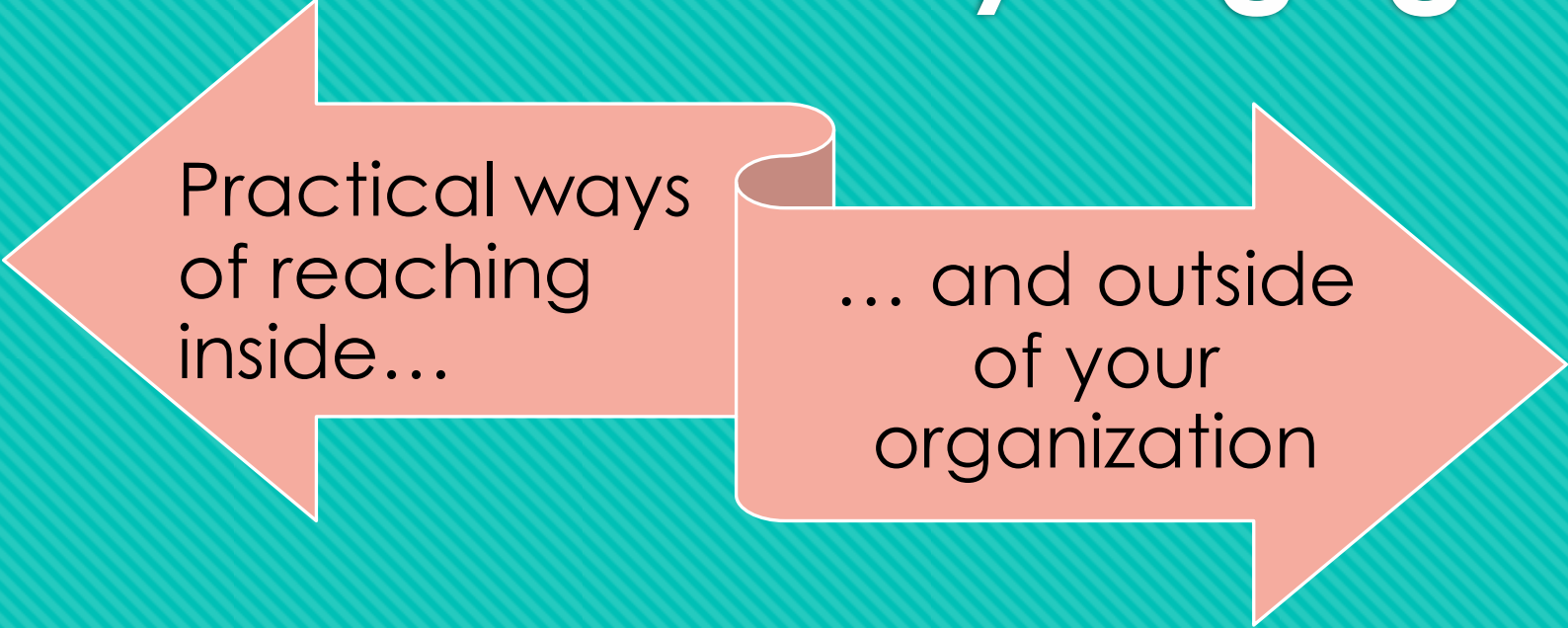


Equitable Community Engagement



Practical ways
of reaching
inside...

... and outside
of your
organization

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Foundational thoughts:

In the sciences/ resource management world...

- (1) We mean well and want to do good.**
- (2) We exist in a field historically rooted in white supremacy.**

Non-profit and consulting organizations

➤ **Community outreach and engagement work:**

- Go to where people already gather
 - Example: Alternatives to evening stakeholder meetings at hotels and community centers
- Acknowledge, include and contact affinity groups and leaders... but don't pass off all the burden
 - Example: BIPOC advocacy groups may be inundated right now, yet one-on-one outreach and going to events or meeting spaces that already exist has value. Not expecting people to come to you is key. A seat at the table is different from someone bringing you that welcoming cup of coffee and invite.

➤ **Create values statement(s):**

- Develop and adopt them with your team
- Work with those who agree to them (project partners, consultants)
- Make them part of your contracting/ MOUs, partnership interviews, etc.

Tribal government relationships

➤ **Care to learn about cultural values:**

- Don't just invite Tribes to the table, ask how to structure the process so it's culturally responsive
- Learn to receive information without offense and in a receptive way

➤ **Acknowledge sovereignty:**

- Language around working with Tribes often lists them last or is awkward or different. Use language that acknowledges the sovereign status of recognized Tribal governments, akin to the US federal government.

Federal and state government

➤ **Affinity groups in action:**

- Many agencies have formed Black Caucus, Latinx Leadership groups, Inclusion and Diversity groups, etc.
 - Do you identify as part of the affinity group? Rad! This your space. Power in numbers matters.
 - Are you white? Let it be a space for people to find solace and peer support. Support but don't dominate, and avoid passing off work that you can/ must do to these volunteers exclusively. Ask for input with a goal of getting it and implementing it. Be ready to take meaningful actions.

➤ **Know your stuff:**

- Know EEO rules and school yourself on current best practices!
- Know what will happen if someone needs to make a report

Local government

➤ **Developing key relationships:**

- Go directly to the trusted BIPOC leaders in your community
- Ask what they really want and need, and be open to unforeseen opportunities
- Follow through on small but meaningful actions to start with... prove you can be trusted

➤ **Celebrate and show respect, don't just tell about the trauma:**

- Showcase BIPOC people who are doing great things. How to avoid tokenizing? Simple: involve people in telling their own story/ deciding how they want to be represented.
- Examine and replace terms like "underserved"
- Question and avoid repeating narratives like "our community is so predominantly white..."

Working in translation

➤ **Allocate resources:**

- Interpretation (verbal) and translation (written) takes time and is a unique and specific skill needing adequate compensation

➤ **Up your level of awareness and sensitivity to the context:**

- Ensure that terms can be understood by your interpreter in English to convey in another language
- Allow a cushion of time to be sure that people receiving interpretation are with the group
- Nip any ignorance, confusion or annoyance in the bud with ground rules
 - Example: explain why an interpreter is there in inclusive language and that people will need to adjust to a different flow of a meeting and additional sounds in the background

Equity in environmental education

➤ **Who are you lauding as experts?**

- Invite BIPOC experts, women in science, queer-identifying scientists to step to the front
 - Who are your guest speakers? Whose research are you sharing?

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What about engaging equitably in our new “pandemic life”?

➤ **Video-conferencing: to video or not to video**

- It's been said before, but consider reasons why folks might not turn on their video... shared home spaces, non-traditional living arrangements, tech considerations

➤ **Alternatives to video for rural communities and less tech-connected neighborhoods**

- Outdoor, distanced pop-ups, advocacy, etc in neighborhoods and roadside turnouts
- Harnessing power of social media and various media formats (including plugged-in but lower bandwidth options)