



Coalition *for the*  
Delaware River  
Watershed



## Definitions/Lens

Our DEIJ Lens defines D, E, I, and J in action, focusing how they can be applied personally and organizationally rather than as passive, general concepts. Each term is then defined as a result of those actions, visioning what each concept creates when applied.

## Screening Tool

An effective way of measuring and driving DEIJ change, it lays a foundation to promote a decision that is rooted in and upholds the DEIJ Lens.

Questions tie directly to each definition and can be used to evaluate any aspect of our work from organizational structure, to projects, practices, processes, and beyond.

# DEIJ Lens and Screening Tool

## Purpose:

The DEIJ Lens and Screening tool serves as a concrete and actionable instrument to create a common understanding around what Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice mean in action (DEIJ Lens), and effectively evaluate our efforts (Screening Tool) to ensure our work upholds the goals, actions, and values within our D, E, I, and J lens.

It provides us a support system to steer clear of “surface” DEIJ work, driving improvements by focusing all efforts through this lens and incorporating tangible behaviors to support the definitions. Through use of ongoing use of this tool, DEIJ becomes effectively ingrained and centered throughout our watershed efforts.

## Components:

- Why Statement
- Active DEIJ Definitions (Lens)
- Screening Tool Questions for each definition



# How to Use the Screening Tool

## Overview

The Screening Tool is an effective and explicit way of measuring and proving action and change relative to the DEIJ definitions. Utilizing the tool in one's daily role is a process that evolves over time.

### Start:

Choose an effort to run through the tool. The lens can be applied to any area of your work. Some examples include:

- Selecting content/presentations for your event
- Conceptualizing and planning a project
- Process for new members to join your organization
- Process for conducting meetings with your staff
- Content for social media or newsletter

### Use the tool:

Ask each of the screening tool questions. They do not have to be used linearly (i.e. diversity first, then equity, etc).

The screening tool is designed to lead to more questions. As individuals become more fluent in using the tool, awareness and skills will develop making it easier to use.

### Outcomes:

Invariably, not everything will "pass" all the questions. Therefore, consider what changes will be made to bring the effort or project in line with the DEIJ Lens (definitions)

In many cases, changes will be incremental over time as opposed to making all changes at once.

If the effort is "out of compliance" in significant ways, you may have to consider ending that practice as it may cause harm to marginalized groups.

## Screening Tool Questions

### Diversity:

- How does this decision/practice/behavior, etc. value marginalized identities?
- How does this decision/practice/policy, etc. seek out diverse identities and perspectives as an asset?
- 3. How do we know?

### Equity:

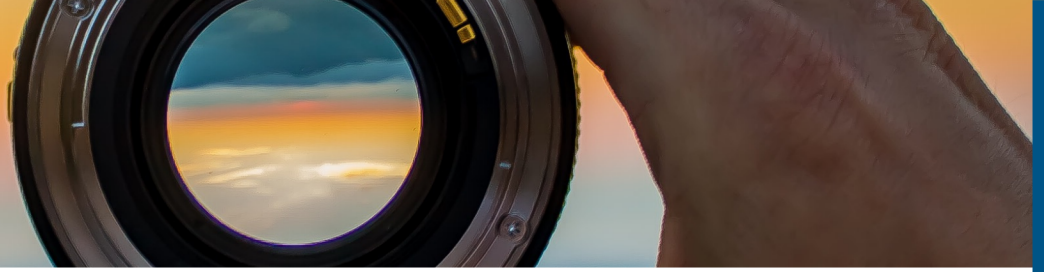
- What communities are most impacted by ecological debt (or this project/action/decision)?
- What are the root causes of disparities within this project/action/decision?
- What are the cultural and structural barriers that must be addressed?
- In what ways are marginalized communities centered in this endeavor?
- How do we know?

### Inclusion:

- In this context, what privileges or blind spots do we have? What are we missing (perspectives, people, inclusive structures, etc)?
- What behaviors will dismantle dynamics of power and privilege in this context?
- How are we challenging "traditional" frameworks?
- Do marginalized groups feel a sense of belonging?
- How do we know?

### Justice:

- How does this action/practice/policy repair harms to the community?
- What does the community want in order to address the impacts of environmental degradation (or this project/action/decision)?
- How do you know?



# Why DEIJ

The DEIJ “why” statement serves as our foundation by contextualizing and centering our commitment to DEIJ. Why statements communicate values from a heart and gut perspective and tap into meaningful concepts various communities can relate to. This connects us deeply to the work, driving behavior, focusing our attention, and creating purpose.

## DEIJ WHY STATEMENT:

**A healthy Delaware River Watershed is not just ecologically sound waters, wildlife, and habitat - it is one that provides equitable access to clean water, land, outdoor recreation, and economic opportunity to all communities.** CDRW deeply acknowledges that embedded in the environmental movement, and society at large, are systemic oppressions resulting in disproportionate environmental impacts on marginalized communities. It is the duty and imperative of CDRW to take action to address these issues - the Watershed, CDRW's work, and society as a whole, are not healthy until the unequal burdens placed on marginalized communities are actively prioritized and addressed. **To ensure a truly healthy watershed, CDRW commits to cultivating a Coalition that reflects the spectrum of identities within the watershed, provides equity in decision making, creates belonging among all members, and actively addresses ecological debt.\***

## Ecological Debt

\*Ecological debt is experiencing the highest impacts of climate change and environmental degradation but not being responsible for causing these impacts or accelerating climate change.

- Jessica Hernandez PhD, “Fresh Banana Leaves”





# DEIJ Definitions and Screening Tool Questions

## Diversity

**In Action:** Diversity is the practice of valuing the spectrum of interconnected identities and ways of being as an intrinsic asset within CDRW and across the watershed, with particular emphasis on marginalized identities.

### Vision/Result: A

Coalition that reflects, integrates, and celebrates the spectrum of identity and thought present in the Watershed.

### Diversity Screening Questions:

- How does this decision/practice/behavior, etc. value marginalized identities?
- How does this decision/practice/policy, etc. seek out diverse identities and perspectives as an asset?
- How do we know?

Notes:

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## Equity

**In Action:** Equity is the practice of addressing inherited ecological debt\* and the roots of disparities in marginalized communities to ensure access to environmental benefits as a priority of our advocacy efforts. Within CDRW, equity is addressing structural and cultural barriers to create the foundation needed for justice and ensure all voices, especially marginalized communities and identities, are centered. Equity infuses an understanding that environmental efforts do not automatically benefit everyone and must be crafted intentionally to address outcome disparities.

**Vision/Result:** A Coalition that actively centers marginalized communities and identities, maintaining the structure and culture necessary to address and prevent outcome disparities. Equity brings together diversity and inclusion, ultimately serving as the vehicle for justice.

### Equity Screening Questions:

- What communities are most impacted by ecological debt (or this project/action/decision)?
- What are the root causes of disparities within this project/action/decision?
- What are the cultural and structural barriers that must be addressed?
- In what ways are marginalized communities centered in this endeavor?
- How do we know?

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## Inclusion

**In Action:** Inclusion is the practice of intentionally creating a culture and structure where individuals, members, and communities experience belonging, can be their authentic self. It requires cultivating and applying intentional behaviors based in understanding the impact of power and privilege. It means challenging frameworks, removing blind spots, reimagining operations, and creating space for different ways of thinking.

**Vision/Result:** A Coalition that effectively supports diversity and innovation by sustaining a culture and structure where individuals, members, and communities experience belonging, respect, and consideration. Each person is able to bring their authentic selves and are valued for their unique identities and perspectives. Spaces, events, community, and conversations are intentional, with the needs of varying identities considered and accommodated. Members demonstrate advanced skill in considering and integrating the needs of identities beyond their own.

### Inclusion Screening Questions:

- In this context, what privileges or blind spots do we have? What are we missing (perspectives, people, inclusive structures, etc)?
- What behaviors will dismantle dynamics of power and privilege in this context?
- How are we challenging “traditional” frameworks?
- Do marginalized groups feel a sense of belonging?
- How do we know?

Notes:

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## Justice

**In Action:** Justice is the practice of taking direct action to repair current and a legacy of systemic environmental degradation which has disproportionately impacted communities and identities most marginalized within society.

**Vision/Result:** A Watershed where environmental degradation is greatly reduced, equity is applied to environmental burdens and benefits, environmental injustices and the systems causing them are remedied, and a better future is actively invested in. Working with marginalized communities to achieve Environmental Justice benefits is central to the goal of a healthy, protected Watershed.

### Justice Screening Questions:

- How does this action/practice/policy repair harms to the community?
- What does the community want in order to address the impacts of environmental degradation (or this project/action/decision)?
- How do you know?

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# Screening Tool Flow Chart

