EMSWCD Partners in Conservation (PIC) Grants Program Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

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EVALUATION GOALS

There were three primary overarching goals of the EMSWCD PIC Grant Program Evaluation, and each overarching goal had specific sub-goals, as follows:

1. EVALUATE PIC DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION OUTCOMES

1) Assess to what extent projects funded by PIC grants are serving organizations, leaders, and members of Black communities, Indigenous communities, other communities of color, and low-income residents (who is designing, leading, and benefitting from funding?)

2) Learn how and to what extent projects funded by PIC grants are increasing equitable access to environmental benefits in BIPOC and low-income communities, and hear recommendations for how grants can better support environmental health outcomes in those communities (Goal 6)

3) Gain a deeper understanding of the barriers faced by small and BIPOC-led and focused organizations in their efforts to apply for PIC grants and implement EMSWCD-funded projects

4) Hear community recommendations about how EMSWCD can address barriers in the PIC program to increase grant program participation among small and primarily BIPOC-led organizations

2. EVALUATE HOW WELL PIC PROGRAM IS MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS

1) Assess what aspects of the PIC program are working well for participants

2) Assess what aspects of the PIC program are difficult for participants, hear recommendations for addressing general program challenges and barriers

3) Hear how PIC grants have supported DEI efforts, barriers faced by White-led organizations and how EMSWCD can further support their efforts

3. EVALUATE PIC PROGRESS TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM GOALS

1) Assess to what extent PIC grant projects have complemented other EMSWCD program efforts in water quality, soil health, habitat restoration and sustainable agriculture (Goal 1)

2) Learn how PIC projects have increased environmental literacy of EMSWCD residents (Goal 2)

3) Understand how PIC projects have increased capacity and strengthened organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes (Goal 3)

4) Assess to what extent PIC grants have established and supported sustainable school and community gardens throughout the urban areas of the EMSWCD service area (Goal 4)

5) Assess to what extent PIC grants have increased the urban tree canopy and supported a sustainable urban forest (Goal 5)

6) Hear how PIC grants have increased conservation benefits for communities and populations experiencing disparities in environmental health, environmental education, and natural amenities (Goal 6)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **BIPOC leaders and grantees at White-led organizations provided detailed, thoughtful feedback for EMSWCD to improve their PIC grants program for them and others.**

   Recommendation: Read through and consider the detailed feedback and recommendations in this report, including quotes from BIPOC leaders in Appendix A, and the results of the online survey of White-led grantees in Appendix B.

2. **Many grantees appreciated and benefitted from a supportive relationship with Grants Manager, Suzanne Easton.**

   Recommendation: EMSWCD should continue to prioritize relationship building and flexibility in grants program management.

3. **EMSWCD has the power to influence deeper shifts in power dynamics and increase equity in conservation grant making.** Most PIC projects have increased conservation benefits in BIPOC and low-income communities. However, grants and direct financial benefit (wages) go primarily to White-led organizations and staff, upholding the White-dominant power structure.

   Recommendations include:

   - Increase the number of BIPOC-led projects via removal of barriers and specific investments in BIPOC applicants
   - Change grant application to require, or selection process to prefer, projects with deeper BIPOC leadership, BIPOC involvement in project design, and that share funds with BIPOC communities
   - Deeply explore and reflect upon how EMSWCD has historically excluded communities of color, and respond with a commitment to dismantling these systems and practices -share findings and commitments publicly
   - Remove the land ownership requirement from serving on the EMSWCD Board of Directors and recruit BIPOC community leaders to serve in this role
   - Acknowledge, identify and address paternalism and unconscious implicit bias in grant-making
   - Increase BIPOC staff and leadership at EMSWCD

4. **Providing opportunities for people to engage with the outdoors was the primary way PIC projects provided conservation benefits to BIPOC and low-income communities.** BIPOC leaders provided a rich description of how their projects increased community involvement in outdoor activities such as gardening, naturescaping, tree planting and restoration.

5. **Increasing access to PIC grants among BIPOC communities was the primary way BIPOC leaders said EMSWCD grants can better support environmental health outcomes in BIPOC and low-income communities**

6. **EMSWCD can make innovative changes to improve equitable access to PIC grants. BIPOC leaders have many suggestions.** Primary challenges faced by BIPOC organizations include difficult application and reporting processes, reimbursement funding, and the 1:1 matching requirement. BIPOC leaders also described a history of White preference, gatekeeping by funders, and difficulty separating out their DEI work from day-to-day operations.

   Recommendations: Suggestions include simplifying applications and reporting, providing up-front funding rather than reimbursement, and reducing the match requirement. They also encourage EMSWCD to root out and dismantle practices embedded in the grant making process that benefit White-led organizations over BIPOC-led.

7. **EMSWCD should carefully consider the effects of increasing outreach and applicants among BIPOC communities.** Will the District increase funding available for new applicants, or create additional competition and burden on small organizations, with little hope for funding?

   Recommendation: Increase funding available for grants, and make clear how EMSWCD will prioritize funding. Consider specific funding pool for BIPOC applicants.

8. **Primary PIC challenges among all grantees include limits on administrative funding, complicated application and reporting, reimbursement being difficult for cash flow, match requirement too high, individual grant awards too low, and needing easier access to longer-term funding.**

   Recommendation: Grantees recommended increasing admin funding limits and flexibility around how funds are spent, simplifying the application and reporting process, providing liaisons or technical assistance for new applicants, providing upfront funding, reducing match required, increasing individual grant amounts, and streamlining the process to access repeat funding.

9. **EMSWCD should consider changing how Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)-specific funding is allocated in order to increase equitable access.** It can be easier for White-led organizations to separate out their DEI work and access DEI funding. Because BIPOC-led organizations often do not need equity trainings, already have relationships with their community, and their DEI efforts are inextricably intertwined in their day-to-day work, it can be harder for them to call out specific DEI funding needs and access DEI-specific funding.

   Recommendations: Clarify and expand the types of work that can be funded under the DEI category to make it easier for BIPOC organizations to access, such as making it clear that DEI funding can be used by BIPOC-organizations for their day-to-day work, such as hiring and retaining BIPOC staff and board members, or paying stipends to community members. Or, consider equitably restructuring how DEI-specific funding is offered, such as offering it as automatic additional funding for BIPOC-led organizations for which DEI is inextricably intertwined with their day-to-day operations, while requiring White-led organizations to outline specific DEI activities and outcomes.

10. **All Organizational Grants Program Goals (1-6) have been achieved to-date. Improvements could be made to further achieve Goal 3 (capacity and structures to advance equitable outcomes).**

   Recommendations: Make strong DEI-focused organizational capacity or development a requirement for all PIC projects (such as hiring and retaining BIPOC staff, authentic community partnerships including funding for BIPOC partners, and BIPOC leadership). At a minimum, projects meeting this requirement should be given preference over projects that do not. Consider not awarding funding to repeat grantees that do not invest in deeper DEI-focused work.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PIC DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION OUTCOMES

Who leads and who benefits from PIC funding: Stamberger Outreach analysis and recommendations

Most PIC projects increase conservation benefits in BIPOC and low-income communities. However, grants and direct financial benefit (wages) go primarily to White-led organizations and staff, keeping the balance of power in the hands of White people. As a significant local funding source, EMSWCD has the power to influence deeper shifts in power dynamics and increase equity in conservation grant making.

EMSWCD PIC grants funded 70 PIC projects between 2017 and 2020. Nearly all projects provided non-financial conservation benefits to BIPOC communities, such as increased neighborhood trees, environmental education, and connection to conservation-related careers. However, fifty-one percent (35) of these projects were led by White people alone. Only eight of these 35 White-only-led projects included BIPOC input in project design (27 did not include any BIPOC input). Twenty-six percent (18) of projects were led and designed by Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC-led). Twenty-three percent (16) of projects were led by a combination of White and BIPOC people, but with primarily White people at the highest levels of management and organizational leadership. Of the 16 White-BIPOC-led projects, only four shared project leadership somewhat equally among White and BIPOC project staff. At least 12 of the White-BIPOC-led projects featured White people in the position of power either by subcontracting with a BIPOC community partner they had sought out, or as the lead project staff with BIPOC support staff or interns. No White-BIPOC partnerships were led by BIPOC people. This suggests a "checking the box" dynamic in which White organizations are sharing some leadership and resources with people of color, but ultimately upholding the White-dominant power structure.

From 2017 to 2020, 38% (24) of projects benefitted BIPOC communities simply by implementing their projects in public schools or neighborhoods with known diverse and low-income demographics, rather than through direct relationships. Eighteen of these 24 were White-led projects, and six were White and BIPOC-led projects. All BIPOC-led projects (and the majority of White and BIPOC-led projects) focused specifically on BIPOC youth and communities through partnerships and direct recruitment. BIPOC-led projects result in more authentic equity and inclusion work.

More overall funding went to White-led projects than any other project type, and the least amount went to BIPOC-led projects (not surprising given that there were fewer BIPOC-led projects overall). However, when averaged across the number of projects, BIPOC projects have received the lowest average award per project of any of the groups. Interestingly, White-BIPOC-led projects had the highest average award per project (higher than the White-led group), showing a preference for these types of projects among grant reviewers. However, when you consider that most White-

BIPOC-led projects are ultimately housed within White-led organizations and with White staff in higher levels of employment, the primary financial benefit in these projects also goes to the White-led organization and White upper and middle-management staff.

Additionally, White-led applicants have received repeat funding from EMSWCD at a higher rate than BIPOC-led applicants. The 18 BIPOC-led projects represent 12 different organizations – most projects are from one-time applicants (four of which were new applicants in 2020 and could not have received repeat funding yet). The 52 White-led projects and White and BIPOC-led projects (from majority White-led organizations) represent 26 organizations – an average of 2 grants per organization.

Project Leadership	Total Award Amount 2017-2020	Total # of Projects	Average Award per project
White leadership	$ 1,367,434	35	$ 39,069.54
White and BIPOC leadership	$ 722,950	16	$ 45,184.38
BIPOC leadership	$ 674,564	18	$ 37,475.78

Project Leadership	Total Award Amount 2017-2020	Total # of Projects	Average Award per project
White leadership + White-BIPOC leadership	$ 2,090,384	51	$ 40,987.92
BIPOC leadership	$ 674,564	18	$ 37,475.78

Underrepresentation of BIPOC grant recipients in the applicant pool is directly connected to the exclusionary history of the environmental movement and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. While BIPOC communities were denied access, White-led organizations were able to form longstanding relationships with EMSWCD, increasing their skills and capacity as the grant program slowly became tailored to what worked for them. Unconscious implicit bias in grant-making has also likely played a part in disparities like lower average award amounts for BIPOC-led projects.

Recommendations (Stamberger Outreach Consulting):

1. Increase BIPOC leaders and staff designing and being paid to implement projects in their own communities. This will require removal of barriers and specific investments in BIPOC applicants. Some examples include funding set aside exclusively for BIPOC applicants, extra support for first time BIPOC applicants and grantees, and direct and intentional outreach to communities of color.

2. As a powerful local funder, EMSWCD can improve how White-led organizations include equity in their projects by requiring or preferring projects with deeper BIPOC leadership, BIPOC involvement in project design, and that share funds with BIPOC communities. Relationship building and direct focus increases opportunities for shared leadership and benefits to BIPOC communities.

3. EMSWCD has already begun some direct outreach to BIPOC communities, and a record of four new BIPOC applicants applied for PIC funding in 2020. However, one BIPOC grantee gave an important word of warning about increasing BIPOC applicants, but not also increasing funding available. EMSWCD should consider how they will make difficult decisions about funding

priorities while centering equity.

4. Overcoming the legacy of racism in conservation grant-making will require serious and deep reflection to understand how EMSWCD's programs and practices have excluded and continue to exclude communities of color, paired with a commitment and accountability to dismantling these systems and practices.

5. Another important starting place for sharing power is to remove the land ownership requirement from serving on the EMSWCD Board of Directors and to recruit BIPOC community leaders. EMSWCD has been working on this effort and should continue to strive to change this requirement.

6. EMSWCD should acknowledge, identify, and address unconscious implicit bias in grant-making. Implicit bias is a part of human nature that results in racist systems. Implicit bias can be identified and minimized. For example, there is a risk of implicit bias in funding decisions based on feelings about fairness, or an organization's stability, progress, or ability to carry out a project.

7. EMSWCD should also consider changing how DEI-specific funding is allocated to increase equitable access. It can be easier for White-led organizations to separate out and access DEI funding in terms of trainings and additional work beyond their normal activities. It can be harder for BIPOC-led organizations to call out specific DEI funding needs separate from their day to day work. One option is that EMSWCD could clarify and expand the types of work that can be funded under the DEI category to make it easier for BIPOC organizations to access, such as making it clear that DEI funding can be used by BIPOC-organizations for their day-to-day work, such as hiring and retaining BIPOC staff and board members, or paying stipends to community members. Alternately, EMSWCD could consider equitably restructuring how DEI-specific funding is offered, such as offering it as automatic additional funding for BIPOC-led organizations for which DEI is inextricably intertwined with their day-to-day operations, while requiring White-led organizations to outline specific DEI activities.

How PIC projects have increased access to conservation benefits in BIPOC and low-income communities, and how EMSWCD can better support this work

- *The majority of PIC projects increased environmental benefits in BIPOC and low-income communities.*

- *Grantees held in common "providing opportunities for people to engage with the outdoors" as the most reported way their projects provided conservation benefits to the community. BIPOC leaders provided a rich description of how their projects increased community benefits.*

- *BIPOC leaders most often mentioned "increasing access to PIC grants" when asked how the grants can better support environmental health outcomes in BIPOC and low-income communities.*

ADDITIONAL CONSERVATION BENEFITS	HOW DEI IS WOVEN INTO EE WORK
BIPOC Grantees	
• Putting funds directly into the hands of community members • Providing culturally relevant environmental education • Providing greater access to healthy food and agriculture • Giving community hope during a time of uncertainty • Increasing environmental health in the community • One participant feels that their work is barely scratching the surface • Another clarified that the benefits of their PIC project are a result of their hard work, not the PIC program itself	• Designed by the community (most mentioned) • Offered in multiple languages (next most mentioned) • Focused on and serving Black and Brown youth specifically (third most mentioned) • Incorporating a focus on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) • Making sure events are accessible to the community • Paying BIPOC people to help deliver education • All staff and leaders have completed DEI training
Grantees at White-led organizations	
• Creating or improving natural amenities in communities (2nd most reported) • Increasing the number of trees (3rd most reported)	• Provide culturally relevant EE (2nd most reported) • Providing outdoor experiences that take cultural, racial, and socioeconomic factors into consideration (3rd most reported)

Barriers and challenges faced by BIPOC-led organizations & recommendations for improvement

BARRIERS FACED	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
1. Limits on administrative (admin) funding are unrealistic	Increase limits for admin funding or add flexibility in use of funding across categories (remove / reduce restrictions)
2. Reimbursement-based funding is not possible, BIPOC-led organizations often have few resources	Provide full or partial funds up front at beginning of grant
3. Applications difficult for organizations without grant writing experience, grant	1. Consider alternative application formats such as video or interview applications

writers, and accounting capabilities	2. Streamlining and reducing the application questions to what is really needed
	3. Simplifying language and adding visual elements to the grant instructions
	4. Offering a very simple pathway for BIPOC organizations to access funding
	5. Provide administrative support for applications and reports - small grants for grant writers or admin assistance or EMSWCD provide individualized support
	Organizational examples specifically recommended:
	- Solidaire Network -https://solidairenetwork.org/
	- Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) - https://www.portland.gov/bps/cleanenergy
	- Metro Community Placemaking Grants - https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-partners/grants-and-resources/community-placemaking-grants
	- East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) - https://eastportlandactionplan.org/grants
4. 1:1 Matching requirement hard to meet, hard to track, burdensome, seems unnecessarily difficult	Reduce the match requirement
5. Award amounts too low to support quality projects with the detail requested by the application process, pay staff enough to live on in Multnomah County, account for increased costs over time	Increase individual grant amounts
6. Need for longer-term funding / challenges with multi-year funding	Increase the number of years an organization can apply and be awarded, and simplify application requirements for repeat grantees; support grantees beyond the grant
7. Gatekeeping by funders creates and upholds barriers	Reflect on and dismantle paternalism within grant-making system – i.e. basing funding decisions on perceived capability or capacity of a BIPOC-led organization, or knowledge of potential funding from other sources; be very clear and transparent about rules for funding decisions based on these types of information
	Promote BIPOC grantees to other funding organizations

8. Program isn't designed to include BIPOC people
 	
   - Doesn't feel like it's for them
 	
   - History of racism in conservation work keeps BIPOC organizations from applying and has given White-led projects more access to resources
 	
   - BIPOC-led projects and focus on environmental justice not highlighted and visible
 	
   - Questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion aren't written for BIPOC applicants
	1. Increase local BIPOC representation at EMSWCD – people with roots in communities, hire BIPOC staff
	
	2. Work to identify, acknowledge, and change a grant making system that has favored White applicants, provide additional support or funding or focus for BIPOC-led applicants and grantees (Stamberger Outreach recommendation)
	
	3. Highlight EMSWCD commitment to environmental justice
	
	4. Highlight BIPOC Grantees on website, in materials, and specific info sessions
	
	5. Tailor questions to include BIPOC leaders and organizations; consider that DEI is inherent in BIPOC organizations and that explaining how they incorporate equity work can be confusing and awkward

9. Grant award decision making process not clear	Be very clear about how grantees are chosen (who chooses and how), and be clear about what is expected when feedback is given to applicants by the grants committee (do they need to respond, or is it just feedback?)
10. Lack of awareness about EMSWCD funding among BIPOC organizations and communities (includes lack of relationships between EMSWCD and BIPOC communities)	Build relationships through intentional outreach to BIPOC communities was also mentioned often – specific, direct outreach to executive directors and organizations, go to community events, hire BIPOC staff that reflect BIPOC communities, pay community liaisons to conduct outreach

Additional Challenges Described

- One person mentioned that more BIPOC organizations would have likely applied in the 2020 cycle due to increased focus on DEIJ in general (i.e. lack of a regular most recent funding cycle was a barrier)
- Lack of financial history required in application process – financial statements, budget history
- Lack of fiscal sponsorship – how to get a fiscal sponsor can be daunting
- Competing priorities - communities may be focused on and supporting other immediate needs

Additional Recommendations

- Support grantees beyond the grant – help an organization maintain and continue the work funded by EMSWCD, transition support, funding connections
- Add contingency funding to each project budget for unexpected expenses

- Bring grantees together specifically to network, share challenges, successes, and lessons learned
- Offer applications in multiple languages – language justice
- Provide more grant workshops and information sessions specific to BIPOC orgs or new applicants

2.HOW WELL PIC PROGRAM IS MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS

What worked well for PIC grantees

The most mentioned aspect of the program that went well for both BIPOC-led and White-led grantees was the relationship and support from Grants Manager, Suzanne Easton.

WHAT WORKED WELL FOR BIPOC-LED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Relationship with Grants Manager (Suzanne Easton) and her support was the most mentioned
2. Flexibility – in project shifts, response to COVID, PIC Pause really appreciated
3. Helped organizations build relationships both with grant-makers and the broader conservation community
4. Multi-year funding was mentioned as a benefit by several participants
5. About half of participants' response to the application process was lukewarm, describing it as "standard", "adequate", and "fine"
6. Two participants said the reporting process was simple and didn't need to be changed
7. One person said the reimbursement process was "pretty easy and straightforward"
8. Gathering with other PIC grantees via EMSWCD (mentioned once)
9. EMSWCD seems to understand systems change (mentioned once)
10. Zoom grants worked well (mentioned once)

WHAT WORKED WELL FOR WHITE -LED ORGANIZATIONS (from most to least reported)

1. Relationship with Grants Manager, Suzanne Easton
2. Application in Zoom Grants
3. Adequate funding to implement and complete project
4. Support for diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives
5. Reporting process in Zoom Grants
6. Reimbursement process in Zoom Grants

Challenges and recommendations held in common among BIPOC-led and White-led projects

DIFFICULTIES WITH PIC GRANTS	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
1. Limits on administrative (admin) funding are unrealistic	Increase limits for admin funding or add flexibility in use of funding across categories (remove / reduce restrictions)
2. Reimbursement is difficult in terms of cash flow and accounting burden	Provide full or partial funds up front at beginning of grant
3. Applications and reporting complicated and difficult	Simplify, clarify, and increase flexibility in applications, reporting, and funding agreements
4. Matching requirement hard to meet, hard to track, burdensome	Reduce the match requirement
5. Grant amounts too low	Increase individual grant amounts
6. Need for longer-term funding / challenges with multi-year funding	Increase the number of years an organization can apply and be awarded, and simplify application requirements for repeat grantees; support grantees beyond the grant

How PIC funding has supported Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts, Barriers to DEI efforts of White-led organizations, and suggestions from White-led organizations for support

In interviews, we asked BIPOC grantees how their PIC grant/s strengthened their organizations DEI capacity. Seven of eight grantees said the PIC grant did increase their DEI capacity in the following ways:

HOW PIC FUNDING HAS SUPPORTED THE DEI EFFORTS OF BIPOC-LED ORGANIZATIONS
1. DEI work is integral to our organization – any capacity building for our organization increases our ability to do DEI work
2. Hiring and retaining BIPOC staff
3. One organization hired an equity consultant and paid for trainings
4. One participant said the PIC grant expanded the diversity of who they serve
5. Another participant mentioned that PIC funding has helped them do more equity partnership building with the community

HOW PIC FUNDING HAS SUPPORTED THE DEI EFFORTS OF WHITE-LED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Providing support for BIPOC engagement and participation (most reported)
2. Support for BIPOC partnerships (2nd most reported)
3. Funding for DEI consultants and training (3rd most reported)
4. Support to hire and retain BIPOC staff (4th most reported, nearly the same as "none")
5. Support for board development and diversification (least most reported)

BARRIERS TO WHITE-LED DEI EFFORTS

1. Lack of funding
   - Not having the ability to pay community members a fair wage for their time and work was the most reported problem with lack of funding and DEI work.
   - Not having enough staff time or capacity to spend on DEI work such as relationship building
   - Other funding-related responses included needing funding to pay a DEI consultant and needing funding for DEI organizational structure work
2. Several participants mentioned difficulty diversifying or working on DEI with their board
3. One participant mentioned a lack of culturally competent staff at EMSWCD as a barrier to their DEI work
4. One participant mentioned needing examples of what culturally responsive environmental education looks like

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WHITE-LED ORGANIZATIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT THEIR DEI WORK

1. Providing funding for DEI capacity building was the most mentioned way EMSWCD can support these grantees' DEI efforts, including paid staff time, time to develop partnerships, funding for staff and board training, and funding that can be paid to community partners.
2. Pooling and sharing DEI learnings and resources was the next most mentioned way that EMSWCD can help support the DEI work of primarily White-led grantees.
3. Some participants needed support in training their Board on DEI
4. Some participants wanted EMSWCD to consult with them specifically about their DEI work
5. BIPOC nature & agriculture jobs & recruiting board for the metro (one mention)
6. Provide funding for food access work (one mention)
7. Encourage better wages in green workforce, more development of jobs that support living wages (one mention)
8. Include disability in DEI work (one mention)
9. Develop a shared set of equity metrics (one mention)
10. Encourage providing funding to pay BIPOC-led organizations as partners on White-led projects (one mention)

3. PIC PROGRESS TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM GOALS

All Organizational Grants Program Goals have been achieved to-date. Improvements could be made to further achieve Goal 3: PIC grants have increased capacity and strengthened organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes. EMSWCD should make strong DEI capacity or implementation outcomes a requirement for all PIC projects. At a minimum, projects meeting this requirement should be given preference over projects that do not.

1. **Goal 1. Achieved. PIC grants projects complemented other EMSWCD program efforts in water quality, soil health, habitat restoration and sustainable agriculture.**

   Our analysis of 55 project reports shows that every project complements EMSWCD program efforts, most in multiple categories, as evidenced by the following metrics.

Acres of vegetation restored	2,152.30
Acres weeds treated or removed	1,367.87
Linear feet of stream restored	143,546
Number native plants/trees planted	70,588
Cubic ft of trash/weeds removed	57,502,991
Pounds of trash/weeds removed	14,644
Square feet of impervious surface removed	41,454
Gallons of stormwater managed	8,995,155
Square feet of urban habitat installed	6,015,620

2. **Goal 2. Achieved. PIC grant projects have increased environmental literacy of EMSWCD residents.**

   Of 54 projects with final reports, 53 increased environmental literacy. These 54 projects resulted in the following metrics.

Number of volunteers engaged	10,165
Number of volunteer hours	58,613.50
Number of elementary school students receiving environmental education (EE)	18,519

Number of middle school and high school youth receiving EE	3,620
Total hours of environmental education	285,518.24
Number of general public reached through environmental education events	34,811

3. **Goal 3. Achieved, and Can Improve. PIC grants have increased capacity and strengthened organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes**

Analysis of Grant Reports

All PIC grants increased organizational capacity, thus, we looked at this question in terms of strengthening organizational structures to advance DEI outcomes. Of 55 reported in this category, 44 projects did use PIC funding to strengthen org structures towards DEI. The remaining 11 did not. The 11 PIC projects that did not strengthen organizational structures to support DEI work were all White-led organizations, and all but one funded only white staff and contractors. All 11 had only indirect partnerships with BIPOC communities through schools or neighborhood demographics, none had specific and intentional partnerships with community groups.

The 11 projects that did not use PIC funding to strengthen DEI organizational structures came from 9 organizations. Four of these organizations were one-time grantees. Two of these organizations are repeat grantees who have gone on to invest in deeper organizational DEI work and only appeared on this list once (Depave and Sauvie Island School). One organization did deepen DEI structures in 2018 and then did not in 2019. Two organizations in particular appear on this list multiple times and do not appear to have used PIC funding to significantly strengthen organizational structures that advance DEI work such as hiring and paying BIPOC youth, staff or community partners, developing culturally specific community partnerships, or focusing projects specifically on supporting BIPOC communities. These partners: Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership (LCEP) and Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors (ECO) should be further encouraged to more meaningfully incorporate DEI principles into their projects. EMSWCD should consider making strengthening DEI organizational structures and outcomes a requirement for all funded PIC projects. At a minimum, projects meeting this requirement should be given preference over projects that do not.

4. **Goal 4. Achieved. PIC grants have established and supported sustainable school and community food gardens throughout the urban areas of the EMSWCD service area**

Of 55 projects reporting, 24 (44%) supported sustainable school and community food gardens. 31 (56%) did not. A total of 431,535 square feet of edible garden plots was created

through these 24 projects. 27,057 youth and adults were engaged in sustainable agriculture through these projects.

5. **Goal 5. Achieved. PIC grants have increased the urban tree canopy and supported a sustainable urban forest**

Of 55 projects reporting, 31 (56%) did increase urban tree canopy and supported a sustainable urban forest, 24 (44% did not). 70,588 native plants were planted through these 31 projects.

6. **Goal 6. Achieved. PIC grants have increased conservation benefits for communities and populations experiencing disparities in environmental health, environmental education, and natural amenities**

52 (95%) of 54 projects reporting increased conservation benefits in underserved communities. 58,917,444 square feet of on the ground conservation projects were installed in low-income neighborhoods through these 52 projects. 15,770 at-risk youth were involved in the projects. See Section 1.2 for more details about how PIC grants have increased conservation benefits in underserved communities.

Stamberger Outreach recommendations for numerical reporting categories:

- Clarify what is meant by "at-risk youth" – does this mean BIPOC youth?

- Use either cubic feet or pounds of trash removed - one person put in both metrics but all others chose one, overreporting likely.

- Consider clarifying "square feet of project in low-income neighborhood". May want to include guidance on how to know the answer to this question. Many grantees simply used the square footage of their project.

- May want to clarify "# of youth and adults in gardening or sustainable agriculture". Does this mean food gardening only? Or also habitat restoration? May lead to overreporting.

APPENDIX A. QUOTES FROM BIPOC LEADERS

1.PIC DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION OUTCOMES

1.2 How PIC projects increased conservation benefits in communities

INCREASED ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS

"It gave the youth opportunity to get out and enjoy the land, a healthy opportunity. They get to walk and work on trails and be active, and get educated about why are you cleaning ivy: to make sure ivy don't smother trees and kill plants, the rebirth of life. More opportunities of this gives the community a sense of ownership and by going out to places like [natural areas] opens up a world of opportunities, helps kids feel part of the bigger community."

PUTTING FUNDS DIRECTLY INTO THE HANDS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

"We piloted a project where we had funding to buy produce from the farmers for neighborhood distribution, and to pay folks in the neighborhood for their work in the garden. It was awesome being able to write in money this round to redistribute resources."

"One thing we tell funders is that to be accountable to BIPOC communities, we need to be accountable to our [BIPOC] staff. Our major impacts are to our [job training program staff], all immigrants that got paid super poorly before [our program]. The major impacts were with our crew, not only did they receive the initial training, they were able to provide for their families, health insurance, dental, vital necessities."

PROVIDING CULTURALLY RELEVANT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

"Our [education program] funding was set up to help us build strong connections with the school district and build cultural competency in our curriculum so kids are more interested in connecting to these fields because their experience [in our program] resonates with them."

ACCESS TO FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

"In [our] program we're really training and trying to focus on Black and Brown farmers to be able to farm - most of those folks are wanting to support their community with access to food - that is a part of access to the environment as well - I don't see it as separate. Building the connections and networks to other programs and organizations - field trips to visit [other BIPOC-led organizations and projects]. Because of how those programs are blending access to food knowledge and the environment, it creates a larger network of Black and Brown folks interested in this work, and it expands. There's a piece around food that it is providing a healthy environment."

PIC PROJECT GAVE THE COMMUNITY HOPE DURING A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

"Through the pandemic we were able to still hold these trainings. The employment opportunities dropped significantly at the beginning of the pandemic, and to have these trainings still happen, that provided workers with a sense of economic empowerment. Also, indirectly sending to folks a message that there was hope that things are gonna pick up, people are hiring, people paying, putting into practice what you're learning - a feeling like the context is temporary and there will continue to be these opportunities."

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ABOUT COMMUNITY BENEFITS

"[Our programming] had a huge impact for those families that were able to be served, but when I look at the broader picture of things, it still seems like symptom vs. system work. We have a limited reach because we're only serving x number of students. When I think about Black and Brown communities having access to a healthy environment in general, this project was barely a drop in the puddle in the grand scheme of things."

"Don't credit it to PIC, credit it to [our organization's] staff who are out there doing the work. I don't credit PIC with the work, I credit myself. Too often I've been discredited."

How is DEI is woven into the environmental education efforts of BIPOC grantees?

DESIGNED BY THE COMMUNITY

"Also, most importantly, you want to involve them in the planning process, asking what works best for you? What would you like to see? This is something that [our organization] does super well. Organizations, governments, businesses tend to ask after they've already decided instead of including folks into that process to figure out what they prefer."

"With the curriculum, we try to make sure that ways of knowing and understanding the environment are incorporated - more of a diverse array of them. Our education coordinator will make the curriculum plans and sometimes change them according to the identity of the cohort participation."

INCLUDE OTHER LANGUAGES

"For sure language justice, being accessible to monolingual Spanish speakers - that has been a clear point of funding through this grant is we've been able to hire interpreters for English language presentations, and I think that is a clear example of equity work we've been able to explicitly build into the trainings - to hire and compensate interpreters that are themselves [members of the community]."

INCORPORATING A FOCUS ON TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE (TEK)

"One specific example was a part of our program in the past was kids came out and service learning, more hands-on, and we were thinking about that and learning more around what it means to decolonize your work and incorporate indigenous practices - everyone does the land acknowledgement now - we thought about how to make that accessible to youth - how do we talk about genocide and land theft with middle schoolers? We were able to build out a land acknowledgement that felt right for youth, and instead of "service learning" we now call it "stewardship". We talk about imagining how people before us stewarded this land, that part of what we're doing is continuing that work. We were also going around and incorporating some signage in the languages of indigenous folks native to the area, wanting to weave that into some of the conversations we're having about conservation."

"TEK is such an important part of our program, not only western science, but leaving space to also acknowledge and understand an recognize that before colonization stared, we had our own ecology, we had our own hydrology - some of it has been forgotten. That's why it's important that we include these other ways of knowing in our program because that's how we remember - talking to teaching each other, passing those things down together."

MAKING SURE EVENTS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE COMMUNITY

"I think when you make the trainings relatable, and we made sure there was easy access to them, we provide childcare, snacks, meals, transportation stipends, etc. Making sure we're offering incentives is the big one. In order for BIPOC folks to participate, we need to create that equity, we need to make sure they have the ability to participate, they're not losing their hours at work to participate. Sometimes that means having trainings at night."

FOCUSED ON AND SERVING BLACK AND BROWN YOUTH SPECIFICALLY

"It's woven in in terms of the training topics and how we deliver trainings to our youth, who we focus on, who we bring into our [programs], our [programs] are an affinity group for Black and Brown youth - the inclusion piece is first in terms of how we work, who we work with, how we prioritize. In our internship program, all the other organizations are BIPOC-led community-based organizations - it helps us and other partner organizations."

Only BIPOC grantees were asked how PIC grants can better support environmental health outcomes in BIPOC and low-income communities.

MOST REPLIES FOCUSED ON INCREASING ACCESS TO PIC GRANTS FOR BIPOC LEADERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

"I believe that BIPOC-led organizations and BIPOC leaders and program managers within our field, even within white-led orgs, are best positioned to create solutions that are appropriate and impactful within communities. The more accessible the grant program becomes the greater the impact they will be able to have."

GRANTEES SHOULD GET TOGETHER FOR LONG-TERM VISIONING WORK AROUND DEI OUTCOMES

"There needs to be a focus on long-term visioning and long-term outcomes for a project. This is up to EMSWCD to decide: are we just trying to fuel programs, or do we want to look at DEI and come up with some strategic long-term goals that our grantees come together and collaborate on to bring about systemic change? I have no idea who their other grantees are! If we want to see long term success and good use of money it's coming together with people to say: how are we doing this DEI work, what do we need to do collectively in addition to our program? It's [EMSWCD] paying for relationship building, coalition building, and capacity building."

EMSWCD SHOULD GO FURTHER TO SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO INCREASE SAFETY FOR BIPOC PEOPLE IN NATURE AND IN OUR COMMUNITIES

"Multiple committees I'm on, I keep hearing "access to nature". I feel like the whole environmental sector, they are talking about access to nature as transportation security (a huge thing our community faces). That is one part, but also I'm thinking safety - like you hear about violence happening to people of color in natural areas - that's the real conversation we could be having. I don't understand why this sector isn't having that conversation, and is still stuck on transportation. In early 2020, a man was tazed in a national park - a Native man praying. That's what I think about with access to nature - I don't wanna go if a park ranger's gonna taze me for praying on my land. That's my round about answer: don't be afraid to support movements like Defund The Police."

1.3 Gain a deeper understanding of the barriers faced by small and BIPOC-led and focused organizations in their efforts to apply for PIC grants and implement EMSWCD-funded projects

LIMITS ON AMOUNT OF GRANT THAT CAN BE USED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE (ADMIN) FUNDING

"I always find it a little challenging to work in the explanation for general operations funding. It would be easier to do what we do if we didn't have to try to align everything to what a funder is wanting to fund - just our work in general - have it fund general operations - anything that's not [general operations] is always a little bit more of a burden for us. The other challenge is having to make the case that our admin expenses are part of our program expenses - the work is peoples' salaries. It's a challenge to make the case that we have to pay our operations manager to support programming - always challenging to explain this - and not just: I want to fund half of my development person. That could be resolved if folks were more open to general funding. To be real, our true indirect rate is more like 33% for what folks are considering indirect."

"Before COVID, most funders have an admin cap at 10-15%, which is not realistic for what we're spending, that is why I try to limit our admin staff time."

"In [our] community, relationships are so important, but I don't see any grants that have that as a specific line item in the budget - you can't just get to know each other, where does that time come [from]? Out of the organization's budget, right? To hear organizations who have gotten awarded say 'make sure your staff time is under a certain amount to increase your chances' - how do you support our organizations, but you don't give them the compensation you need just to live? We're just at the point where we need people, we need to survive, we need livable income. Most grants, especially from city, state, or federal, aren't as generous with making sure those things are met. It makes me think that organizations value the data that comes out of the project they want us to do more than my humanity - there's an issue there. I'm not saying this just because of EMSWCD, but these are things that are on my mind a lot and from conversations with other local nonprofits. So much of the grant process is tied up in reporting and writing down your experience and how you're gonna measure. The way it's set up like this it feels like the foundations are just data mining us - it's another form of extraction - instead of doing it verbally, let's ask you to write down a bunch of stuff so we can do the data analysis and extract your experience to make our program better - when we're out here saying we can't breathe, we can't live."

REIMBURSEMENT-BASED FUNDING NOT FEASIBLE

"Reimbursement is racist and problematic - lots of Black and Brown organizations don't have the funds to do this. If we're going to try to lead with equity, we need to stop doing things that immediately take people out of the running to participate. We've gotten city grants, works the same way - I told them: 'I don't know you - we don't have 100k to loan to you'. Target doesn't say, 'sure take that home', that's not how it works. The government needs to start being mindful how they're doing business - this is deliberate in its design to [exclude] Black and Brown people and women-owned, who don't have funds to up-front the government or entity - be mindful of that and come out of that."

"If they are serving community-based organizations, that unless these organizations have a large pot of money, most of us don't have the money to work with these reimbursement grants - that's the challenge with having government money coming to groups that don't have a lot of money - how do we wait to get paid back?"

"Another thing we've heard is the administrative burden in what it takes to administer reimbursement- based funding, putting that weight on the organization."

WRITTEN APPLICATION DIFFICULT

"Just going through the initial process of how to explain your work and how to put the whole budget (there were a lot of things I wasn't familiar with). When they're doing it [the application questions], it's tailored for larger organizations (asking what % of people of

color you serve, for example), hasn't always been catered to BIPOC organizations. When you are first getting started with a PIC grant, not knowing what that question entails can be questionable about how much info you should share, or what you should share."

"A lot of Black and Brown organizations don't have professional grant writers - if you don't have this, it's hard to access the dollars - you can't be flowery or obscure at all, looking for very particular language and ways of speaking - often not how Black people think or are trained - it's not an easy shift."

"Especially if it's government, it can be overwhelming - it can feel discouraging to apply - it feels very bureaucratic and [people might feel] we don't have a chance of getting it - folks may feel discouraged to apply."

"A lot of my partners [that are small and BIPOC-led organizations] know about the EMSWCD grants. The main issue is that barrier of completing that application and coming up with the matching funds."

"I came from a fundraising background; I know how to do that, but that isn't a field or skill-set that is as accessible for BIPOC communities, and not a lot of organizations are investing in hiring a grant writer."

"I have been doing this work for so long, I can read through the RFA and know, but I think the language is not really accessible - like 'these are the objectives of the grant, how do I write a successful grant application that ties into the objectives?'"

"The language around 'must address soil erosion, prevention, water quality, watershed health...' The more White-centric conservation language can be a little inaccessible if you're a smaller organization, or not used to making that direct connection [between your project and these goals]."

"For other, smaller and emerging Black and Brown organizations and communities, that is a barrier - folks aren't wanting to apply because 'I don't have the time to fill out this reimbursement', or: 'I'm not set up on Quick Books, it's harder to track'".

"The mainstream conservation world has historically excluded BIPOC, and those conservation BIPOC orgs that do exist may not have the experience to put together a proposal together which meets standards to be funded. It does appear that EMSWD does provide technical assistance to help these applicants succeed."

"Predominately white workforce in City organizations and departments like the one I work for is one big reason and lack of capacity and paid opportunities to navigate the grant writing and management process for local CBOs [Community Based Organizations] who are the trusted advisors for our BIPOC community."

DIFFICULTIES MEETING THE 1:1 MATCH REQUIREMENT

"The match requirements are ridiculous - and a huge barrier. I thought it was 1:1 after the first $10,000, and it turned out to be 1:1 for the total amount. We were able to make that work, but that was pretty significant. It's a lot of money. If you want a $50,000 grant, you need $50,000 in match money - where's that gonna come from? Definitely for grass roots organizations, I can only imagine how challenging that is. You can do in-kind, that's nice. I don't know if the taxing authority requires that, but it's a lot to come up with - 100% match. With USDA it's 25%. To make it 100% I think is really, really hard."

"The matching aspect of it has been challenging - for me it's complicated - it presents itself like a bit of a barrier. It's overwhelming to be able to measure and track where we're getting the in-kind, to be able to measure - feels like an extra step, hurdle we have to cross that seems unnecessary to me. There's probably a good reason for it, but it feels a little unnecessary, creating more of a burden, feeling like an extra loop to have to go through. Attributing match or in-kind from other sources - the matching up - is the only aspect that I'm citing as a challenge and a barrier. I wonder: what's the rationale behind having organizations match their funding?"

AWARD AMOUNTS ARE TOO LOW TO SUPPORT QUALITY PROJECTS

"$XX,000 over two years is not really enough money in 2021 to implement a thoughtful, collaborative, high impact project - we have to think about the amount we have to pay people to survive in Multnomah County. $XX,000 through the whole year with partner sub-awards [is not enough]. We were lucky to get another grant to support. If there's a way we can take a grant amount higher, take into account the real costs associated with quality programming."

GATEKEEPING BY FUNDERS CREATES AND UPHOLDS BARRIERS FOR MARGINALIZED GROUPS

"I should be able to submit an application to one [SWCD], and that organization should recommend it to their network. There hasn't been any networking or leveraging on the part of our funder [EMSWCD] on our behalf. Gray Family Foundation or Metro have said: 'Here are some other pots of money that might work for you.' Funders recognizing the power they have to open up other doors for their grantees."

"[Grants Manager] said something to the effect that EMSWCD is already funding this organization that we had a subcontract written in for, and a lot of people want to work with the organization, so they wouldn't want a significant amount of funding in our grant to go to that organization. It made me feel uncomfortable because a lot of times funders take a paternalistic view around how much funding [BIPOC-led organizations] are entitled to, what their capacity is – it's not really their place as funders - they should not be making those types of...gatekeeping. If a lot of partner organizations are interested in the services that a BIPOC-led organization is offering, that's a great thing. It shouldn't be the role of a funder to gatekeep and decide how much resources should flow to that organization, even if they [the BIPOC-led organization] aren't able to take on the work and it is too much, the BIPOC

organization should have the opportunity to make and learn from those mistakes just like White-led organizations. I felt uncomfortable about that comment - it gives us a peek into a paternalistic dynamic with funders around their perception of BIPOC organizations and how much resources they think they're entitled to. One of my main points of feedback is to reflect on that and try to dismantle that approach."

PROGRAM NOT DESIGNED TO INCLUDE BIPOC PEOPLE – HISTORY OF WHITE PREFRENCE

"It's the word 'Conservation', when someone hears this, they usually think 'that's a white organization that's not supporting environmental justice initiatives, they're supporting conserving wildlife areas' -spaces where POC often don't feel like they belong and may not even feel safe in the spaces. [May think] it's not an environmental justice grant, not happening in the urban environment necessarily."

"I'm guessing or assuming that there is this piece around having to say 'this is my DEI work and this is my programming'. Answering the question: 'how has the funding moved your DEI efforts?' Those questions, if you're a Black and Brown organization – 'our programming is that - I can't separate my funding into my DEI work and program work - they are the same'.

"It helps when your staff is representative of those communities - it's a lot easier to have roots in a community when your staff is representative of that community - really key thing. [Looking at EMSWCD website] I can see how that's been a barrier."

"EMSWCD board of directors is an inherently racist entity. The land ownership requirement to serve on the board of directors is antiquated and a massive barrier for members of historically disenfranchised communities, who were systemically denied land ownership rights, who wish to serve on the board. The fact that land ownership is a requirement which allows white folks to serve in positions of power is baffling when we are all living on stolen land. This land belongs to the Confederated tribes of the Chinook, Cowlitz, and Clackamas to name a few. The fact that there is zero representation of the rightful indigenous owners of this land or Black folks who were systemically denied access to all land rights, on your board is appalling. Representation in positions of power is the bare minimum to ensuring resources are distributed equitably, and EMSWCD does not seem to be able to meet that. It appears that EMSWCD are interested in DEI until it means giving up power or until they have to say no to rich, white powerful folks. Their DEI seems to lie within white comfort. There also needs to be more transparency on EMSWCD's approach to engaging BIPOC community members in the grant review process. It is my understanding outside reviewers are hand-picked for this work, but there I question about how much power is truly shared with them."

"I would have them revisit and work the language on their website - the diversity statement on the website - it's a good statement... I think if they took a stronger stance, particularly around environmental justice - if they were doing awareness-raising and getting people to this site, when they get to the site and see a stronger stance around environmental justice and the importance of it, they would likely apply. If you're new to grant writing, every grant

is a major ordeal to apply for, and much like when POC and women are applying for jobs, the research shows that when we look at the description, if we don't see ourselves in all the requirements, then we self-select out. That might be happening here given that it's called 'conservation'. Then, there's a paragraph about wanting diversity, but it's not specific enough in their stance and commitment."

"I don't know what the history is of them [EMSWCD] continuing to fund organizations they've always funded. I can imagine if they started funding 10 years ago, BIPOC organizations weren't intentionally on their radar. I can imagine by default, White-led organizations were able to build those relationships early on and maintain them."

DIFFICULTY IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION AS A BIPOC LEADER OF A BIPOC-FOCUSED ORGANIZATION

"By having Black kids! When we're talking diversity and equity, we are already all Black. That's what I mean by some of the questions [not being suited to POC organizations]. I understand why they're asking, but for the POC organization, those questions don't make sense - we are what you're actually saying."

CONFUSION AROUND THE AWARD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

"Who are the decision makers around the grants? Came up during our past grant application that there was someone on the panel or who decides what applications are awarded - they had questions around our transition to organizational independence, how we were going to build capacity - and I didn't know if it was an opinion, is it from the board, a panelist? Do I have to respond to this? Be more clear around how we're being rated vs. what is an opinion. What do I need to actually demonstrate? Are you asking because I need to respond, or are you just wondering?"

LACK OF AWARENESS & RELATIONSHIP WITH BIPOC COMMUNITIES

"I do think that EMSWCD does need to get more visible - this is an entity that has resources - there's a lot more Black and Brown organizations that are in alignment w y'alls' mission that don't know you exist - only reason I know is because of outdoor school - they used to be a big sponsor of outdoor school - I remember the logo from being a child."

"I think they don't do a good job of leveraging community and bringing people together who have received the money and can turn around and be spokespeople. I should have had a directive or encouragement to elevate it to partners and do that outreach. [EMSWCD should] highlight their grantees to communities more in their work, and in the community - show up to community programs."

"Maybe [EMSWCD] feels like a more obscure funder - you have to be in the know, or have done a lot of research to know we even have an SWCD - what is it? I still don't really know. I don't know that they do any intentional outreach to BIPOC organizations."

"I think you gotta have liaisons intentionally reaching out to those organizations of color and then more people will start to ask for the resources."

"When I started, I was pretty out of my league in this position, and the idea of starting from scratch reaching out to grants managers felt pretty intimidating because they have so much power, that's real. I felt like I couldn't do that - I had that experience with other funders."

COMPETING PRIORITIES

"I can only answer for our organization. [For others, maybe] it's not a priority given the pandemic, but also other areas that have leapt up to the front of all the needs of our communities - one was the digital divide, how many folks did not have stable internet connection, no technology to connect, highlighted by the pandemic. Also, ongoing housing instability, that's something very important and a big priority. You have to look at what' s coming up for everybody and how can we address it."

LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

"My job and my priority is making sure we're doing the work and supporting the community - if I miss an email, I hope the thought would be we're out doing the work, not that I'm not doing the work - it's the opposite - that I'm busy doing the work. Because we can't respond on their timeline, or struggle to get the paperwork done, it shouldn't be assumed we're not doing the work. This year I have felt like I've had to defend what we're doing and be responsive on their time schedule. I don't feel like this from all our funders - this happens with our government funders. They've had all these questions and concerns and needs from us, but not: 'how can we help you get through the process, let me work with you and be more flexible'."

"Trying to fit within some of the stipulations around what you can use the money on, the percentages it has to fit. I'm getting $30,000, there shouldn't be a cap where you can only use x % on overhead and x % on youth services - it makes barriers for organizations to use the money where it's needed."

BIPOC leader recommendations for addressing barriers in the PIC program to increase grant program participation among small and primarily BIPOC-led organizations

SIMPLIFY, CLARIFY, AND INCREASE FLEXIBILITY IN APPLICATIONS AND REPORTING

"Even within English: how could there be more simplified material so it feels less daunting? The RFP seems kind of intense, [add] more visual elements, more summarized bullet points, something a little bit more relatable or accessible that breaks things down, even if there will be very text heavy docs. Even an introduction or summary or one-pager intro to a heavy text document. A little orientation packet that kind of introduces everything and the process itself

- the stuff in the RFP but in a more accessible and visual way. I haven't seen too many foundations, even progressive ones, doing this - it's not very common still."

"The best way would be to dig deep in the application process. What I've seen from smaller organizations that don't have development staff is they struggle with...answering those [application] questions appropriately or in the form the funder wants. One thing really great Metro does, they're starting to offer a video application so you don't have to have the writing background. Education is such a privilege - in order to submit a good grant, you have to have that background and knowledge [writing]. Offering opportunities like that, or if EMSWCD had the proper staff in place maybe even offering or allowing a Spanish application."

"Most of the things required in grant writing are easily found out by going to an organization's website, they are public records if they're a nonprofit. We gotta find ways to streamline it and build community trust. These processes, which are often long and real similar questions on repeat (trying to trip people up?), are a big time waste, and with a lot of reporting on the backside, no one reads that shit. I've been confirmed from people on the inside - those reports are bullshit - White people like paperwork."

"Getting us funds as easy as possible - we are interested in focusing on the work - taking care of the community - make it easier for me so we can have more resources going to the community. There are so many Black and Brown organizations doing impactful work that have to be in the streets begging. Give us more coin! You owe individuals millions of dollars for our ancestors' free work. Should be: 'I have this idea, here's the budget - run us our coin'. That is how easy it should be for Black and Brown folks to get resources for the community. At this point, it's insane we have to be out here begging for dollars. Our government should be actively looking for programs like this and 'let's get this funded'."

"We've been starved of resources, at this point it should be easy to access resources, opportunities should be just coming to us. We need government entities to push through the status quo, the norm, recognize that it's not equitable and the norm is very racist and problematic. Say: 'we're going to try things very differently -we see this isn't working'. We need smaller bureaus to make smaller pivots so larger ones can see that does work and make sense. In terms of Black and Brown farmers: creating an annual easy peasy grant for them would be incredible - access to that. For farmers to grow and become larger farms and be secure, they need access to land and equipment and funds - hard to do when your time is spent farming. Grant writing is a whole different process."

"Just going through the initial process of how to explain your work and how to put the whole budget (there were a lot of things I wasn't familiar with), just having it more clear what they're actually asking. When they're doing it [the application questions], it's tailored for larger organizations (asking what % of people of color you serve, for example), hasn't always been catered to BIPOC organizations. Some of the questions should be more clear on the ask, make it more open for discussion, just making sure the questions are more to the people of color organizations. When you are first getting started with a PIC grant, not knowing what that question entails can be questionable about how much info you should share, or what you should share."

"In general, I remember feeling like the EMSWCD grant was restrictive because of the application and reporting process, restrictions to geographic boundary, and timing that didn't always match our season. I don't want to come across as ungrateful for the funding and support we received because it was impactful for our organization. However, we made the decision to not apply for funding in subsequent years because it was hard for us to manage so many logistics for $6-$15k in funding."

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH INTENTIONAL OUTREACH

"There are Black and Brown farms that you all should be reaching out to. 100k would keep [our organization] going for 6-8 weeks - for a Black or Brown farm to get access would be life changing."

"Doing things where they go out into the community - more one on one meetings with folks to let people know that EMSWCD is there and what they do - that kind of community engagement piece is missing. Maybe it's about creating some contracts with existing grantees to do some of that work on their behalf. Thinking about BIPOC-led organizations that have relationships that have been successful in getting grants, working with those folks in the communities to get the word out."

"What outreach is done - more intentional and planned out outreach and outreach phase specifically to BIPOC-led organizations - if there was intention or a plan. And then also application support, especially those applying for the first time - if there's support for them applying and into the process. Folks may feel discouraged to apply - I think that could be dismantled through more direct outreach, direct contacts to organizations. Then having those webinars that happen for more info on the application process, having more of those. Having a list of organizations and trying to reach out to their EDs or grant writers. Having more connections that are direct contacts that are building more relationships with those organizations somehow."

"They should continue to have liaisons to reach out and give community a sense of support, that this [EMSWCD PIC grant] is available, and make sure they're reaching to the grass roots organizations. That's how they'll get more participation and get the most equitable result. Be intentional, meaning learning your community, learning the grassroots organizations, being able to give that exposure because grass roots organizations don't know about EMSWCD. Helping grassroots organizations working on the environment to know that EMSWCD is there. They [the organizations] can do the work, but they don't know this is the opportunity for them. Have the liaisons help identify organizations."

"One solution is making sure the outreach team is Black and Brown people from Portland that know the different programs in the community that this would benefit. We often see in Oregon, we do not see local people already connected to the community put in the community organizing position - now the person needs 18-24 months to get to know the community, and that's a waste of time and money and hardship for this person. Find people who have a network in the community in those positions to do this task."

"Exposure - thinking about who attends the EMSWCD trainings and if they can be offered directly to CBO's rather than on usual city social media channels and calendars."

PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATIONS NEW TO THE PROCESS

"Having a liaison person that's there that can help walk you through every question, that can give you the best information. And also, when it comes to reporting, when you have grassroots organizations, it's harder to report than for bigger organizations, making sure they have a liaison helping with that would be very helpful. Always having the liaison between the organization and EMSWCD, that person can identify everything the organization needs and is expected of them. Make it clear what the funding can be used for. Also, to know how to get funding annually - how to apply for a grant make sure you could get it annually. As a small organization, you depend a lot on grants - the unknown can create a lot of uncertainties."

CLARIFY HOW GRANTEES ARE CHOSEN

"We haven't applied for one because when we go into coalitions with other people, we decide who should go after this grant or that. Because a coalition partner already had a PIC grant, we didn't also apply for the PIC grant because we would be competing with them. I don't know if funders think when you already have your name in the pot, you're trying to double dip, so we haven't been submitting applications to any of the funding opportunities that are already attached to our coalitions, and because we have a growing number of initiatives, we have a shrinking number of grants to apply for."

MORE GRANT WORKSHOPS AND INFO SESSIONS

"I don't remember if EMSWCD offered a workshop, sometimes it's helpful for smaller organizations that don't have professional writers to participate in a workshop to ask questions before they apply. It's nice to make sure the priorities align. We've had situations where on paper it looks like our priorities align well, but we go through the process and then the board says no because we didn't fit their priorities, and it wasn't stated anywhere. It's so much work, it's frustrating."

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF YEARS AN ORGANIZATION CAN APPLY AND BE AWARDED AND SIMPLIFY APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR REPEAT GRANTEES

"Our concern is that there is a timeline where you can only apply for a certain amount of years. I don't think that's a fair or good rule to make because if your [EMSWCD's] funding program is all about doing x, and if an organization's whole mission is doing x with the audience [the funder wants to serve], we should be able to say we're still doing this. If you funded a group for 5 years, why would you not fund a group the 6th year if there still doing this mission? Need some type of relationship building or management - something that looks at what happens at the end of that [grant] period - the relationship is severed. Those organizations [grantees] are still doing the work, but you just took us out of being able to apply without a means to replace it - if this happens, there should be something

else after that for what comes next. Also, if we apply after the 2nd year, we should be able to say we're doing the same thing again, and it should be a much simpler verification process because of the 2-year relationship we've built."

"I really appreciated the application process for 2021 and hope they will continue this extension option for continuous grant recipients. It's so much easier to edit our current SOW and budget and have them weave into this next year, rather than having to start from scratch. Since we have been long-standing recipients of the PIC grant, it was nice to not have to explain everything about our organization and mission all over again. PIC (multi-year) grants that were offered previously were extremely helpful for us. When it was cancelled and we went back to regular 1-year PIC grants, it made things more challenging for us. The one-year duration grant is hard for us especially on big complex projects subject to normal delays with contractors, pandemics, etc."

SUPPORT GRANTEES BEYOND THE GRANT

"Maybe [EMSWCD] staff members having supporting conversations around how to be able to sustain this [the grant projects] beyond the grant period - whether it's strategizing or fundraising support or directing to other opportunities, so that what is initiated here can continue without having to end when the grant period ends - if there were ways there could be more direct support around that at some point."

"I'm curious if EMSWCD, WMSWCD, all the SWCDs, do they operate independently? If the answer is "no", that they all have pots of money, I think one SWCD should help their grantees get funded by the others if they meet their criteria. I should be able to submit an application to one, and that organization should recommend it to their network. There hasn't been any networking or leveraging on the part of our funder on our behalf. Gray Family Foundation or Metro have said: here are some other pots of money that might work for you. Funders recognizing the power they have to open up other doors for their grantees."

ADD CONTINGENCY FUNDING TO EACH PROJECT BUDGET FOR UNEXPECTED EXPENSES

"There should be an automatic technical assistance pot of money to tap into that can be used responsively for needs that could arise for a grantee as needed that we don't have to explain - we could say we have a need for x - there should be extra 10-15% available on top of each grant amount in case we need it for our grant, and if we don't use it, it goes back in the pot of money. For pieces that are not program related - an accountant or insurance writer you hadn't anticipated, if you have to get special insurance to work with the city, or maybe it's transportation or money to have meetings or equipment - not program related - a technical or one time need for a contractor or consultant or technology that will help you get your project done."

BRING GRANTEES TOGETHER TO SHARE SUCCESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

"I'd be curious to hear the feedback you're getting from other organizations you're interviewing. I feel there's a lot of good that could come from getting those organizations [BIPOC-led] together to see what's happening in common with them. You're collecting all of this data now - if you think that you can benefit from it, the people getting the grants can benefit from it too [the data you're collecting]."

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2. HOW WELL PIC PROGRAM IS MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS

2.1 What worked well for BIPOC-led organizations:

RELATIONSHIP AND STAFF SUPPORT

"Suzanne was super nice, super helpful, what i really appreciate from her is that before we even submitted our application, she offered to meet with us, we were able to ask her questions to make sure it was a good fit for our program. That was something that really stood out because most funders don't have the time to do that."

"It's been a long-time partnership - their support has been amazing. Suzanne is a really flexible grants manager. I've been able to meet with her over coffee and talk to her about our transition. It's significant to be able to work with a funder that is able to build a relationship with me over time."

"The communication and follow up and areas of opportunity to be able to get support (like for example with [technical assistance consultant] and having meetings and keeping us more on track - doing that follow up. Sometimes, if it's a government agency there isn't that continued communication and opportunities to meet and talk about the work in the way that feels supportive (not just in terms of accountability). The feeling from you all about wanting to be here to support our process and ability to be successful in what we're doing and the flexibility. Overall, it has been positive to get that sense and that energy of being supportive and also responding to whatever are the needs and challenges that we have and guidance - all that has been super helpful - follow up and support that we have experienced has been amazing."

FLEXIBILITY

"I think the level of flexibility and allowance for organizational change and transition makes a huge difference. I feel really comfortable writing a report and explaining how our scope changed and how we're doing something different - that says a lot for how it's set up that I don't feel anxious about changing our scope of work. They've been flexible with moving

budgets around, and overall, it's been a flexible, accessible funding. I do think it makes a difference that we've been receiving it for a lot of years, and I have the relationship with Suzanne - I benefit from that. I don't know how accessible it is to new organizations or folks Suzanne doesn't know. I'm on the inside."

"Our entire organization really appreciated the way that EMSWCD handled the PIC Pause situation, supporting organizations throughout the pandemic. That was handled really well, not just because we're funded, but it shows the continued support and real investment in our organization. Sometimes, it can feel like grants are really transactional, like it's just a contract, and I understand why that's important, but nobody could have foreseen 2020 and COVID and all of that. Having the support from funders, especially general operating support, really helped us sustain our programs through the pandemic. Just appreciation for that."

2.2   Assess what aspects of the PIC program are difficult for participants and recommendations for improvement (see Section 1.3)

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3. PIC PROGRESS TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM GOALS

3.4 Understand how PIC grants have increased capacity and strengthened organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes (Goal 3)

DEI WORK IS INTEGRAL TO OUR ORGANIZATION

"We don't want to pay for a consultant to tell us the things we already know."

"DEI for us is integral and ingrained in what we do and how we serve our community - all our funding has a direct impact on how we do that."

"Indirectly [through doing our work]. DEIJ work isn't explicitly part of our mission - I talk about this a lot in my work. [haven't used PIC funding for specific organizational DEIJ work]"

HIRING AND RETAINING BIPOC STAFF

"This grant has a real heartfelt impact on what we're able to do capacity-wise. Retaining staff, being able to support a full-time program director at a competitive wage, professional development for young adults, camp guides and interns, and support summer jobs in the field of environmental education."

"Definitely retaining staff, PIC grant definitely helped with that. During the beginning of COVID, the ... crew could not work from home, it was nearly impossible to do a COVID-safe [Program], The PIC grant allowed us to offer trainings from home so they were able to continue to get paid and continue to work; we did our best to not lay folks off during COVID - it allowed us to keep them on a little bit longer so they had time to look for jobs or open their own landscape companies (we helped them through that process)."

ONE PARTICIPANT SAID THE PIC GRANT EXPANDED THE DIVERSITY OF WHO THEY SERVE

"Has helped reinforce it - there's been a diversity of [program participants] that are the ones that have [participated], so we've had a pretty fair system of distributing these jobs, and also there being gender, race, language, ethnicity diversity. [PIC grant] has helped us reinforce the diversity within the membership. [our organization] is historically more Latino-centered - the people that have gone through PIC have been diverse, not only Latino men. Through the PIC grant, we were able to uplift that to signal to people that [our organization] is diverse and diversity is valued and embraced here."

APPENDIX B: ONLINE GRANTEE SURVEY RESULTS

The online version of the survey was offered to primarily White-led organizations. An organization was considered primarily White-led if its Board and staff are nearly all White. Readers should note that several online survey respondents identified as Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color, but that most did not.

Survey response statistics

|	Count	Percent Complete
Total Responses	26	100

1.What type of organization do you represent?
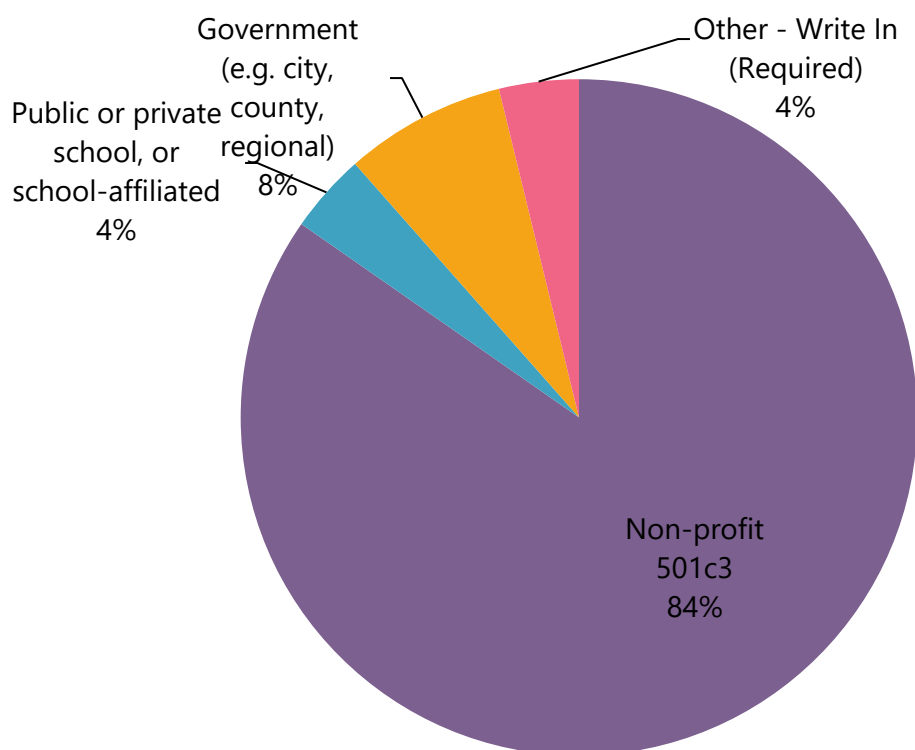
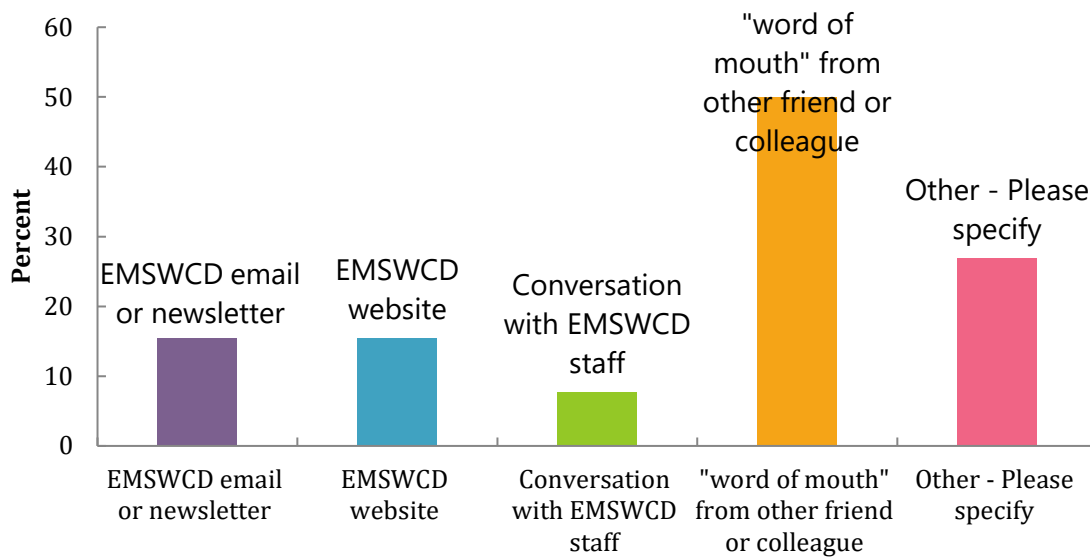| Value	Percent	Count
Non-profit 501c3	84.6%	22
Public or private school, or school-affiliated	3.8%	1
Government (e.g. city, county, regional)	7.7%	2
Other - Write In (Required)	3.8%	1

Other - Write In (Required)	Count
Transit Agency	1

2.How many paid staff members does your organization/agency have?
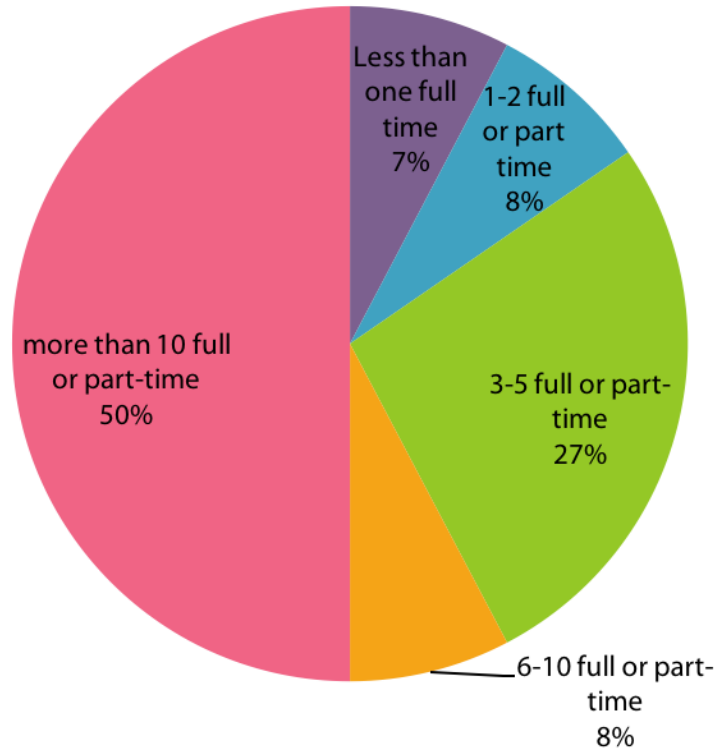
Value	Percent	Count
Less than one full time	7.7%	2
1-2 full or part time	7.7%	2
3-5 full or part-time	26.9%	7
6-10 full or part-time	7.7%	2
more than 10 full or part-time	50.0%	13

3. How did you originally hear about the PIC funding opportunity?

Value	Percent	Count
EMSWCD email or newsletter	15.4%	4
EMSWCD website	15.4%	4
Conversation with EMSWCD staff	7.7%	2
"word of mouth" from other friend or colleague	50.0%	13
Other - Please specify	26.9%	7

Other - Please specify
Grant writer at TriMet
I'm not sure. Our org already had a relationship with EMSWCD when I started 6 years ago.
Our org has been applying for PIC grants since before I became ED.
Unknown as PIC funding was in place when I joined the org
We had multiple grants in the past
county partner
we had gotten funded in 2019 and were on their list of recent funded programs

4. What aspects of the PIC program have worked well for you?
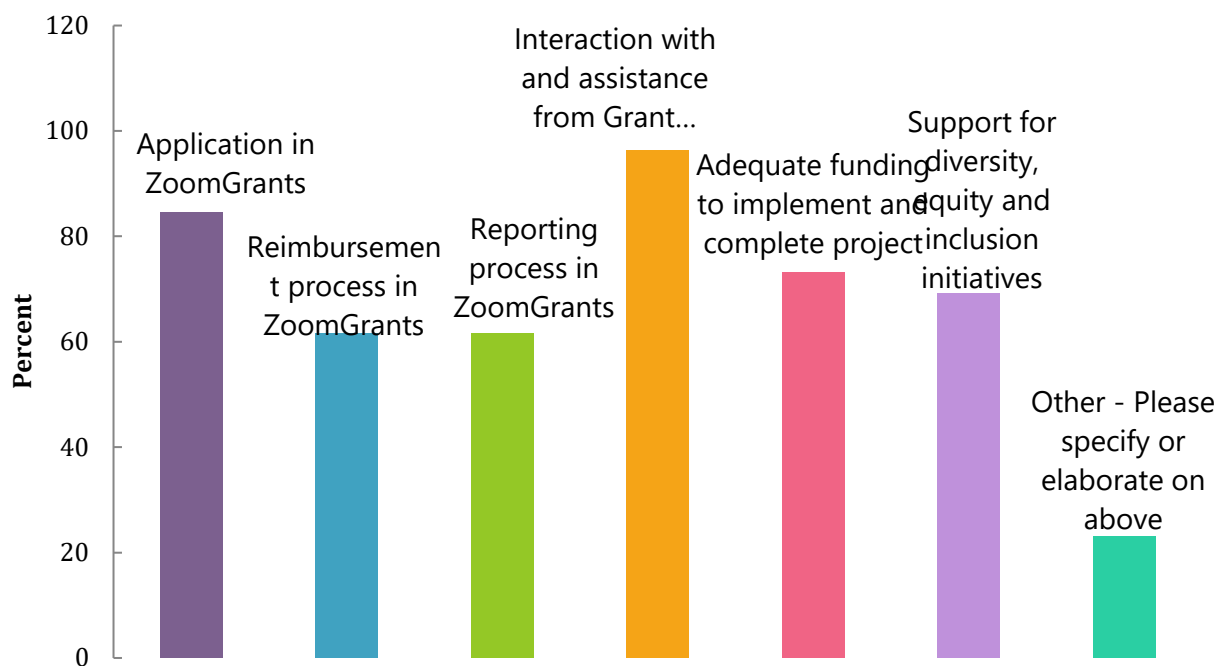
Value	Percent	Count
Application in ZoomGrants	84.6%	22
Reimbursement process in ZoomGrants	61.5%	16
Reporting process in ZoomGrants	61.5%	16
Interaction with and assistance from Grant Program staff	96.2%	25
Adequate funding to implement and complete project	73.1%	19
Support for diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives	69.2%	18
Other - Please specify or elaborate on above	23.1%	6

Other - Please specify or elaborate on above
Grant officer Suzanne Easton is very responsive and supportive
Suzanne is super accessible and friendly! It's also been neat that they have convened grantees. The [longer] timeline was very very helpful for our org! It made it possible to have a longer term vision with... partners.
The staff have always been very supportive, understanding, and encouraging. I enjoy working with them a lot.
Visiting the project/site

connection to other EMSWCD staff for technical guidance
support from grant manager was great

5.What, if anything, has been difficult for you in your experience with the PIC program?

Difficulties were highly varied among respondents, with many topics mentioned.

1. **Issues with the expense reimbursement process** was mentioned the most, including the cash flow difficulty reimbursement causes for small organizations, the detail and time required to prepare reimbursement requests especially at smaller organizations, and needing to know what the expectations are for reimbursement in advance

    "Reimbursements are time consuming. Getting paid back for work can take 30 days."

    "Being reimbursed for funds spent is semi-difficult for us as a small non-profit."

2. **Difficulties with reporting** was mentioned by several respondents, including complicated reports for organizations with small staff, and difficulty with demographic reporting

    "PIC requires more in-depth reporting requirements compared to most of our foundation funders."

    "The reimbursement and reporting process, while reasonable, are bulky for our small nonprofit organization. We only have 2 full time staff and are often spread very thin and away from the office during certain busy seasons for the organization. We often have trouble applying for government grants that require such detailed application and reporting procedures due to limited organizational capacity."

3. **Technical issues with Zoom Grants** was also mentioned by several respondents, including the platform is difficult to navigate, people have lost work on Zoom Grants, and issues with character limitations

4. **Difficulties with the grant application timeline** was a problem for several respondents, although issues were varied, with two people noting that December timing is difficult to accommodate. One person noted difficulty in planning 6 months ahead of a project, while another person needed a schedule that would work better for projects that happen in the summer months.

5. Some respondents mentioned **a need for more administrative funding**

    "While we understand administrative/staff time (for managing grant)

is often not as attractive as material costs or paying for time "on the ground", these grants do require a fair amount of time managing these grants. It seems hard to obtain grants when we give realistic pricing and time for admin or program management work."

6. **Difficulties meeting the match requirements** was mentioned by several respondents, although these were varied and included difficulty providing 1-to-1 match, difficulty documenting match through receipts, and COVID-19 causing difficulties for organizations who use volunteer hours as match

7. **The lack of long-term funding streams, or being disqualified for repeat funding** was an issue for some respondents

"There have been times in the past few years where we have been denied our full funding request amount because we already asked for a "large" amount the year prior. As an organization that completely relies on grant funding and individual donors, this was difficult to process.
We need money every year to keep our organization afloat."

8. **One respondent mentioned difficulty of having to competing with other organizations**

"The biggest challenge is having to compete with other amazing organizations and projects for grant funding as we all are doing amazing work and deserve funding!"

9. **Another respondent expressed the need for increased project budgets over time**

"It often seems like we are being scrutinized on our spending, and we are unclear why. We have always delivered our projects and spent our grants accordingly, and there seems to be a scarcity mentality with little evidence that it is necessary.

It would be helpful if the PIC grant administrators would acknowledge the increase of our costs and that we have overhead costs associated with keeping our organization going that often goes beyond their project-based grants (and the minimal 10% admin rate that we charge on projects).

It would also be mutually beneficial to acknowledge that we are active in the community curating projects, building relationships, and bringing along our partners to have them ready for PIC funded projects. There has been no consistent support for that work by us over the years. It is acknowledged as a need but it is not funded. We are often expected to stay within the same budget every year, and that is not possible or realistic with these factors."

6.What, if anything, would make the PIC application process and grant management easier for you?

1. **The most mentioned recommendations focused on clarifying and streamlining the reporting and reimbursement process**

   <u>Suggestions included:</u>
   - Simpler application, reporting, and reimbursement requirements overall
   - Offer reporting tutorials
   - Consider the difficulty around providing staff payroll reports and customizing this requirement for organizations with different needs
   - Simpler application and reporting requirements for smaller award amounts
   - Correct issues with potential overcounting participants in reporting metrics

   "In general, I remember feeling like the EMSWCD grant was restrictive because of the application and reporting process, restrictions to geographic boundary, and timing that didn't always match our season. I don't want to come across as ungrateful for the funding and support we received because it was impactful for our organization. However, we made the decision to not apply for funding in subsequent years because it was hard for us to manage so many logistics for $6-$15k in funding."

   "On the reporting metrics, where the field only accepts a numerical value, it has been tricky to know how to report. For example, if the question is how many adults participated, it would be nice to be able to say there that an average of 50 adults attended 10 events since we don't usually know how much overlap there is between adults (in other words, saying 500 adults would be over counting since some came to multiple events, but 50 would be undercounting)."

   "The detail requested in the schedule/calendar was also daunting. For a [multi-year project with many partners], it's nearly impossible to have all those dates established in advance. A more general format with major goals per quarter would be more realistic and result in less hair pulling."

   "Fiscal requirements can be complex. Could a short video be produced? Balance needed between numbers/data with mission achievement. Look for transformations over transactions. Perhaps final reports can also serve as renewals for BIPOC grantees in "good standing"; it lessens the
   burden on already under-resourced communities. Some local foundations have started to adopt this practice."

2. Several respondents mentioned the need for a **simpler or clearer budget process** in the grant application

   "Having an understanding of how funds might be able to or not be able to move from one line item to the next would be helpful."

"PIC requires a more in-depth budget compared to other funders. A more streamlined budget application process would make the process easier for applying and tracking."

3. **Offering payments up front rather than as a reimbursement** was also mentioned

"Less constant reimbursement paperwork, instead do a desk audit once a year. Getting paid also can take some time which has been challenging during COVID. Would be nice to be able to get an advance of an award like 25-30% when project begins. It would be nice also to have the option for direct deposit into our account instead of getting a check."

4. **Respondents** also mentioned a need for **longer-term grants or funding arrangements**, including a suggestion for a simplified process for repeat grantees

"I really appreciated the application process for 2021 and hope they will continue this extension option for continuous grant recipients. It's so much easier to edit our current SOW and budget and have them weave into this next year, rather than having to start from scratch. Since we have been long-standing recipients of the PIC grant, it was nice to not have to explain everything about our organization and mission all over again. PIC (multi-year) grants that were offered previously were extremely helpful for us. When it was cancelled and we went back to regular 1-year PIC grants, it made things more challenging for us. The one-year duration grant is hard for us especially on big complex projects subject to normal delays with contractors, pandemics, etc."

5. Some respondents would like to see **regular meetings with the EMSWCD grants manager**

"I think that in addition to the reports, a regular meeting with the grant manager would also be helpful. I really value my relationship with Suzanne, but I would benefit from more regular contact. I would also love to have more support from other EMSWCD staff."

"I think regularly scheduled meetings with grant staff would be really helpful. Maybe a quarterly check in phone call or something like that. I've done this with Suzanne maybe 2x per year and I always find value in in, and it would be great to get a more regular schedule for these calls."

6. Sending **reminders about reporting requirements and timeline** was also suggested

7. Participants also mentioned included **increasing the % of the budget that can be used for admin**, and **reducing the match requirements**

7. Which of the following most closely describes your organization's current experience level with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)?
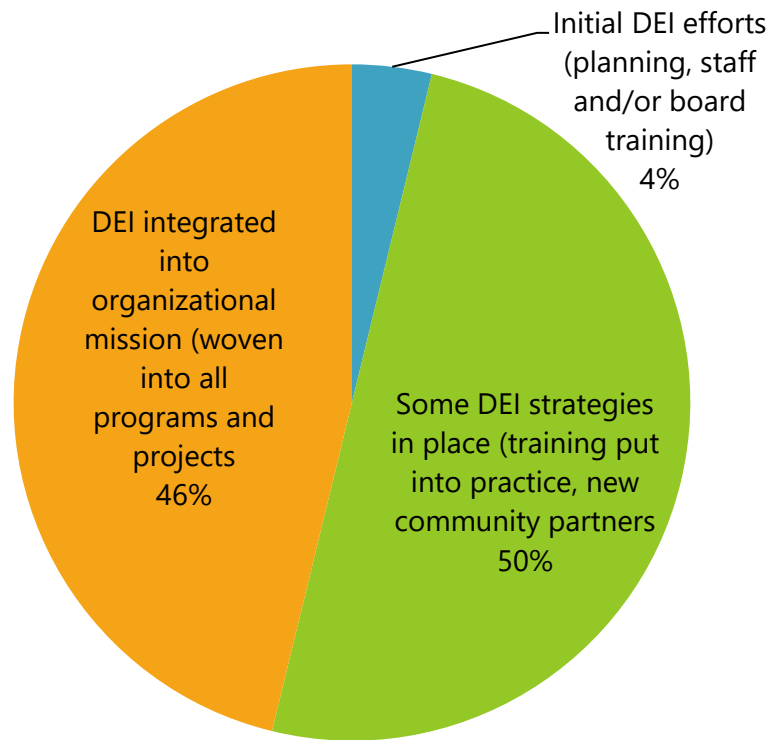
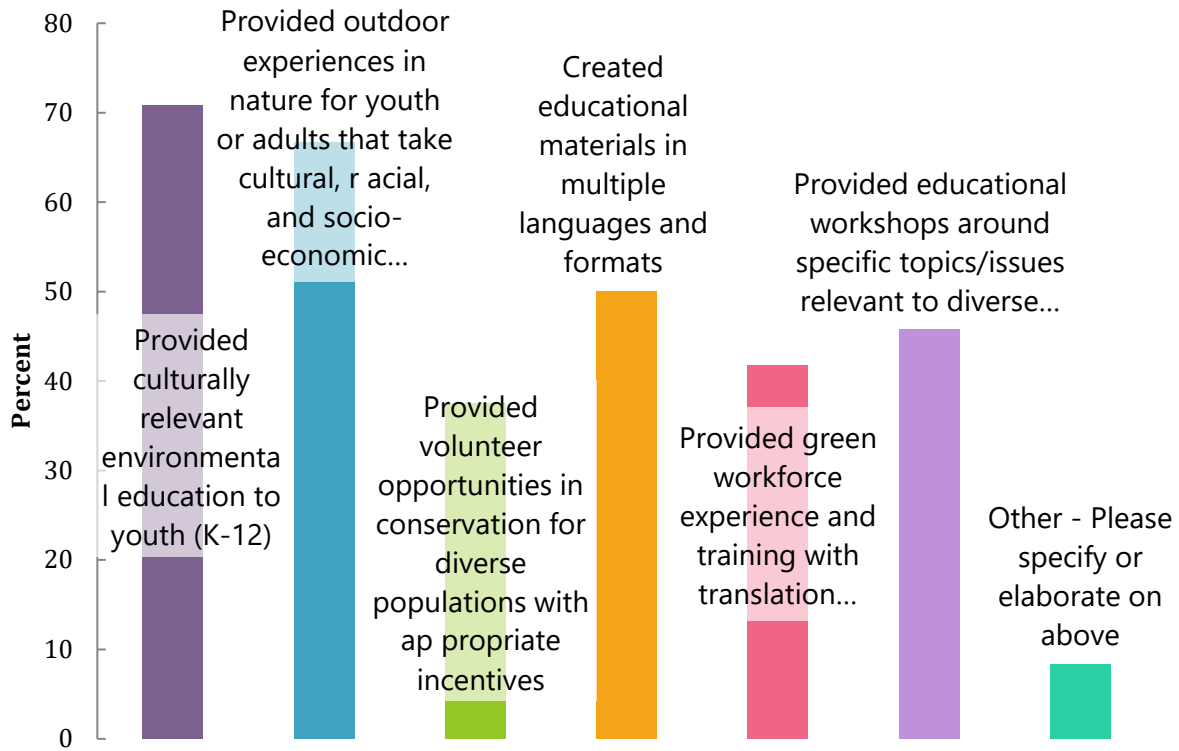| Value	Percent	Count
Initial DEI efforts (planning, staff and/or board training)	3.8%	1
Some DEI strategies in place (training put into practice, new community partnerships, DEI integrated into some programs and projects)	50.0%	13
DEI integrated into organizational mission (woven into all programs and projects, strong community partnerships, continuing to grow and improve)	46.2%	12

8. How, if at all, has your PIC project impacted access to a healthy environment in BIPOC and low-income communities? BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color.
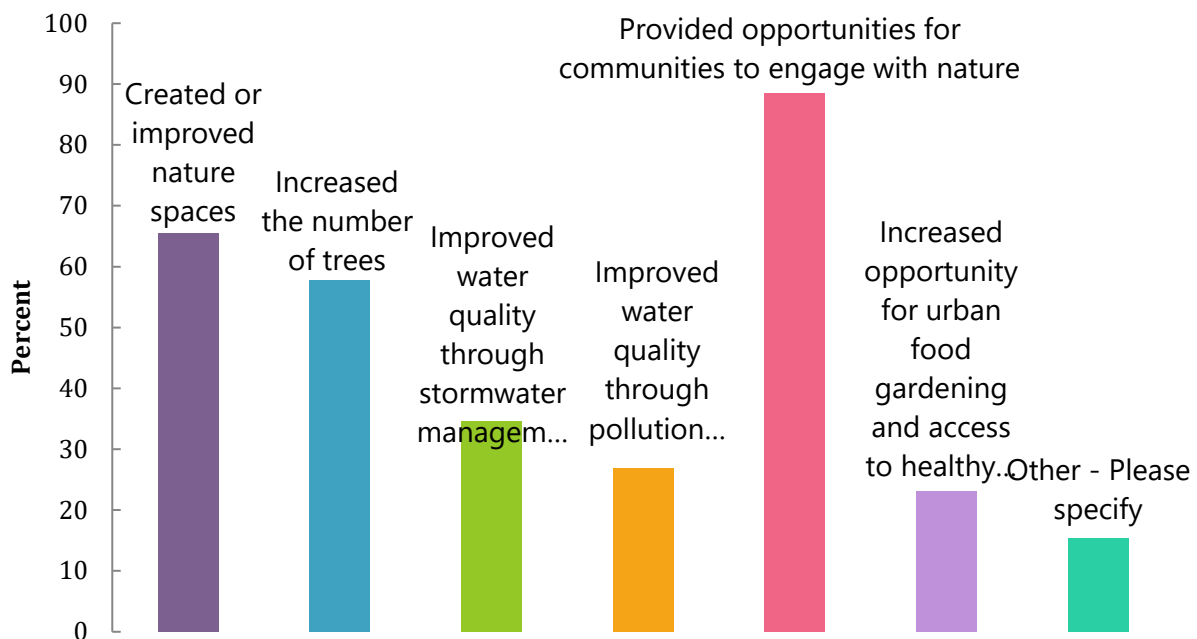
Value	Percent	Count
Created or improved nature spaces	65.4%	17
Increased the number of trees	57.7%	15
Improved water quality through stormwater management	34.6%	9
Improved water quality through pollution reduction	26.9%	7
Provided opportunities for communities to engage with nature	88.5%	23
Increased opportunity for urban food gardening and access to healthy food	23.1%	6
Other - Please specify	15.4%	4

Other - Please specify
Collaborative partnership. DEI workforce development
Educational opportunities about all of the above
Providing paid work opportunities for young people.

10. How, if at all, has DEI been woven into the environmental education efforts of your PIC project/s?

Value	Percent	Count
Provided culturally relevant environmental education to youth (K-12)	70.8%	17
Provided outdoor experiences in nature for youth or adults that take cultural, racial, and socio-economic factors into consideration	66.7%	16
Provided volunteer opportunities in conservation for diverse populations with appropriate incentives	37.5%	9
Created educational materials in multiple languages and formats	50.0%	12
Provided green workforce experience and training with translation and other needed accommodations	41.7%	10
Provided educational workshops around specific topics/issues relevant to diverse audiences	45.8%	11
Other - Please specify or elaborate on above	8.3%	2

Other - Please specify or elaborate on above
I can't be certain that our enviro-ed was culturally relevant, but we have attempted this.
We are a BIPOC led/serving org, DEI is interwoven into all we do.

11. What, if any, barriers have you experienced in your diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work?

1. Lack of funding was the most reported barrier to DEI work.

This included several important themes:

a. **Not having the ability to pay community members a fair wage for their time and work was the most reported problem with lack of funding and DEI work**.

"We would like to hire more staff who are reflective of the communities we serve. However, we understand that there are geographic barriers that make it difficult to work for [us, outside the Portland Metro area], and our jobs are low paying. We designed an internship to pay a living wage for someone who was reflective of the communities we serve, but we were not able to meet this pay equity across the board, and upon completion of the internship their pay …decreased hourly."

"As an organization, we want to create an environment where a diverse staff have pathways to a livable, long-term jobs. One barrier is that frontline jobs at nonprofits (including ours), like for coordinators or educators, are not very well paid or are part-time as we try to stretch grant dollars to provide a lot of [programming]."

"Not being able to offer a living wage restricted our capacity to hire BIPOC mentors and role models for youth/students. This is critically important for inspiring youth to be involved in the green economy and environmental sciences."

b. **Not having enough staff time or capacity to spend on DEI work such as relationship building**

"The biggest barriers we have experienced in our DEI work have been having the time, funding, and capacity to do it as well as we want to - to truly do it well. Working to build deep, thoughtful, intentional, and genuine partnerships with BIPOC organizations and communities takes time and people resources. Relationships grow with intent and trust building. To be truly responsive to community partners has involved taking the time to really listen, to plan, to provide support in ways that are asked, and then, to be responsive. It is a long-term effort. We have built really phenomenal partnerships, but to sustain those partnerships over time, and to really be good partners, necessitates having the capacity on our staff to really dedicate to being focused on our work with partners as well as being able to dedicate resources to our partners directly, such as financial and otherwise."

"We also need additional time for meetings and staff training (for our staff and our partners) to develop deeper relationships with our neighbors and culturally specific partners, obtain trust, and create better programming. This is SLOW work, and requires funding for us to sit down together A LOT. That type of funding has so far been hard to obtain."

    c. Other funding-related responses included **needing funding to pay a DEI consultant and needing funding for DEI organizational structure work**

2. The COVID-19 pandemic was another prominent barrier to DEI work in 2020, which made it difficult for organizations to develop relationships with communities.

"This year in particular has been so challenging, not being able to meet in person and build that trust in the way we have in the past. There are benefits to just hopping on zoom, instead of having to travel somewhere for a meeting, but we have all missed that in person connection."

"COVID has made meetings especially difficult and we find that in-person meetings are extremely important in developing trust relationships with anyone, but especially in the Native communities that we work with."

3. Several participants mentioned difficulty diversifying or working on DEI with their board

4. One participant mentioned a lack of culturally competent staff at EMSWCD as a barrier to their DEI work

5. One participant mentioned needing examples of what culturally responsive environmental education looks like

12.In what ways has PIC funding helped your organization build capacity around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)?
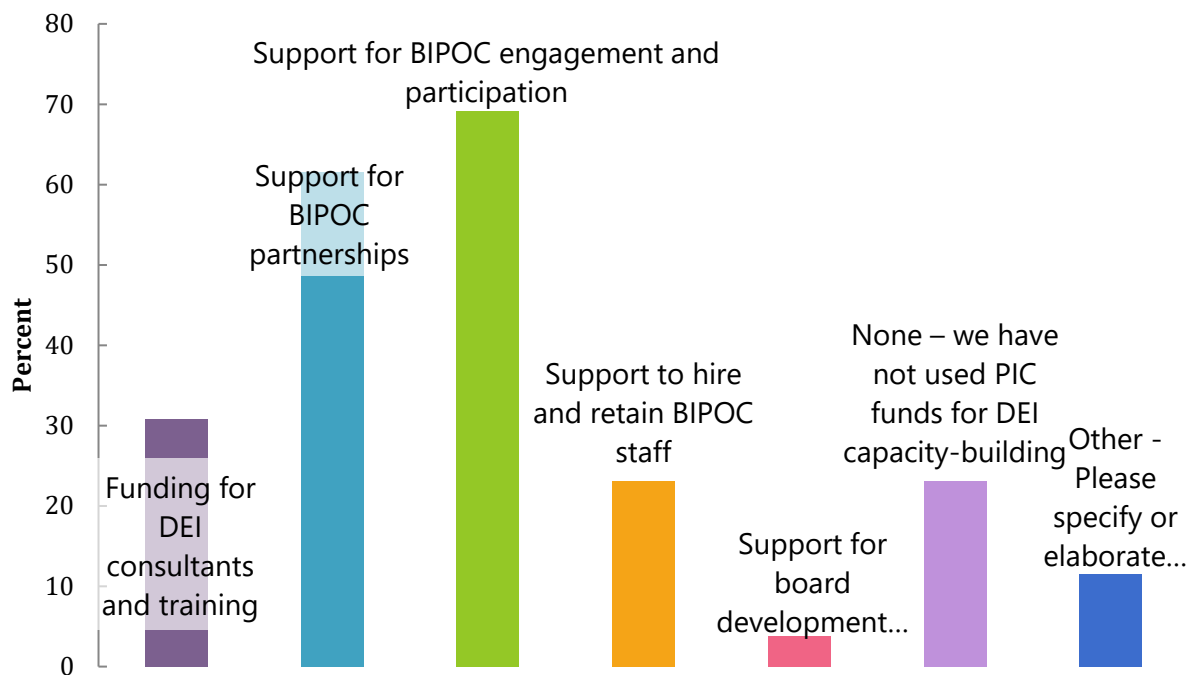
Value	Percent	Count
Funding for DEI consultants and training	30.8%	8
Support for BIPOC partnerships	61.5%	16
Support for BIPOC engagement and participation	69.2%	18
Support to hire and retain BIPOC staff	23.1%	6
Support for board development and diversification	3.8%	1
None – we have not used PIC funds for DEI capacity-building	23.1%	6
Other - Please specify or elaborate on above	11.5%	3

Other - Please specify or elaborate on above
Providing discussions and trainings around DEI
Teaching primarily BIPOC students
helps fund crews where we might otherwise not have community funding available

13. Please take a minute to tell us what else we can do to support your organization's DEI journey or ability to do DEI work.

1. **Providing funding for DEI capacity building was the most mentioned way EMSWCD can support these grantees' DEI efforts**, including paid staff time, time to develop partnerships, funding for staff and board training, and funding that can be paid to community partners. One participant did not feel that EMSWCD has supported their organizational DEI capacity building work.

    "Include funding for partnership building, understanding that there may not be clear deliverables. Explain that this is okay in grant applications, so we feel encouraged to do so."

    "EMSWCD has not really ever indicated to us via their grant making that they want to support us on in our organizational DEI work. Everything is project focused, with lack of interest and support for our development as an organization, which directly impacts our projects. We as an organization have shown more interest and follow through on DEI work than EMSWCD. Other grant makers have asked us what we are doing in regards to DEI, and make suggestions that we consider applying for funding to support our efforts around DEI. We do not see this in the PIC grant. As a result, we have had to seek other funding to support our DEI work."

2. **Pooling and sharing DEI learnings and resources** was the next most mentioned way that EMSWCD can help support the DEI work of primarily White-led grantees.

    "Would be great for small organizations to have collaboration on efforts instead of spreading resources and every organization having to figure out the journey independently. Shared workshops, speakers, etc. A hub for orgs to come together, share ideas, collaborate on shared efforts would be amazing (and money to support the time of staff and community members involved)".

    "Were EMSWCD to support collaboration among PIC recipients to work together to do this work, that could be really helpful too. Many organizations and programs and projects are working toward shared goals and could be collaborating even more on those share goals and efforts."

    "Workshops where multiple grantees can come together and learn from one another/ share resources/ participate in learning together. If there were two annual workshops for grantees on different subjects that would be fabulous. For example, a workshop on communications: how to elevate diverse voices/ showcase work happening in the community and through these grants without tokenizing. And a workshop on storytelling. I think our project teams would value this type of engagement and opportunity.

3. Some participants needed **support in training their Board on DEI**

"We could really use support for training for our board and executives. We feel confident in our staff and lower level management's commitment to DEI work, but would benefit from more leadership from the top."

4. Some participants wanted **EMSWCD to consult with them specifically about their DEI work**

5. Other recommendations for supporting DEI work included:

"BIOPOC nature & agriculture jobs & recruiting board for the metro region"

"I feel like our organization, a large government organization, has a lot of internal DEI resources. What I want from the EMSWD is a partner who can take a DEI approach in helping to advance mutually held goals in areas of the service district that need support."

"EMSWCD has been instrumental in our DEI journey. Funding for training, curriculum updates and more came from EMSWCD and Suzanne suggested additional funding sources for DEI work which came through. I credit EMSWCD for supporting this important work at [our organization]. So many funders are interested in the number of field trips provided or the number of acres cleared. EMSWCD invested in our people, which has allowed us to better serve our community."

"We are seeking support that ties our programming together. We want to offer low-income BIPOC community members deep and thoughtful experiences. It's been challenging that EMSWCD funds haven't been accessible for our food access work...which is interwoven through our other programs."

15.Not very many organizations that are led by people of color are receiving PIC grants from EMSWCD. Do you have any opinions or thoughts on why this might be the case? *This question was offered only to respondents who identified as BIPOC. We recommend thoughtful consideration of each response below.*

"The PIC grant is a pretty time-consuming grant. I'd encourage y'all to check out the Metro Placemaking grant. They simplified as much as possible, including allowing video submissions, as a way to support marginalized communities."

"EMSWCD board of directors is an inherently racist entity. The land ownership requirement to serve on the board of directors is antiquated and a massive barrier for members of historically disenfranchised communities, who were systemically denied land ownership rights, who wish to serve on the board. The fact that land ownership is

a requirement which allows white folks to serve in positions of power is baffling when we are all living on stolen land. This land belongs to the Confederated tribes of the Chinook, Cowlitz, and Clackamas to name a few. The fact that there is zero representation of the rightful indigenous owners of this land or Black folks who were systemically denied access to all land rights, on your board is appalling. Representation in positions of power is the bare minimum to ensuring resources are distributed equitably, and EMSWCD does not seem to be able to meet that. It appears that EMSWCD are interested in DEI until it means giving up power or until they have to say no to rich, white powerful folks. Their DEI seems to lie within white comfort. There also needs to be more transparency on EMSWCD's approach to engaging BIPOC community members in the grant review process. It is my understanding outside reviewers are hand-picked for this work, but there I question about how much power is truly shared with them."

"The mainstream conservation world has historically excluded BIPOC, and those conservation BIPOC orgs that do exist may not have the experience to put together a proposal together which meets standards to be funded. It does appear that EMSWD does provide technical assistance to help these applicants succeed."

"Predominately white workforce in City organizations and departments like the one I work for is one big reason and lack of capacity and paid opportunities to navigate the grant writing and management process for local CBOs [Community Based Organizations] who are the trusted advisors for our BIPOC community; A third reason may be exposure - so thinking about who attends the EMSWCD trainings and if they can be offered directly to CBO's rather than on usual city social media channels and calendars."

16. Is there anything we missed, or anything else you'd like to tell us?

Respondents had these additional thoughts and suggestions to share:

"I think one of the challenges in this field of natural resources and green jobs that PIC supports is difficult for the young BIPOC youth is success after high school. I know that the greater green workforce movement is to be more inclusive. This would be nice, however for my population, what I have found are that their life challenges prevent them from succeeding in a field that rarely supports a living wage in the Portland area. Either the work is seasonal or pays just above min. wage. This makes it challenging to help young participants move to the next level and even to pursue their post-secondary education. I'm not sure what PIC can do about this, but I think there needs to be an understanding of what kind of outcomes we might see in the workforce arena."

"More communication from EMSWCD about their initiatives and how we can tap into those for our work & networks would be great. Many times, I only stumble across something via social media or otherwise."

"We are an organization that considers disability in the intersection of DEI work, and would hope that value is shared by EMSWCD."

"A shared set of equity metrics to evaluate grant programs and projects across our region is needed."

"Our culturally specific partner orgs are swamped with work, and with people wanting to start projects with them. They are overworked and understaffed. While we don't know exactly what they need, we can't help them without being able to pay them to sit down and talk. Our organization is largely grant funded, and grants rarely do this. Instead, we are forced to have short meetings to plan potential grants together, and then hope that we can make work happen without too many conversations."

"I have appreciated when EMSWCD has pulled grantees and partners together for larger conversations around a topic like workforce training. It has been inspiring, supportive and feels like EMSWCD is genuinely wanting to do the work alongside us. "

"We appreciate this opportunity to give honest feedback and look forward to EMSWCD to rise up to the needs of the communities they serve. Thank you."

Many respondents thanked EMSWCD for their PIC grant and appreciate their support, partnership, and DEI efforts.

"Your team is a valued partner and has allowed our organization to provide much needed educational tools to the BIPOC youth of our community."

"We really appreciate the support of EMSWCD in general and through the PIC grant. This funding has been crucial to helping us in our programming in general as well as in our DEI work."

"The knowledgeable staff who are committed to the EMSWCD mission that includes advancing racial equity and access to nature for East County demographics is a key driver to the program's success."

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION TOOLS AND METHODS

Survey Methodology

Surveys were co-created by Jamie Stamberger and Suzanne Easton. Jamie implemented the surveys by phone and using her Alchemer professional online survey account. Jamie summarized results and themes from the data in a final report to EMSWCD.

Survey Sampling Plan

This table describes the market segments, number of participants per segment, type of survey implemented with each segment, and incentives offered.

Market Segments	# of Participants	Survey Type	Incentive/ Participant
PIC Grantees (BIPOC-led organizations)	8	45-minute phone	$ 75.00
PIC Grantees (White-led Organizations	26	15-20-minute online	$ 25.00
PIC Non-Applicants (BIPOC-led organizations)			
BIPOC leader or staff person that has partnered on PIC grants or received SPACE	2	45-minute phone	$ 75.00
BIPOC leader or staff person that is considering PIC but has not applied because of PIC timeline	1	45-minute phone	$ 75.00

Description of Evaluation Tools (Surveys and Grant Report Analysis)

1. PIC Grant Program Grantee Surveys

PIC program surveys included PIC grant program grantees with projects that ended in 2019 or 2020 (N = 32). We surveyed two different groups of PIC grantees likely to have had different experiences with the PIC program. Surveys differed slightly between the groups, although they asked for similar information.

a. Survey of PIC grantees for projects led by Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color

Eight of the 32 PIC projects in this timeframe were led by Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, and their projects were developed by and for BIPOC residents. These eight organizations participated in this survey through a 45-minute phone interview. These organizations were asked for a more detailed interview in order to center the perspectives and needs of BIPOC community leaders. These community leaders have the best understanding of the needs of their communities, how EMSWCD programs are supporting or not supporting them, and how EMSWCD can do better.

b. Survey of PIC grantees for projects primarily led by White people

The remaining 24 PIC grantees with projects ending in 2019 and 2020 that were led primarily by White people, completed an online version of the survey with fewer open-ended questions.

2. Survey of Non-Applicants

This survey also included 45-minute phone interviews with three organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous, and other people of color that had not applied for EMSWCD funding. This included groups that have partnered with other organizations on PIC grants or received SPACE grants, but have not applied themselves for a PIC grant. The group also includes one organization who has just learned about the PIC grant and has not yet had the opportunity to apply because of the PIC timeline.

3. Analysis of PIC grant reports

The evaluation also included an analysis of all PIC program final grant reports submitted within the past four years (Jan 2017-Feb 2021) to determine whether or not and to what extent funded projects have contributed to the following goals.

Goal 1: Complement other EMSWCD program efforts in water quality, soil health, habitat restoration and sustainable agriculture.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, number of complementary projects per category

Goal 2: Increase environmental literacy of EMSWCD residents.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, number of children and adults reached total and per funding category

Goal 3: Increase capacity and strengthen organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, total, what types

Goal 4: Establish and support sustainable school and community gardens throughout the urban areas of the EMSWCD service area.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, metrics total

Goal 5: Increase the urban tree canopy and support a sustainable urban forest.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, metrics total

Goal 6: Increase conservation benefits for communities and populations experiencing disparities in environmental health, environmental education, and natural amenities.

Analysis: Met/unmet analysis, total, who leads and who benefits analysis

Methods: To assess who leads and who benefits from EMSWCD PIC funding, we analyzed application materials and staff and board makeup for the 70 PIC projects awarded between 2017 and 2020. Leadership was assessed by studying the demographic makeup of the funded organizations' board and staff, key staff and partners associated with the

project and their roles, and whether or not BIPOC communities had a role in the design of the project. Benefit was assessed by looking at both direct financial benefit (who is directly paid by PIC funding) and indirect social benefit (i.e. more trees in neighborhoods, job skills, environmental education).

Other Criteria assessed included:

Jamie Stamberger assessed:
- # of BIPOC-led projects
- # of previous applicants and # of new applicants
- # board members and paid staff/org
- annual operating budget/org
- Project outcome metrics from reporting (totals per metric)

Suzanne Easton assessed:
- Achieved outcomes within EMSWCD funding category (Met/unmet analysis, totals per category)
- Outcomes fully reflected workplan (Met/unmet analysis)

Methods: Jamie and Suzanne each reviewed all 70 grant reports and applied the above criteria assigned to them.