



Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Action Plan

This plan is a working document that may be updated and revised as the goals of the organization grow and change and as progress is made.

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Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory Statement of Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

The planet's health relies on all of us working together for the benefit of all.

The Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory recognizes the deep abuses committed as a result of systemic racism, white privilege, and environmental injustice. We understand it is our duty, as an organization and as individuals, to take concrete steps against these abuses and towards a more equitable and inclusive approach to addressing the problems facing our oceans and our communities.

Therefore, the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory commits to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) in our field of marine science. We proactively strive to bring the voices, intellect, and talents of people of all colors, cultures, backgrounds, and identities into our work to further science and conservation.

This action plan outlines the concrete actions that we are taking to achieve our vision of a more diverse and inclusive organization.

Goal 1: Continuously grow team knowledge of DEIJ and anti-racism

Identify resources and ingest new information to improve our individual and collective knowledge of topics related to DEIJ and anti-racism. Foster a safe and respectful environment that encourages sharing and communication.

- A. Ensure that everybody on the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory team has a forum to provide feedback and engage in DEIJ issues.
- B. Maintain a Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory book club covering books about DEIJ, anti-racism, etc., especially those written by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) authors.
- C. As a team, read and discuss articles and papers related to DEIJ and anti-racism in ocean and conservation science.
- D. Maintain an active list of DEIJ & anti-racism resources and organizations on campus and in the Santa Barbara community. Engage and support these organizations when relevant.

- E. Participate in university and/or academic department diversity trainings (microaggression, bystander intervention, implicit bias, etc.)
- F. Maintain a channel on the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory Slack workspace for sharing ideas, events, and topics relating to promoting DEIJ.
- G. Ensure that all new staff & intern hires have access to all Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory DEIJ resources.

Goal 2: Ensure fair and unbiased recruitment and hiring processes

Implement standardized recruitment and hiring processes that increase access and equity and reduce bias. Emphasize our commitment to DEIJ through these processes, ensure an inclusive workplace, and pay staff and interns equitable wages.

- A. Require that all Benioff Lab staff that participate in search committees complete DEIJ training.
- B. Formalize and distribute job and internship opportunities widely, rather than hiring via existing connections or word of mouth. Advertise to institutions and organizations that train and support diverse students and scientists from underrepresented groups.
- C. Pay all interns and staff a competitive, fair, and honest wage, commensurate with education and experience and in line with peer organizations and cost of living adjustments.

Goal 3: Establish opportunities for students and youth from underrepresented groups to participate in marine science

Engage students and youth of underrepresented groups in the field of marine science through mentorship, partnerships, events, and accessible content.

- A. Lead "Sea the Future", a marine science mentorship program for local junior high students
- B. Engage in partnerships with other organizations and programs that advance DEIJ in marine and environmental science
- C. Lead or participate in events promoting the participation of students and youth from underrepresented groups in marine science

Goal 4: Increase access to marine science career development opportunities for underrepresented groups

Provide funding for career development opportunities and reduce barriers to participation in marine science for students from underrepresented groups at all education levels.

- A. Maintain the annual Benioff Scholars Program in Applied Environmental Science to offer fellowships to UCSB graduate students from communities historically underrepresented in the sciences
- B. Remove barriers to key marine science skill-building opportunities for underrepresented groups (e.g., training in scientific scuba diving training and research field methods)
- C. If we have the opportunity to direct funding to external groups, consider those specifically created to support BIPOC researchers in marine science

Goal 5: Engage and amplify underrepresented voices in marine science

Increase the visibility and exposure of marine scientists from underrepresented groups by highlighting diverse experts and spokespeople in scientific working groups, media opportunities, panels, speaking engagements, social media channels, and papers and citations.

- A. Invite diverse scientists to all Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory scientific working groups.
- B. Request diversity statements in RFPs for all Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory funded projects.
- C. Maintain a list of BIPOC experts & spokespeople in ocean science who we could suggest when we're approached for media opportunities, working groups, panels, or other speaking engagements. Ensure that there are BIPOC participating and ask organizers to adjust if not.
- D. On Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory social media, aim to share at least two posts per month highlighting BIPOC work in marine science. Build this into the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory communications strategy.
- E. Encourage the use of land acknowledgements in public Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory presentations.

Goal 6: Integrate environmental justice and equity into our projects and workstreams

Incorporate and prioritize principles of environmental justice (EJ) into all new and existing projects, proposals, and communications. Ensure all team members have access to EJ resources and expand our external network to include EJ organizations.

- A. Ensure that all members of the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory have access to EJ resources including online courses and university contacts.
- B. Expand network connections to include EJ organizations and leaders. Establish professional relationships for project mentorship, development, and education.
- C. Develop and maintain the EJ tracker for current Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory projects and integrate EJ where possible through project communication materials, network expansion, and project additions.
- D. Include EJ criteria when selecting new flagship projects from crowdsourcing platform and funding proposals.
- E. Build EJ communication materials into Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory social channels and communication strategy.
- F. Ensure priorities of local communities are centered in projects. Engage and consult with community leaders early-on in the process.
- G. Decouple white/Western-dominant biases and neocolonialist principles when engaging with any partners, especially those abroad. Ensure these biases are addressed during early stages of project development.

Goal 7: Establish long-term commitment to DEIJ and anti-racism

Hold ourselves and our organization accountable to our DEIJ action plan goals by taking action, measuring progress, and evaluating impact.

- A. Maintain monthly all-hands Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory DEIJ meetings.
- B. Create a framework for how we measure progress, take action, and stay accountable to achieving these goals.
- C. Review and update this Action Plan once annually.
- D. Dedicate funding to DEIJ initiatives and programs.