Wild Animal Initiative

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

Standard Operating Procedures

Purpose

Wild Animal Initiative opposes all systems of oppression. We also believe that the wild animal welfare movement must be equitable to be effective. We put this belief into action by building justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) into our activities and operations. This document describes the aims and work of Wild Animal Initiative's JEDI Committee to ensure its ongoing transparency and accountability.

Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are:

1. Promoting an environment at Wild Animal Initiative that cultivates justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging for the benefit of all staff.
2. Ensuring that Wild Animal Initiative's actions and programs in the wild animal welfare movement model and foster a norm of counteracting systemic inequity and exclusion and contribute to dismantling structural injustice in our society.
3. Fostering transparency and accountability in how Wild Animal Initiative deals with issues of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, both within the organization and the spaces in which it operates.

Purview

The scope of the Committee's work is to ensure Wild Animal Initiative actively opposes systems of oppression. To this end, the Committee considers both internal and external dynamics. Internally, the Committee focuses on developing just, equitable, and inclusive procedures and systems within our organization. Conversely, our external priorities concern responding to undercurrents within the wild animal welfare movement and to broader societal issues.

Setting priorities and choosing projects is at the discretion of the Committee. The Committee welcomes feedback and suggestions from employees, volunteers, and external stakeholders. The Executive Director can request assistance on issues that could improve equity, justice, diversity, or inclusion in the organization.
Because the most glaring and impactful injustices in the spaces where we operate stem from racial inequality, the Committee prioritizes its focus on anti-racism.

Power

The Executive Director must respond promptly and transparently to the recommendations of the Committee. Recommendations and comments by the JEDI Committee and the organization’s response will be publicly available on the Wild Animal Initiative website, regardless of whether the Executive Director decides to follow the advice of the Committee.

Standing Responsibilities

1. Quarterly review of the Organization’s objectives, results, and critical actions (ORCAs) for progress on JEDI.
2. Quarterly publish progress on JEDI objectives, results, and activities.
3. WAI employees can seek advice, feedback, or support from Committee members on JEDI-related issues that personally affect them.

Meeting Schedule

The Committee meets quarterly on the first Thursday of the month. Members may schedule additional meetings as needed to ensure progress on objectives.

Committee Members

The Committee is staffed by self-selected employees and board members. The number of staff members on the Committee should equal or exceed the number of board members. The number of members can grow or shrink proportionally as the organization changes in size.

Power is shared equally among all Committee members. The board members do not have special privileges in determining the Committee's direction.

The board members on the JEDI Committee hold two special functions:

1. They must inform their fellow board members of JEDI issues to ensure the board can fulfill its duty of care.
2. They are responsible for hearing and investigating informal or formal JEDI-related complaints about the Executive Director.
The Executive Director will not be a member of the Committee, but rather be the target audience for the Committee’s analyses and recommendations.

**Investment**

Time spent on JEDI work is compensated at the same rate as the employee’s other responsibilities. Staff members on the Committee, regardless of whether they are full time or part time employees, use their own discretion as to the time they spend on JEDI projects.

JEDI projects are a regular part of a Committee member’s responsibilities. Committee members can discuss their time investment with their team and the Committee and adjust it if the balance between their JEDI work and other tasks grows unbalanced.

If a staff member on the Committee cannot fulfill their responsibilities within their regular hours, the nature of compensation can be re-evaluated and changed to be more fair or effective. Other options could be compensation for additional hours at their hour rate, a salary adjustment, or an annual bonus. Wild Animal Initiative budgets money for training and materials so the Committee members feel they — and the organization — can meet their JEDI objectives.

**Key Concepts**

Anti-oppression terminology can be interpreted in different ways in different contexts and cultures. At Wild Animal Initiative, we are focused on the ways these terms apply to our organization and to the systems and groups our organization is embedded in. Our definitions are chosen from that perspective.

By **diversity**, we mean that we seek to be an organization with staff from a wide range of identities, viewpoints, and lived experiences at all levels of power in the organization. We seek to foster similar diversity in our funding and target communities (such as the effective altruism, animal rights/welfare, academic, and conservation communities).

By **equity** we mean that our activities at work and in our communities are fair: appropriately targeted to the needs of the individuals they involve, not inappropriately varied on the basis of identity membership. For example, an equitable workplace would ensure that all staff members are given what they need to succeed, rather than the exact same thing regardless of their needs.

By **inclusion** and belonging, we mean that people of all identities and backgrounds feel able to participate, succeed, and be welcomed in our workplace and community. Failure to foster an inclusive environment is a
subtle form of discrimination, as it disadvantages people of particular backgrounds, identities, and personalities.

By *justice*, we mean dismantling systems that create inequity and benefit some at the expense of others — so that all individuals can participate in the wild animal welfare movement and contribute to its success freely with the same access to resources and opportunities.

We acknowledge that, worldwide, many systems perpetuate inequities between people of different identity groups, regardless of whether participants in those systems intend to be biased against others. Therefore, if we do not critically assess our own actions, we may unintentionally perpetually inequality and prejudice ourselves.