JEDI Committee Meeting Notes

2023 September 11

Attendees: Janire, Jacie, Grey, Anam, Jason, Anne, Bonnie

- Small talk
- JW: Reviewed our positions.
- Resource sharing:
  - GF: 2023 Inclusive SciComm Symposium maybe not as relevant for JEDI, maybe more so for Outreach and Comms.
- Check-in on previous action items:
  - JO created JEDI@wildanimalinitiative.org email address and sent info to JCB
  - Scope training for leadership/board re: discrimination/harassment: Board agreed to take the recommended two trainings until January 2024 board meeting.
    - AN: I brought it up in the board meeting and they agreed to take the 2 we recommended.
  - Follow-up Benefits Analysis
    - JO: This was left with the committee’s list, and I’ve discussed with Cam. I’d like more info about if there are some specific benefits that help with hiring diversity and with equity within the organization. It is slated for a session at the retreat. We’ll get a better understanding when we discuss as a group since we are an international org.
    - GF: We sent a report.
  - Run 2023 WAI diversity survey
    - We looked at list of potential questions that GF prepared.
    - GF: I think everyone has commented, and now we want to trim down and decide exactly which questions.
    - GF: Seems that demographic questions are good. We should split answer options in a way that allows for anonymity.
    - BF: Does it help to split US into East vs. West?
    - JW: Time zone seems less of a JEDI issue. Is there another way that splitting the US can impact diversity issues. Did last year’s survey ask about it?
    - GF: There isn’t a question about location.
    - BF: Does US region really tell us much? Other questions are getting better at these questions?
AN: I wonder whether can be some prejudice with regard to location. I’ve heard disparaging comments from coastal residents vs non-coastal residents as well as city vs rural residents.

GF: Different states will have different social safety nets and different cultures. But we’d have to make assumptions about these things. Requires a hypothesis.

AC: If we are getting so specific about those things in the US, we’d also have to get that specific in the EU and UK. Being more specific, like rural vs urban, etc would be more informative than the region.

GF: Agree, but it’s again a matter of not singling people out with a single answer.

JW: Since already know where everyone lives, it seems that we need to ask more specific questions.

BF: Agree, things like, do you have a social safety net, how safe do you feel in your community, etc.

JCB: Agree, looking at things like income etc, and things that we can get at in another way.

AN: Question for queue after location discussion: I’d like to hear everyone’s opinions on: What do we think of measuring “diversity of thought” in addition? I am not too familiar with that, however, in my talks with various team members it has come up that some people think we are not very diverse in that sense. I am unsure how relevant it is and unsure how to survey for it.

AC: I think to a certain extent we need a similar way of thinking because we are mission driven, but I think we also are given a lot of room for diversity of thought because we have different backgrounds regarding thinking about animals. It’s important to look at an issue from different angles, and WAI accounts for that by giving room for diverse backgrounds. We’d need to think about what type of diversity we are looking for in this question.

BF: Questions about types of thought should be decided on in regard to their potential for a person to feel comfortable voicing: philosophy (utilitarianism vs other), religion, political leaning.

GF: I have 2 questions that get to whether people feel comfortable voicing their beliefs in the comfort/belonging section.

JCB: We should really consider what we are going to do these answers (e.g. religion, political spectrum), because many people might feel uncomfortable answering these questions. We should have a plan of action if we are going to do it.

JW: All the survey questions should be optional.

AN: For questions 29 and 32, they do seem to encompass what we are trying to get at. We might want to have an open answer question where people can do a free response about a belief they feel strongly about.
GF: If we don’t add more in response to demographics, if there’s an issue shown by Q 29 and 32, we might be able to do a follow up based on that. Also, agree with Anam’s suggestion of letting people add in more identities if they want to.

JW: Based on time, should we go back and review again, etc?

BF: Continue to work asynchronously and provide comments, maybe ready to use by next meeting. Use next meeting to prepare to launch.

Conclusion: Yes, we’ll do that.

Question: AN has been doing a lot of reviews of job postings and interviewing guides, has anyone else also been involved with that? Want to make sure not just my perspective is being represented

BF: Yes, others are also doing those.

Discussion topics

Meeting frequency:

JW: I think it’s okay to meet as we are, but having more meetings for specific topics between the main meetings. Project specific meetings.

BF: Agree, the full JEDI meeting needs everyone there, and we have a lot of people, so it would be harder to have them more frequently. The project-specific meetings can be a sub-set of us.

JW: We can take notes within this doc.

GF: We need to make sure the mini-meetings shouldn’t have any major decisions made during them without everyone present. We don’t necessarily have to publish the mini-meeting notes online, since no major decision should be made. What are the logistics for those mini-meetings?

JW: We could decide those during the meeting, like “let’s schedule a meeting about X for next week” Would there be a need for a meeting that would come up between meetings.

GF: I could see it happening working on the survey, when we have a sticking point or something along the way. We could trial it and see if that works before we vote on something that would be more demanding.

AN: You can always invite me but I will most likely not accept due to my low availability. I agree we shouldn’t do too many project meetings per quarter, also in order to keep the focus and not spread ourselves too thin.

JCB: They should be an exception rather than the norm.

Conclusion: We’re good with current frequency, mini-meetings can happen on occasion when we need to work on something we discussed at a larger meeting. It should be uncommon to have a mini-meeting, only definitely when needed, not a new way of working.

JCB: Should we share the new email on the website and/or listserv? All vote yes. (JCB added to listserv, will send to Comms to add to website)
○ JW: When to have next meeting? Before end of year or after?
○ GF: I vote for before end of year.
○ JW: let’s hold a vote for DEC 7? All vote yes.

● Action items
  ○ Continue working on diversity survey
  ○ Add JEDI email to listserv and website
  ○ Next meeting: 7 December 2023