

LCBP DEI Strategic Plan

Introduction and Background

This Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan was developed by LCBP staff in collaboration with Dr. Carmen Phelps of [Project 968 Consulting](#). This plan outlines specific actions the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) will take to improve and expand our support for disadvantaged communities in the Lake Champlain Basin. This plan is an important complement to LCBP’s management plan, [Opportunities for Action](#) (OFA), which guides LCBP’s work. Actions included in this DEI strategic plan provide additional detail on how LCBP will strive to advance the goals of OFA and meet the objectives of the Federal Justice40 initiative to ensure that disadvantaged communities equitably benefit from and are included in LCBP’s work.

More information about LCBP’s DEI efforts and the current status of initiatives outlined in this DEI strategic plan are available on the [LCBP website](#).

Acronyms

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| LCBP = Lake Champlain Basin Program | DEI = Diversity, equity, and inclusion | CVNHP = Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership |
| E&O = Education and Outreach | RFP = Request for Proposals | TAC = Technical Advisory Committee |
| RR = Resource Room | | |

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Strategic Priority 1: Enhance LCBP’s internal culture to reflect our commitment to inclusion, belonging, respect, and the validation of the diverse voices and identities representing the LCBP team

| Actions | Timeline/ Status | Accountability | Desired Outcomes | Metrics |
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| 1.1 Train supervisors to encourage modeling of DEI-aligned behaviors and communication in management practices | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing annually Status: not yet started | Supervisors | Supervisors are cultivating and modeling a DEI-aligned professional culture; Supervisors are building their capacity to lead, support, and engage in LCBP’s DEI efforts; Supervisors report increased levels of competency; LCBP staff report improved internal culture resulting from supervisor development | Number of trainings conducted |
| 1.2: Engage staff in DEI capacity-building activities focused on improved professional culture and practices that support the DEI strategic plan | Ongoing annually Status: Ongoing | DEI working group; All staff | LCBP staff are building their capacity to enact DEI principles and reach desired outcomes of the DEI plan; Staff report increased competency levels in effectively executing the DEI plan; Staff report having an increased understanding of how they can support implementation of the plan | Number of DEI capacity-building activities organized for staff |
| 1.3: Engage LCBP committee members in DEI capacity-building activities focused on improved professional culture and practices that support the DEI plan | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing annually Status: not yet started | Program Director; Steering/ Executive/ Advisory Committees | LCBP committee members are building their capacity to enact DEI principles and reach desired outcomes of the DEI plan; Committee members report increased levels of competency in DEI topics and understanding of how they can support implementation of the plan | Number of DEI capacity-building activities organized for committee members |
| 1.4: Develop shared language to be used to communicate about LCBP’s DEI efforts (i.e., diversity; equity; inclusion; justice; antiracism; access; disadvantaged community) | First quarter of 2023 Status: Partially complete | DEI Working Group; All staff | LCBP staff are communicating about LCBP’s DEI efforts in a consistent and coordinated way; Staff report feeling informed and able to communicate about LCBP’s DEI efforts | Language guidance is developed and shared with staff |

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| <p>1.5: Establish a regular schedule of discussions, dialogues, and DEI planning status updates</p> | <p>Beginning in 2023 and continuing quarterly or semi-annually</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>DEI Working Group; All staff</p> | <p>LCBP staff are provided with regular opportunities to communicate experiences with LCBP’s DEI efforts, including concerns, challenges, progress, etc.; staff are cultivating a professional culture of connection, shared growth and engagement on issues of DEI relevance (internal and external) to LCBP</p> | <p>A discussion schedule is established and maintained</p> |
| <p>1.6: Develop a process to gather staff feedback about their experiences serving LCBP</p> | <p>Beginning in 2023 and ongoing annually</p> <p>Status: Not yet started</p> | <p>Program Director</p> | <p>Staff have regular opportunities to share information about their experiences at the LCBP (with option to share anonymously); LCBP is acquiring information necessary to update strategies for supporting employees; Staff report feeling supported in their roles and that LCBP is responsive to feedback</p> | <p>Number of opportunities for staff to share feedback</p> |
| <p>1.7: Create opportunities for and support staff in their efforts to engage with and serve disadvantaged communities through their roles at LCBP</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> | <p>Program Director, DEI working group</p> | <p>LCBP staff are aware of opportunities to work with disadvantaged communities and feel supported in their efforts to establish and/or participate in initiatives serving disadvantaged communities</p> | <p>Number of staff engagements with programs serving disadvantaged communities</p> <p>Number of staff-driven initiatives serving disadvantaged communities</p> |

Strategic Priority 2: Increase the accessibility of our grants process and funding opportunities to groups which are prioritizing the needs of disadvantaged communities in our region

| Actions | Timeline/ Status | Accountability | Desired Outcomes | Metrics |
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| 2.1: Adopt a definition of 'disadvantaged community' to identify communities which LCBP desires to benefit equitably from its grant programs | By early 2023; review and update annually Status: Interim definition approved Dec. 2022, further implementation ongoing | LCBP | Identify disadvantaged communities that may have historically received fewer resources and may face greater barriers in accessing LCBP grants/resources. Prioritize our engagement with these communities. | Approval of the definition and prioritization Numbers of projects driven by and/or serving disadvantaged communities competing for and being awarded funding |
| 2.2: Increase language accessibility in LCBP's grant programs | Beginning in 2023 for CVNHP grants; evaluate expansion to other categories by 2024 Status: In progress | Staff involved with grants and RFPs | LCBP grant programs are more accessible to prospective grantees who are less fluent in English | Grant materials and translation resources are available to grantees in multiple languages |
| 2.3: Collect and incorporate feedback from grant applicants or prospective applicants to ensure the grant programs are DEI-aligned and | Beginning in 2024 and ongoing | Staff involved with grants and RFPs | Grant programs are more accessible to a wider network of under-resourced organizations and/or those which have previously lacked access to funding; Barriers | Grant applicants have a method to provide feedback on |

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| <p>accessible to disadvantaged communities</p> | <p>Status: Not yet started</p> | | <p>to accessing grant funding are identified and addressed to the extent possible</p> | <p>the application and award process</p> <p>The LCBP grants/RFP process is updated and reflects greater consideration for disadvantaged communities</p> |
| <p>2.4: Provide guidance and develop resources to support the incorporation and evaluation of DEI criteria in the grant review process</p> | <p>Beginning in 2024 and ongoing</p> <p>Status: Draft resources and FAQs for grant applicants have been compiled; need to develop resources for reviewers</p> | <p>Staff involved with grants and RFPs</p> | <p>Feedback from grant applicants and reviewers on the incorporation of DEI criteria is gathered and used to refine resources for future grant cycles; Bias is mitigated in the grant review process</p> | <p>Resources are developed, provided to grant applicants and reviewers, and updated on an as needed basis</p> |

Strategic Priority 3: Leverage LCBP’s role and resources to increase representation and opportunities for professionals and students from disadvantaged communities

| Actions | Timeline/ Status | Accountability | Desired Outcomes | Metrics |
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| 3.1 Develop and maintain contact information for representatives of disadvantaged community groups to increase engagement with LCBP programs | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing Status: Not yet started | DEI working group and Communication s Team | Organizations and community members from disadvantaged communities are informed about existing educational, research, and grant opportunities offered by LCBP | Number of organizations representing disadvantaged communities in regular communication with LCBP |
| 3.2 Participate in events and communications reaching disadvantaged communities to promote LCBP employment opportunities | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing Status: Not yet started | DEI working group and E&O Team | Disadvantaged community members are more informed about employment opportunities with LCBP | Number of workforce development-oriented events/job fairs staff participate in, number of contacts received by LCBP as a result |
| 3.3 Support partners engaging in workforce-development efforts targeting disadvantaged communities | As needed Status: Not yet started | DEI working group | Existing DEI-aligned workforce- development programs are aware of LCBP as a resource and supportive partner. | Number of workforce development efforts LCBP staff help support |
| 3.4 Create and promote educational and professional development opportunities for professionals and students from disadvantaged communities | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing Status: Not yet started | E&O; CVNHP; Technical Team | LCBP promotes educational opportunities to disadvantaged communities; LCBP is a source of professional development opportunities | Number of student and young professional opportunities offered by LCBP, such as outreach events. |

Strategic Priority 4: Design and implement programs and education and outreach tools that effectively reach and reflect the voices of disadvantaged communities in our region

| Actions | Timeline/ Status | Accountability | Desired Outcomes | Metrics |
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| 4.1: Incorporate audiences from disadvantaged communities into the LCBP strategic communications plan | Beginning in 2024 and ongoing annually Status: Not yet started | Communication s Coordinator | The LCBP is expanding its reach/increasing its visibility across targeted new audiences from disadvantaged communities | Inclusion of outreach strategies targeted at disadvantaged community groups in the strategic communications plan |
| 4.2: Increase visual representation of diverse community members in LCBP/CVNHP publications and outreach materials | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing annually Status: Not yet started | Communication s and Publications Team | All community members feel represented in and can identify with LCBP programs and initiatives | LCBP publications include visual representations of a greater diversity of community members |
| 4.3: Directly engage with disadvantaged communities to determine their questions/concerns and address them through | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing based on | DEI working group, E&O team; Technical | Education and research needs of disadvantaged communities are identified and addressed; community members are involved throughout programs | Number of LCBP programs directed towards serving the needs |

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| communication, education, and/or research programs | community need Status: In progress | Team; Cultural Heritage team | | of disadvantaged communities |
| 4.4: Facilitate a comprehensive review of Resource Room books and materials in consultation with representatives of disadvantaged communities | Beginning in 2023 and ongoing as needed Status: Not yet started | Resource Room Staff | Greater diversity, accuracy, and accessibility of the RR library, exhibits, and other resources; the stories of disadvantaged communities are shared with visitors | Number of reviews conducted by members of disadvantaged communities Number of new books and materials added to the RR library because of dialog with disadvantaged community representatives |
| 4.5: Participate in seminars and trainings for educators led by representatives of disadvantaged communities | Ongoing Status: Ongoing | Resource Room Staff | Resources and educational skills for engaging diverse audiences are incorporated into Resource Room practices. Greater effectiveness and accuracy of RR interpretation | Number of seminars and trainings attended by Resource Room staff |
| 4.6: Support community liaisons to engage with disadvantaged communities | Beginning in 2023 Status: Not yet started | Staff involved with grants and RFPs | Community liaisons work with disadvantaged communities to identify needs and opportunities and to assist with administrative processes related to managing water quality-related grants (aligned with strategic priority 2); LCBP can effectively receive input (via community liaison) from disadvantaged | Engagement of disadvantaged community liaisons in multiple jurisdictions |

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