

Building Equitable and Inclusive Food Systems at UC Berkeley

FINAL REPORT TO THE UC BERKELEY EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND DIVERSITY INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM

June 7, 2016

Over the past year, the Berkeley Food Institute, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, Centers for Educational Equity and Excellence, Multicultural Education Program, and numerous other food-related organizations on campus have been working to improve campus climate through an Innovation Grant, “Building Equitable and Inclusive Food Systems at UC Berkeley.” This project has brought together various campus constituencies for conversations on the barriers and possibilities for greater equity, diversity, and inclusion in the UC Berkeley food system, whether in terms of academics, programming, or dining operations.

Background

UC Berkeley is experiencing an unprecedented surge of interest in food and agriculture, as is reflected by its academics and educational programming, student-led initiatives, and community outreach activities.¹ The growing “food movement” on campus is a strategic opportunity to address the need to transform campus climate, and to fully integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into Berkeley’s programs, capacity building, and campaigns. While the food programs on campus theoretically embrace equity and inclusion, the collaborators in this proposed project recognized that many members of the UC community do not feel that they have a place at the table. The food movement remains segmented and has a reputation of elitism. Moreover, the staff, faculty, and students in campus food initiatives do not reflect the diversity of the broader UC Berkeley community, nor of the communities who are affected by systemic injustices in the food system: for example students and faculty of color are notably missing.

Project Goals and Strategies

Learn how to facilitate conversations and effectively communicate on inclusivity, equity, and diversity within food spaces at UC Berkeley and beyond.

1. Develop emotional intelligence and a more comprehensive understanding of issues of privilege, race, class, gender, sexuality, and other forms of marginalization in food movements.
2. Identify specific operational changes to be made in UC Berkeley food-related organizations and programs, in line with the UC Berkeley Strategic Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity.
3. Identify examples of specific actions that can empower students, faculty, staff, and executive

¹Recent examples of new initiatives include the formation of the Berkeley Food Institute in 2013, creation of the UC Berkeley Food Pantry and Food Security Committee in 2014, and launch of an undergraduate food systems minor in 2015, among other new programs. Simultaneously, the UC Office of the President launched the UC Global Food Initiative in 2014.

leadership to contribute to a more inclusive climate in food systems activities/programs.

4. Distinguish UC Berkeley as a learning institution that actively promotes and realizes equity and inclusion, thus encouraging recruitment, retention, and success of diverse executive leadership, faculty, staff, and students.

Project Activities

Together, 16 UC Berkeley food-related organizations² came together to create safe spaces for open dialogue and critical thinking aimed at cultivating a climate of inclusivity and diversity in food and agricultural research, teaching, and activism at UC Berkeley. By engaging in a deeply reflective process, project participants explored the structures and systems that produce and perpetuate exclusion and racialized outcomes. While efforts to create a more equitable and inclusive campus do not have a final endpoint, we made great progress toward our goals through the activities below.

1. Working Group and Project Leadership Formation

In April 2015 the initial staff leadership team formed, and held an open meeting to envision a working group and design the student leadership positions. In May 2015, the project staff members interviewed and hired the student leadership team, consisting of two graduate student fellows and three undergraduate working group fellows from a diverse cross-section of fields of study and student activism. (See graduate student fellows description [here](#), and working group fellows description [here](#).)

The leadership team consists of:

- Project Manager: **Rosalie Z. Fanshel**, Program Manager, Berkeley Food Institute.
- Graduate Student Fellow: **Melina Packer**, PhD Student, Environmental Science, Policy, and Management.
- Graduate Student Fellow: **Kara Young**, PhD Candidate, Sociology.
- Working Group Fellow: **Luna Fassett**, Undergraduate Student, Conservation and Resource Studies and Geography.
- Working Group Fellow: **Amy Huynh**, Undergraduate Student, Urban Studies and Environmental Economics and Policy.



Leadership team, from left to right: *Elsadig, Nadia, Melina, Walker, Rosalie, Ruben, Lizbeth, Kara, Amy* (not pictured: *Luna*)

² Initial Collaborating Organizations: Berkeley Food Institute, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, Centers for Educational Equity and Excellence, Multicultural Education Program, Food Pantry, Cal Dining, Student Environmental Resource Center, Student Organic Garden Association, Berkeley Student Food Collective, GradFood, City-Food, University Health Services, Institute for the Study of Societal Issues, Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, Department of Geography, and Department of Sociology.

- Working Group Fellow: **Lizbeth Zuniga**, Undergraduate Student, Nutritional Science and Toxicology
- Staff Lead: **Nadia Barhoum**, Research Associate, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society
- Staff Lead: **Ruben Canedo Sanchez**, Research & Mobilization Coordinator, Center for Educational Equity and Excellence
- Staff Lead: **Elsadig Elsheikh**, Global Justice Program Director, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society
- Staff Lead: **Lisa Walker (a.k.a. Walker)**, Director for Cross-Cultural Student Development, Multicultural Education Program

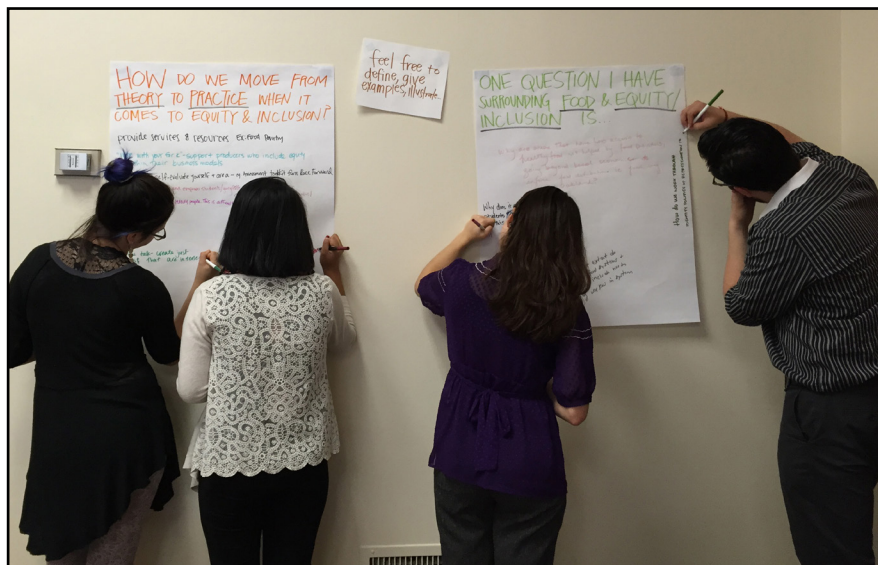
One significant success of this project has actually been the collaboration of our leadership team in itself. While each team member is involved in different aspects of food system and/or equity and inclusion programming at UC Berkeley, this is the first time we have all worked together, and drawn on our collective resources.

In August through October, 2015, the leadership team has held regular meetings, as well as two open working group meetings, to strategize the timeline, intentions, and structure of the proposed workshops. Overall 30 undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff participated in the working group meetings. We collectively decided to make the fall 2015 workshops by invitation only, for leadership of UC Berkeley units doing work related to food and/or issues of equity and inclusion on campus. Over 60 multi-positional leaders were invited and, to our delight, 45 agreed to participate in the initial workshop.

2. Fall 2015 Workshop

The first workshop was held as two half days on November 19 and December 8, 2015. Overall the workshop was successful in accomplishing our short-term goals:

- Clear awareness of definitions of: food system, food movement, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Reflection on whether we are prioritizing inclusion, diversity, and equity in our own work.
- Stronger connections among ourselves, and more synergy between units.
- Transparency in our process.
- Identify barriers to building equitable and inclusive food systems on campus.
- Practice coming up with solutions to these barriers.



Workshop activity on defining key terms

- Identify and create tangible tools and strategies.
- Make pledges to bring tools back to communities.
- Share visions of what an equitable and inclusive foodscape might look like.

40 participants attended on the first day and 25 attended on the second day. We solicited anonymous feedback between the two workshop days so as to tailor the second day based on the experience/ outcomes of the first.

During the workshop we co-generated a set of tangible resources, which were shared with all participants, and posted on the Berkeley Food Institute website, Facebook page, and Twitter account. Please see the live links here.

- [E&I Workshop Agenda](#)
- [E&I Workshop Definitions of Terms](#)
- [E&I Workshop Food Systems Presentation](#)
- [E&I Workshop Digging Deep Notes](#)
- [E&I Workshop Stop-Start-Continue](#)
- [E&I Day 2 Report Back Presentation](#)
- [E&I Workshop Identifying Challenges](#)
- [E&I Workshop Transferable Tools](#)
- [E&I Workshop Pledges](#)

3. Workshop Follow Up and Evaluation

Immediately following the fall workshops our leadership team held a thorough debriefing meeting to reflect on successes and challenges with the first set of workshops, and plan activities for spring semester. In January through March, 2016, Kara, Melina, and Rosalie held individual follow-up conversations with workshop participants to 1) Evaluate how participants were operationalizing the workshop materials, 2) Solicit feedback for further project activities, and 3) Offer support for thinking through challenges. We also held a coffee hour in February 2016 for workshop participants to further examine these three points together.

Below is a sampling of successful outcomes we heard, as a result of participating in the workshops:

“[The workshops] helped me to form relationships with people with shared interests, even beyond food, especially around the issues of inclusion and diversity in the academy and our academic communities.”

“I now see my department’s public events as an opportunity to feed students, and my catering purchases as an opportunity to support organizations such as the Berkeley Student Food Collective.”

“We are incorporating [workshop] resources ... more intentionally into [our] staff structure ... we are in the midst of a three-part meeting reviewing our vision and staffing structure, and this topic [of equity and inclusion] has been part of the review and rework.”

“[The workshops] prompted research and practice of Race Forward’s ‘Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit.’”

We also identified the following considerations and challenges, which we are working to address through our ongoing project activities.

- **Faculty involvement:** Faculty members were notably absent on the second day. In the future we will do the workshop as one full day rather than two half-days, and avoid Reading, Review, and Recitation week to help encourage faculty participation. We also reflected on the risks and challenges faculty specifically face in the university structure that would discourage participation in equity and inclusion activities. We hope the planned public forum for fall 2016 (see below) will create a good venue for faculty participation.
- **Food service labor involvement:** During the workshops we realized an oversight was not reaching out to campus food service workers for participation in the workshops, which will be corrected for any future workshops.
- **Efforts to be critically self-reflexive can come across as exclusionary:** While the working group decided to make the fall workshop by invitation only among existing campus food system leaders so as to have a space for “internal work”—a decision we explained on our website—we were very aware of the risk that this decision could be seen as contradictory to the work of equity and inclusion. The spring 2016 Student of Color Workshop (see below) was formed partially in response to this issue.
- **Terminology:** The concepts of equity, inclusion, diversity, food systems, and food justice are so large that a significant portion of our work went into just trying to understand the topics we were trying to address.
- **The challenge of dealing with campus structural constraints against enacting change, despite individual good intentions:** For example, it was noted by several participants that sustainability and social justice initiatives are difficult to support when we are living under austerity. “It’s a problem [when] the University treats food as a cost-center; it’s at odds with the wellness priority.”

4. Students of Color Community Gathering for Food Justice

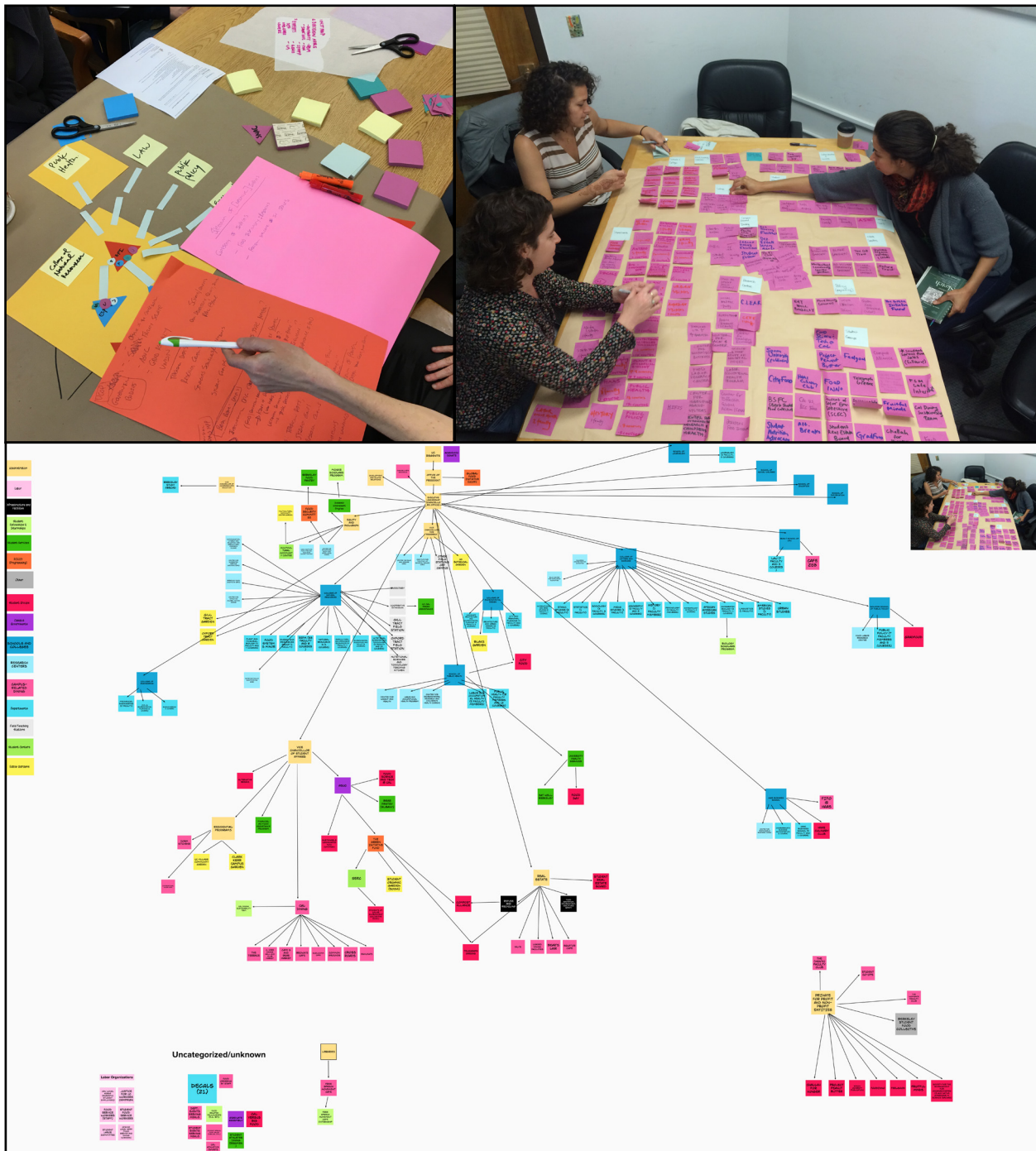
In response to the fall workshops we received the specific request from many students to have the spring 2016 workshop focus on students of color. On April 14, 2016, we held a workshop entitled “Students of Color Community Gathering for Food Justice.” (See here for workshop agenda.) Our undergraduate student fellows Amy, Lizbeth, and Luna, together with graduate student fellow Kara, facilitated this students-of-color-only space. This was a unique leadership development opportunity for the undergraduate fellows, who received guidance on facilitation from Walker. While 38 students registered in advance—each writing a statement about why they wanted to participate—only ten students came to the actual workshop. While we were disappointed in the low attendance, the workshop created meaningful dialogue for participants and opened up future collaboration between the Berkeley Food Institute and two newly formed student groups: the Anti-Oppression Committee at the Berkeley Student Food Collective and Students of Color Environmental Collective.

5. Mapmaking Activity

An ongoing theme throughout the workshops and follow up conversations was that a lack of understanding of all the players in the UC Berkeley food system was limiting our ability to create change.

As a result, we decided to dedicate much of our spring 2016 efforts toward creating a tool that maps out the UC Berkeley “foodscape.” No one had prior attempted to name all the food-related organizations, people, and resources on campus and illustrate how they intersect. This tool will be a visual knowledge base from which we can recognize resources and identify blockages to further our work toward creating a more just UC Berkeley food system.

Over the course of the spring 2016 semester the project leadership team held several mapmaking sessions. We created iterations on paper map and then moved to the digital tool Mural.ly. After discussing possible approaches to the map—such as geographical, hierarchical, and/or coded by extent of existing power—we opted to draft our beta version within the extant organizational hierarchy of UC Berkeley,



Top: early stages of identifying map elements and structure. Bottom: the beta Mural.ly map.

because that structure is driving the issues we are grappling within this project. Furthermore, simply naming all the entities involved is in itself a powerful first step. We acknowledge the limits of this hierarchical approach—on-the-ground/unconventional powers and degrees of agency are erased or elided by this kind of map-making—and in the next map iterations will dive into multiple approaches and lenses to mapmaking. (See Next Steps below).

6. Map Presentation and Project Report Back

On April 27, 2016, we held a wrap up event for the first year of the “Building Equitable and Inclusive Food Systems at UC Berkeley” project, at which we reflected on the state of UC Berkeley food and agricultural research, teaching, and activism from a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective. Melina and Kara presented a brief overview of what has been accomplished over the past academic year, as well as the project’s next steps. They also presented a working version of the UC Berkeley foodscape map and solicited feedback from the 25 attendees, which will be incorporated into the next iterations of the map.

7. Conclusions

Changing long-engrained campus cultural patterns is not easy, particularly in the context of organizational systems that discourage equity and inclusion—e.g., budget constraints, tenure reward structure, and lack of transparency of power structures. This work cannot be completed in one year. That said, we are confident that the activities outlined above have contributed to our overall project goals. Specifically:

- We raised the level of dialogue and understanding across campus, connecting issues of equity, inclusion, and diversity within food systems studies.
- We gathered ~100 active participants in the project, representing a diversity of positions and organizations throughout campus, who have each shared their learnings with their respective units. For many participants our workshops and working group meetings were the first time they had sat down with undergraduate students, graduate students, research staff, operational staff, and faculty in one room. In this process we created opportunities for underrepresented/marginalized undergraduate and graduate students to take on leadership roles. Additionally we raised awareness among people in majority groups on unintentional behaviors that lead to inequities.
- We forged valuable links between campus units addressing food insecurity among students and academic departments teaching and researching about food systems issues.
- Through case study exercises, we shared skills in developing concrete tools for addressing issues of equity and inclusion in a variety of campus organization structures (student groups, research centers, etc.).
- Embarked on a mapmaking process that will serve as a resource for food-related units across campus.

Next Steps

We are leveraging the initial grant we received from the Division of Equity and Inclusion Innovation Grant Program to continue our work in the upcoming year.

1. Conference Presentations

Kara, Melina, Rosalie, and Ruben will be presenting on this project at two important food and agriculture studies conferences this summer. We will bring our roundtable session, entitled “Building Equitable, Inclusive, and Diverse Food Systems on College Campuses: Lessons from the University of California, Berkeley,” to:

- “Scarborough Fare: Global Foodways and Local Foods in a Transnational City,” the joint Association for the Study of Food and Society/Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society/Canadian Association of Food Studies Annual Meeting, June 22-25, 2016, University of Toronto, Scarborough.
- “The Ecology of Food Systems: Engaging Interdisciplinary and Applied Education for a Just and Sustainable Agriculture,” the annual conference for the Sustainable Agriculture Education Association, July 29-31, 2016, University of California, Santa Cruz.

2. 2016-17 Graduate Student Fellows

Through garnering \$4,000 from the UC Global Food Initiative and dedicating \$4,000 in internal Berkeley Food Institute funds, we have appointed two graduate student Equity and Inclusion Fellows for the 2016-17 year. Melina Packer will continue as a fellow, and we will be joined by Hortencia Rodríguez, Dual Master’s Student, Public Policy and International and Area Studies. (See [here](#) for Fellowship description.)

3. Fall 2016 Public Forum

In fall 2016 we will hold a public panel discussion elucidating the intersections between equity and food, specific to the UC Berkeley context. We will explore such issues as: the confluence of UC Berkeley’s record budget cuts while 1 in 4 students report food insecurity, Cal Dining’s efforts to keep prices affordable while paying a living wage to their food service workers, and how the recent surge in food and agriculture research, educational programming, student-led initiatives, and community outreach activities tends not to adequately represent the full UC Berkeley population. Our panelists will draw from expertise in both the Division of Equity and Inclusion and food and agriculture studies. Planned invitees are: John A. Powell, Director, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society; Na’ilah Nasir, Vice Chancellor, Division of Equity and Inclusion; Kathryn De Master, Assistant Professor of Agriculture, Society, and Environment; Jennifer Sowerwine, Assistant Cooperative Extension Specialist, Metropolitan Agriculture.

4. Continuation of Mapmaking

We will continue to develop the UC Berkeley foodscape map into an interactive, multi-functional online tool. We will leverage the resources of undergraduate and graduate research programs across campus, creating vital student engagement opportunities. We specifically plan to work with students in the Information School’s Master of Information and Management Systems (MIMS) final project curriculum; the Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (URAP) in the College of Letters and Science; the Sponsored Projects for Undergraduate Research (SPUR) program in the College of Natural Resources; and the Geographic Information Science (GIS) minor and graduate certificate curricula.

We will present the final map in a public forum, and in meetings with strategic campus leaders, such as the Chancellor’s Office, Office of Real Estate, Division of Equity and Inclusion, College of Natural Resources, etc.

5. UC Berkeley Food Policy Council

Our project team will join efforts underway to form a UC Berkeley Food Policy Council. We will work to ensure that issues of equity and inclusion are integrated into the council’s goals and strategies.

Expense Report

2015-16 Project Expenses

Expense Category	E&I Innovation Grant Fund	Other Berkeley Food Institute Funds*	Total Expenses
Graduate Fellows: Packer and Young	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00
Working Group Fellows: Fassett, Hunyh, Zuniga	\$960.00	\$960.00	\$1,920.00
Meals	\$953.13	\$499.49	\$1,452.62
Supplies	\$86.87	\$0.00	\$86.87
TOTAL	\$10,000.00	\$1,459.49	\$11,459.49

*Note: The Berkeley Food Institute received \$2,000 from the UC Global Food Initiative for equity and inclusion activities.

See attached BAIRS reports for details on the Equity and Inclusion Innovation Grant fund expenses.

Acknowledgments

The project leadership team is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with each other provided by the grant, and for each of the workshop and working group participants. We are inspired by the ~100 individuals who have invested time and effort into participation in this project, and who are creating change toward increased equity and inclusion in their respective food-related organizations and departments. We are deeply grateful to the Division of Equity and Inclusion Innovation Grant Program for support of this project. We welcome any feedback and look forward to continuing to work with the Division in the future.