



Weitzman School Research Centers Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plans

Spring 2021

As of 2/1/21



The Architectural Archives

DEI submission for The Architectural Archives

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November 14, 2020

1. Evaluate the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity and perspective of your Center's visitors, speakers, lecturers, authors, researchers, and student participants.

Charge: Each Center must put together a plan that includes short and long term goals.

o Each Center should review the ethnic, racial and gender makeup, as well as the diversity of perspectives of past visitors, speakers, lecturers, authors, researchers and students to establish a baseline understanding of their individual diversity and diversity of perspectives.

o Each Center should then:

Develop a plan to encourage a greater diversity of perspectives and increase opportunities to participate for those whose voices have previously been underrepresented. In developing this plan, it is critical to consider that BIPOC, women, and others who are underrepresented in academia are often tasked with a disproportionate amount of service. Prioritizing inclusion while being mindful of reducing the service burden of BIPOC and women should be covered in the plan.

Consider strategies for reaching more diverse audiences, including BIPOC audiences.

Deadline for Implementation: *As noted above, your plan is due by 11/15/20. Participation data will be reviewed at the end of the fiscal year (e.g. by 6/30/21).*

Baseline Understanding

The Society of American Archivists Code of Ethics states that, "Archivists actively promote open and equitable access to records in their care as much as possible. They strive to minimize restrictions and maximize ease of access. They facilitate the continuing accessibility of archival materials in all formats." The Architectural Archives abides by this statement in providing access to our collections for research, teaching (via organized collections tours led by Archives' staff), and special exhibitions to all interested parties. Penn affiliation is not a requirement for access, nor do patrons need to present academic credentials or be subject to other types of screening prior to arrival. We have an independent entrance at ground level and do not require a PennCard swipe to access our space (at our regular public entrance).

For research: We require that patrons make an appointment as this is essential to allowing the staff to manage spaces in the reading room and to allow time for retrieval of the requested materials. It is important to note that these patrons initiate contact with us. We do not recruit or have an application process. The Archives does not gather data relevant to this DEI assessment out of long-standing policies regarding user/visitor privacy, a policy held as a core value in the museum, library and archive community.

We do track user data in the following manner for each academic year: the total number of individual researchers, the total number of research appointments (by month), the collections accessed, the broad purpose of the research (scholarly, curatorial, conservation based, general interest, etc.), in addition to data about where the researcher is traveling from. This data is used to guide our staff schedules, resource allocation, among other topics.

None of our research collections are behind a paywall, which can sometimes be the case with archival or library material. This has been a hallmark of the Archive's policy since the arrival of the Louis I. Kahn Collection in 1978 and it continues to guide our practice of equitable access to our collections (The Kahn Collection is owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is on permanent loan to Penn).

Our researchers or patrons typically number over 400 individuals a year and, historically, have mostly been non-Penn affiliated. The collections have been accessed by individuals at Penn, from the five county Philadelphia Region, the United States, and over 35 countries internationally.

For teaching: The Archives staff organizes meaningful events and opportunities for groups of students (in addition to foreign visitors who are mostly professionally allied with architecture) to engage with our collections through what we call "table-top" collections tours. We customize events to the group interest and work with group leaders to shape content. In all cases, we are responsive to group interest and make it a point to creatively engage with the collections in support of teaching.

As with researchers, groups initiate contact. We keep a record of the group affiliation, who organized the tour, the number of participants, and subject (or theme) of the tour (which collections we used). In recent years, we've conducted up to 60 tours (some at off campus sites), engaging upwards of 3,000 individuals per year. We have not gathered demographic data about participants.

Most tours are led and organized by William Whitaker, the Archives' curator. Whitaker has brought in additional voices – most often individuals who were active participants in the subject matter of the tour (i.e. Henry Wilcots, a long time staff member of the office of Louis Kahn, is an important resource – now 92 years old – has participated numerous times), to add content and perspective. These tours, by their very nature, bring in a diversity of sources and materials. Moreover, the tours are geared to be conversations between the participants and the guides. The Archives staff realizes the value of listening to a diversity of perspectives and how our visitors see our collections and what they take away as lessons from these collection tours.

For exhibitions and special programs: The exhibitions that the Archives' presents in the Kroiz Gallery (usually 2 per year), most often engage with and grow out of our own collections. Sometimes these exhibitions are motivated out of a need to acknowledge major gifts. Occasionally, we work directly with students (most often within the Historic Preservation program) in organizing an exhibition. Our exhibition programs are a "stretch" for us institutionally and would benefit from new funding to strengthen outreach capacity. For exhibitions, we keep a head count of visitors but do not account for any further categorization of that data. Our most recent exhibition, "The House We Live In", saw over 2000 visitors.

Increasing Opportunities

Not everyone who would like to use our collections in person can afford the time and expense of traveling to Penn to conduct their research. Due to covid, we have expanded our remote research services and plan to continue to do so, to the extent that our staff time allows. Covid protocols have also demonstrated that we can provide engaging collections tours via remote resources like Zoom. These experiences have made us vividly aware of the desire to break down the barriers to access imposed by Zoom during Covid. We are proud of the impact of the learning experiences we have created using objects from the collection and how that impact is magnified by when others in the same space provide

new perspectives and understanding; these moments provide us with opportunities to learn more about lasting value in design (and how we choose to define or reinvent those definitions).

We are also acutely aware of the less quantifiable barriers to entry including access to networks and cultural capital that can come with being a BIPOC or low-income student at the university. We are investing heavily in creating a digital infrastructure that promotes more equitable use of our collections and institutional knowledge. This includes the arrival of Archives Space, a collections management system, that will allow patrons to access details of our holdings as well as our accumulated knowledge and understanding of them. Archives Space will provide searchable, controlled data across the collections freely available in multiple online spaces. We expect Archives Space to be implemented by the university before the end of the fiscal year and building it will be a priority for the Archives over the next several years. In addition, we have made some of our material freely accessible through various platforms including Vermont Marble historic images and marble samples on Penn Libraries Jstor forum, collection information and images on the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings site, and the online exhibit *Journey to the Sea Ranch*. The Archives has much more digital material that could be made freely available to the public, but this requires a technical infrastructure that takes time and resources to create. We are actively planning for this infrastructure, including creating a born digital preservation and access plan jointly with archivists in the Penn Libraries and Penn Law School. In the meantime, we are committed to sharing our material through other projects and platforms when the opportunities are made available.

The Archives is increasingly working to expand outside of ourselves, into diverse communities we have not typically served or come into conversation with. Some recent initiatives have included our mapping demonstration at the Free Library of Philadelphia in fall 2019 which brought the concepts behind *Design With Nature Now* to a very public audience. We are also engaging with younger audiences through our efforts in Take Your Child to Work Day and Philadelphia Public History Day. We have not devoted sustained resources to these more publicly-focused programs, but are committing to building this into our strategic efforts going forward. Our Pew-funded project, *What Minerva Built*, which begins in January 2021, will allow us to better understand this practice of involving underrepresented groups to participate in the work we do in the archives.

2. Develop a plan for hiring more diverse staff to fill future vacancies.

- ***Charge:*** Centers should develop a plan indicating how they will do assertive outreach to the BIPOC community in order to recruit diverse qualified candidates to fill vacant staff positions as they become available
- ***Deadline for Implementation:*** Plan is due by 11/15/20

As resources become available, the Architectural Archives will prioritize the hiring of BIPOC professionals and others with diverse perspectives that fit the needs of our growing collections and programs.

Our staff is involved in numerous professional organizations related to architectural history, museums and special collections, who are all engaged in similar diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. We will continue to participate in those networks, using them to recruit qualified individuals as positions

become available. We will also continue our practice of hiring students with a diversity of backgrounds and valuing their input in our work.

3. Develop a plan for reviewing your center's research agenda to determine how it is developed (e.g. who is at the table), whether it reflects diverse perspectives, which communities or individuals it will impact, and whether it supports the School's mission by focusing on equity and social justice. Implement strategies to respond to critical gaps.

***Charge:** Each center should review past research, publications, presentations and other areas of focus to determine missing voices or perspectives, which communities might be adversely impacted or omitted, and how to ensure that some portion of the Center's research focuses on equity, social justice, and BIPOC communities. You might consider establishing partnerships and identifying reviewers to help evaluate your center's approach, identify more diverse voices and participants, identify cultural and academic biases, and provide culturally relevant feedback.*

***Deadline for Implementation:** A plan for this review should be completed by 11/15/20. The review itself and associated plan is due on 1/15/21.*

The collections of the Architectural Archives reflect the professional practice of architecture and landscape architecture, which have historically been dominated by white men and wealthy clients. This presents a collecting challenge. However, despite these limitations, the Archives has invested significant time in complicating the hero architect narrative by demonstrating in our acquisitions, exhibitions and our tabletop tours, that the design process involves many hands. And that in some cases, those hands belong to women and people of color. We have worked to amplify those stories by bringing in new collections such as those of African American architects Henry Wilcots and Walter Livingston and by investing our time in identifying stories of female designers like Jean Walton and Barbara Stauffacher which are represented in the Lawrence Halprin Collection, as we did in the recent digital project *Journey to the Sea Ranch*.

The Archive's strength is in our collections and our staff's proximity, intellectually and physically, to them. A large part of our efforts toward diversity, equity and inclusion revolve around:

1. Determining what we will collect and establishing policies and practices for how to do that work
2. Investigating the stories of marginalized and underrepresented individuals and groups found within our collections
3. Engaging with Penn students, faculty and other constituencies to access and interpret these materials

The first two action points require long-term investment in our staff and development of our physical collections so these will take time and resources. Some of this intellectual work will be done within the scope of our Pew-funded project, *What Minerva Built*, over the next two years (2021-2022), but will be ongoing as we continue to collect and come to understand the unique circumstances of their creation. We are working to ensure that a diverse group of thinking partners and collaborators are brought to the table throughout the course of the project.

Our connection to students and faculty at the university is key to our understanding of what archival materials are relevant and how, so we will continue to extend our outreach by communicating with both groups to shape our exhibition programs, tabletop tours, and digital projects.

The Archives will invest in the examination of our existing collections to identify and better understand the hidden stories of marginalized people represented here. In doing so, we aim to create a more robust collecting policy to strengthen those holdings, as well as to develop our own understanding of how to interpret them. As part of this examination, we will engage with a number of “thinking partners” to generate a more expansive view of our collections and priorities for areas of future collecting.

Another action the Archives is beginning to take to diversify our collections is the acquisition of born-digital materials which allows for more contemporary designers, who are considerably more diverse than in the past, to place their collections here. We have begun the process of creating the infrastructure that needs to be established to handle that intake.

4. Participate in school-wide anti-racism and diversity and inclusion training for faculty and staff (funded through the Dean's Office).

- ***Charge:*** Faculty, and staff should participate in school-wide anti-racist, implicit bias and/or other DEI trainings that will be scheduled in fall 2020.
- ***Deadline for Implementation:*** Trainings should take place by 1/15/21.

Our staff has attended the first two DEI trainings offered through Weitzman offered in October and November 2020. Prior to that, we participated in the Dialogues Across Difference training offered by the School in June 2019. As a staff, we are using these trainings as a framework for evaluating our own work and in planning for the future of the Archives.

Additionally, we are involved in committees of the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries, including the DEI and Member Engagement groups. The DEI committee has been on the forefront of aggregating resources for inclusivity practices in archives and libraries across the region. This committee has responded timely to local and national events which impact BIPOC in our community, including the murders of George Floyd and Walter Wallace Jr. and we stood in solidarity with the Concerned Black Workers of the Free Library of Philadelphia in their demands for a safe and equitable work environment. The Member Engagement Committee has been conducting regular Wikipedia editing events focusing on marginalized groups, using our primary source collections to provide deeper understanding of these groups and individuals.

5. Increase transparency related to the selection criteria for student employment.

- ***Charge:*** Students have asked that we make the application and selection process, selection criteria, and pay rates for available RA and TA positions more transparent. Please submit a plan outlining how you will do so at your center by 11/15/20.

- ***Deadline for Implementation:*** *Revised and more transparent processes should be in place by 1/15/21. Thank you very much for your continued partnership in these efforts. I look forward to discussing these important issues with you further and to reviewing your respective plans.*

The Architectural Archives typically employs 2-4 students, undergraduate and graduate, per semester. Student workers are very racially and culturally diverse; in the last 5 years we have employed students, both men and women, from Bangladesh, China, and Mexico, as well as a number of African American, Asian American, and Indian American students. These students work directly with the collections and often the public and provide valuable feedback to our staff in terms of our programmatic planning.

We are generally able to hire most students who apply, as long as they are studying in a relevant area (art, architecture, historic preservation, urban planning, history), have an interest in working with archival collections, and their schedule allows adequate time (at least 5 hours each week) for work. Our hourly pay rate is described in the job posting. We provide a flexible work environment and allow students to become involved in as many aspects of what we do here as they would like.

In order to provide fuller transparency, we will update our position description to include more specifics about the work we are engaging in each semester and the relevant skills we are looking for in a student worker, including covid-related adaptations to our work, if applicable. We are also committing to raising our pay rate to \$15/hour to better support our students and stand in support of the movement for a higher minimum wage.



The Kleinman Center

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

CURRENT ASSESSMENT

In 2020, the Kleinman Center team witnessed the outpouring of grief, frustration, and bravery by minority Americans, especially Black Americans, in response to pervasive racist criminal justice policies in the United States. Positioned in a research institution with the mission of influencing decision-makers and thought leaders, we recognize that racist policy exists not just within our nation's criminal justice system, but in all systems and institutions, including our own. If we are to continue leading the Penn research community on topics related to energy and climate policy, we must become a more inclusive, diverse, representative, and just organization in all respects.

Our past performance leaves room for improvement. A recent analysis of the racial and gender diversity of our blog posts, policy digests, reports, events, and podcasts over the first six years of the Center reveals that women, Black, and Latinx authors and speakers are massively under-represented. The only area where we excel is in the gender diversity of our staff: three out of four of our directors are women.

In developing this plan, it is critical to consider that BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and others who are underrepresented in academia are often tasked with a disproportionate amount of service and are often overburdened in organizational efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. This plan seeks to prioritize inclusion while being mindful of reducing the service burden of BIPOC and other underrepresented groups.

Detailed performance metrics can be found in our "2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan" along with demographic information for the communities we seek to represent: the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, the energy sector, and academia as a whole. We will continue to collect data and closely monitor our progress towards all of the goals listed below.

In order to combat racism, discrimination, and exclusion within our own institution, we must work to amplify new voices through our blogs, digest, papers, podcasts, and events. For our research to be meaningful, impactful, and motivational, it needs to come from a community of diverse faculty, students, and research staff. It needs to represent researchers from diverse backgrounds, opinions, and points of view.

In order to do our part to tackle injustice within our nation, we must effectively tackle topics of equity and justice as they relate to climate change and our energy landscape. In order to have a positive impact on the world and fulfill our mission of creating "the conditions for policy innovation that support a just and efficient transition to sustainable energy" we need to expand and strengthen our capacity to contribute to these difficult conversations.

FIVE-YEAR VISION: The Kleinman Center supports a diverse community of students and researchers and amplifies research that tackles local, national, and global energy challenges and prioritizes those related to equity and justice.

Goal 1: Recruit research assistants, fellows, certificate students, and student grantees that represent or exceed the diversity of the Penn student community

Strategies:

1. Expand our community outreach practices by building relationships with student groups around campus and advertising our student opportunities.
2. Offer consistently high-value and well-compensated student opportunities.
3. Evolve our application review process for grants, research assistant positions, the undergraduate seminar, and the certificate program.

Success Measures:

1. Increase applications from minority students by at least 10% each year and reach representation by the end of the strategic period. Develop methods for tracking progress.
2. Accepted students are from many different departments and disciplines and bring varied outlooks and viewpoints on energy.
3. Our record of student grant recipients, research assistants, certificate students, and fellows represents the diversity of the Penn student body (by 2026) and even exceeds this level of diversity.
4. Diversity and inclusion are systematically included in the review process.
5. Our application process for grants, internships, etc. are more streamlined, making it easier for students to engage with the center.

Timeframe: Changes to our application review process will take place immediately. Ongoing outreach will begin in the fall of 2021. Student diversity metrics will be collected on a semi-annual basis to ensure we are making progress towards our goals.

Challenge: Finding a way to consider diversity in the application review process in a way that checks our biases without profiling students.

Goal 2: Guests and faculty grantees exceed the racial and gender diversity of academia¹

¹ 14% of U.S. undergraduates are Black, 17% are Latinx, and 6% Asian American. National [faculty](#) breakdown is 6% Black, 6% Latinx, 11% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 54% male.

Strategies: Identify and increase efforts to reach out to researchers within the Penn community and from other organizations. Restructure the criteria we use for selecting faculty grantees and visitors to strongly consider diversity and representation.

Success Measures:

1. Our faculty grants and visitors will exceed the racial and gender diversity of academia by 2026, with steady annual progress toward this goal.
2. New and innovative ideas and research are amplified across outputs.

Timeframe: Semi-annual monitoring of the racial and gender makeup of speakers, authors, and grantees will begin immediately. By the fall 2021, we will have completed a nationwide list of possible faculty guests of color and will have updated our guest selection process.

Challenges: Much smaller pool of qualified applicants; difficult to ensure representation within a single grant or visitor period. Must be cognizant of fatigue among members of the BIPOC community.

Goal 3: Increase blog and digest contributions from a wider group of authors

Strategies: Invite external researchers and practitioners to contribute their voices to our publications and podcasts through the new “Guest Insights” program.
SEE COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 3

Success Measures:

1. Recruit at least three 3 external academics or practitioners to write a policy digest on an energy policy topic in their area of expertise each semester.
2. Offer competitive stipends.
3. Provide an alternative to the visiting scholars program for external researchers who cannot commit to a full week of time.
4. Consider the diversity of invitees with the goal that the diversity of guest authors exceeds that of U.S. academia.
5. Guest insights contribute to a diverse set of policy topics—not just issues of equity and justice.

Timeframe: Our first guest insights will be published in the fall of 2021. We will monitor the diversity of authors on a semi-annual basis.

Challenges: With only a small handful of guest authors each year, we want to ensure that we are amplifying diverse voices and diverse topics. Achieving either goal will be challenging; achieving both will require very intentional and thoughtful selection of invitees.

Goal 4: Establish a method of review of all equity and justice related research

Strategies: Identify, recruit and retain an internationally recognized expert in energy equity and environmental justice to serve as a secondary content reviewer.

Success Measures: Ensure that our own cultural and academic biases do not prevent us from providing authors with the most constructive feedback possible on their written work. We will rely upon this reviewer to provide both the author and our editorial team with feedback on how best to select and support this kind of research.

Timeframe: This is a top priority as we expand our work on these topics. An external reviewer will be identified by the end of 2020-2021 academic year.

Challenges: To acknowledge that we are not able to properly review these topics on our own also suggests we are not qualified to select this reviewer; request help from partner organizations like American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE).

Goal 5: Increase Center support of research related to equity and justice in energy

Strategies: Encourage energy equity and environmental justice topics in the grant review process, in the undergraduate seminar, in our events, and in the Center's internal research. Topics include:

- The geographic and demographic distribution of climate change impacts
- Local community impacts of energy infrastructure
- Domestic and international energy access and affordability
- Energy and resource recovery impacts on culturally or ecologically significant lands
- The impacts to workers and communities from resource extraction
- Access to clean energy financing, expertise, and knowledge resources in the U.S.

Success Measures:

1. Maintain our position as a trusted and diligent research organization, committed to delivering data-driven and impartial findings, policy recommendations, and prompts for future research.
2. Have at least 15% of publications, events, and podcast episodes deal directly with an equity and justice in energy topic.

SEE COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 2

Timeframe: By the end of 2023, at least 10% of publications will deal directly with issues of equity and justice. By the end of 2026, that number will be up to 15%.

Challenges: Effectively guiding the topic areas of written work without over-prescribing these topics.

Goal 6: Grow our staff to better represent the national workforce

Strategies: Make sure that gender and racial diversity are strongly considered in all future hiring at the Kleinman Center.

Success Measures:

All future hires will be representative of the national workforce.

Timeframe: By 2025, any Kleinman Center employees hired since 2020 will be representative of national workforce.

Challenges: We have a phenomenal team, all of whom hold diversity and inclusion as a top priority for the Center. That said, there is no significant turn-over of staff expected in the next few years, making improved representation a long-term goal.

Goal 7: Contribute to solving local Philadelphia energy challenges

Strategies:

1. Offer a community-focused summer fellowship with a regional energy organization.
2. Increase the attention given to local environmental justice and energy equity challenges in our events and publications.

Success Measures:

1. Become a more trusted and known player in tackling local energy challenges, especially those related to energy equity and environmental justice.
2. Encourage students from under-represented groups to apply to the second fellowship opportunity.

Timeframe: A Philadelphia focused fellowship will be offered by the summer of 2021. In the 2021-2022 academic year we will have at least 10% of our publications and events focus on local energy challenges.

Challenges: Achieving the outcomes of this goal without conflating our efforts to close the internal opportunity gap and to tackle national justice and equity challenges.

Goal 8: Support future energy leadership in young Philadelphians

Strategies: Partner with an area non-profit focused on science education that has existing energy programming for Philadelphia high school students. Promote and encourage the study of local and global energy challenges amongst students by sharing our knowledge and expertise.

Success Measures:

1. Reach students from communities that are under-represented in energy and academia.
2. Do our part to tackle the lack of racial and gender diversity in energy science and policy by supporting education and career development within our own minority-majority city.
3. Empower students to tackle local justice and equity issues.

Timeframe: Starting this program will take time and should not distract from our own internal work to increase diversity. A partner organization will be identified by the fall of 2022 and a program will be operational by the summer of 2023.

Challenges: The Kleinman Center has no experience working with students from outside the Penn community. We need to find a trusted partner organization that can lead this effort with our support.

Goal 9: Ensure that ENMG courses are structured with DEI in mind

Strategies: Encourage and assist instructors for ENMG courses to include diverse voices on key issues.

Success Measures:

1. ENMG instructors are able to identify reading and learning materials that are representative of a diverse group of authors, communities, and organizations.
2. ENMG courses involve as diverse a group of Penn lecturers and faculty members as possible within the subject area.
3. When the subject matter allows, students interested in energy access and equity are positioned to pursue these interests within ENMG course requirements.

Timeframe: This effort will begin for each class that we offer whenever that course next undergoes an instructor change or the next time the syllabus for that course is revised.

Challenges: We want to encourage instructors to be inclusive in their courses, without dictating the structure or source material that that instructor chooses.



The McHarg Center

**THE DESIGN JUSTICE PLAN OF THE IAN L. McHARG CENTER FOR
URBANISM + ECOLOGY IN THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
DEPARTMENT AT THE WEITZMAN SCHOOL OF DESIGN, UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA**

2020

Preamble

This plan summarizes the Ian L. McHarg Center's approach to becoming an actively antiracist institution within the department of landscape architecture. This plan is a living document that will be updated with timelines and accountability mechanisms which will be laid out in a forthcoming action plan. The plan itself is based on the ongoing efforts led by the department's Design Justice Working Group (DJWG) and fits into the Weitzman School of Design's overarching effort to (1) assess its own historic and ongoing racism and white-centering and (2) to recommend and implement policies and practices which both increase the participation and power of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students and faculty in the department and move the department towards an antiracist culture and pedagogy of landscape architecture.

The DJWG is a permanent departmental working group offering advice to the department and communicating its work to and seeking input from the LARP student and alumni body. The role of the DJWG going forward is to develop the action plan and monitor its implementation. The current members of the group and the authors of this plan are Emily Bunker, Sean Burkholder, Kat Engelman, Billy Fleming, Karen M'Closkey, Ally Nkwocha, Nick Pevzner, Michael W. Smith, Richard Weller, Sarai Williams, and Ari Vamos. All standing faculty in the department will cycle through the working group and have been given the opportunity to review and contribute to the plan.

As a unit of the department of landscape architecture, the McHarg Center's plan is based on the same principles and uses many of the same strategies, tactics, and language in order to ensure that it and the department's efforts are aligned whenever possible.

Relevant Definitions:

- **BIPOC**- Black, Indigenous AND People of Color; it is used in this plan to include all non-white people, while highlighting and recognizing the specific experiences of Black and Indigenous people in the American context of colonization and slavery. While we recognize that constructs of race vary across cultural and national contexts, we also recognize that many international students are impacted by American understandings of race as they pursue their education at Penn. In the context of this plan, BIPOC refers to all non-white members of the department community, whether domestic or international.

- **Antiracism**- Antiracism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity)

- **Racism**- A system of oppression based on an individual's or group's actual or perceived racial identity; a collection of policies that lead to racial inequality, which are substantiated by racist ideas (Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be An Antiracist*)

- **White-centering**- the belief or worldview that white culture, values and norms are the normal center of the world.

Euro-centering- the belief or worldview that Western culture, values and norms are the normal center of the world; a biased view that privileges Western civilization over non-western civilizations.

Diversity- A diverse community draws its strength from a multitude of races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, historical traditions, ages, religions, disabilities, veteran status, interests, perspectives, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

McHarg Center and DJWG Guiding Principles

There are 4 maxims guiding the Center's efforts, drawn directly from the DJWG's plan to forge an antiracist department.

- 1) Identify where and why we are personally, professionally, and institutionally not meeting the highest standards of racial justice and equity.
- 2) Make recommendations for cultural and structural change that will allow the Center to grow to attract, include, and support more BIPOC students and faculty.
- 3) Review and make recommendations for ways in which the courses, programs, and research projects undertaken in the Center can reckon with and contest the discipline's history of whiteness, incorporate and uplift marginalized histories and forms of knowledge, and center design work and pedagogy that contests the structures of injustice that bind landscape architectural practice.
- 4) Review and make recommendations for ways in which the culture of the Center can become actively anti-racist.

The Process (for the DJWG, on which the McHarg Center plan is based)

1. The draft plan began with faculty members of the Design Justice Working Group (DJWG) offering points in relation to designated topics.
 2. Feedback and input on these was then sought from all members of the DJWG leading to a second draft.
 3. DJWG members offered feedback on this second draft.
 4. With the approval of the DJWG an amended second draft was presented to all LARP faculty and students for comment.
 5. Feedback arising was discussed by the DJWG and further amendments to the plan made.
 6. With the approval of all DJWG members the final draft was presented to the Dean on November 1, 2020.
 7. The DJWG plan is adapted to the McHarg Center's operations and submitted to the Dean on November 17, 2020.
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THE 7 POINT PLAN

1. *Recruit, retain, and support more Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) among the Center's affiliated faculty, research assistants, staff members, and external collaborators.*

Intent: The Wilks Family Director, in association with the co-Executive Directors, will (1) assess and address hiring practices within the department and school that have allowed the Center's workers to remain primarily white, and (2) actively seek BIPOC candidates for available positions in Center. This work will be done in partnership with the department's Diversity Search Adviser (DSA).

Strategy: The DSA will be appointed from the standing faculty and will then also be a sitting member of the DJWG. The DSA will lead the DJWG in continual oversight of all departmental appointments and through the DJWG offer advice to the Chair accordingly. In addition to ensuring diversity protocols across all aspects of hiring processes in the department, the DSA will also advise the Center on all affiliated faculty designations and staffing hires. Research assistants and external collaborators will be reviewed annually, with individualized follow-ups for faculty struggling to diversify their RA workers and project

partners. On behalf of the DJWG the Chair and the DSA will conduct an audit of all positions in the department so as to continually identify opportunities against a timeline.

2. Review and restructure the curricula, programs, and research projects undertaken with Center funding to ensure a diverse representation of voices and perspectives, including BIPOC voices.

Intent: Decentering whiteness in the Center's courses, public programs, and research projects, and meaningfully incorporate BIPOC perspectives and forms of knowledge into its work.

Strategy: As a part of the departmental curricula review, conduct a survey of existing courses to identify both individual syllabi from affiliated faculty in the Center that lack BIPOC voices and knowledge forms and gaps in the overall curriculum that fail to prepare students to meaningfully engage with issues of race and social justice in landscape architecture and develop a plan to address them. This is intended to be a holistic examination of the intersections of race, place, history, and design throughout the coursework offered through the Center. The DJWG will monitor and report to the Director and Co-EDs on curriculum changes over time. The Center and department's efforts in this area will be informed by BIPOC design academics that have already built methodologies and practices for developing diverse and representative curricula. Based on survey results and consultation with faculty, a subgroup of the DJWG will prepare recommendations for curriculum development and/or change.

3. *Conduct ongoing, regular antiracism and diversity and inclusion training for faculty, staff, and students.*

Intent: All members of the Center's community will be expected to participate in regular trainings addressing structural oppression, antiracism and anti-oppression work, and applying this work to academic and interpersonal frameworks.

Strategy: The faculty, students, and staff within the Center will participate in regular trainings provided by the School. To inform future trainings, the DJWG will highlight, share, and incorporate ongoing work by BIPOC designers and educators related to design and social justice.

4. *External relationship-building*

Intent: The Center will continue its work building meaningful relationships with communities of color beyond the confines of the university, locating designers within the larger ecosystem of actors that collaborate to shape a community. In the long term, the Center's aim is to use its Green New Deal work (widely lauded as an example of this kind of antiracist work) as a model for the rest of its external relations.

Strategy: Working within the department, the Center will identify opportunities for significant and meaningful antiracist design research, both existing and new, that allow for faculty and student leadership and involvement. The DJWG will research and develop best practices for sustained engagement with community partners that aim to offer long-term resources to support community self-determination while simultaneously training students to practice responsible, community-accountable work. Recognizing that the time frame of a single studio does not allow for the kind of long-term relationship building necessary for this work, this effort should include partners that can sustain non-extractive multi-year engagements that are useful and beneficial to community participants.

5. Acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples, lands, and knowledge systems

Intent: The Center will adopt the department's new Indigenous acknowledgement protocols for a range of situations including formal gatherings, public events, syllabi and departmental publications. We understand the limitations of land acknowledgements and see them as a starting point for deeper and broader critical conversations about histories of colonization, genocide, and incorporations of Indigenous knowledge in relation to contemporary culture generally and landscape architecture specifically.

Strategy: The DJWG will make recommendations to the department as to meaningful acknowledgement practices for a range of situations and also form a subcommittee to spearhead discussions of colonialism in design. Design studios will play a key role not only in meaningfully acknowledging Indigenous custodianship but in preparing students to engage with historical and ongoing Indigenous experience through design work. In collaboration with Natives at Penn, Lenape leaders, and other Indigenous partners, develop a plan for how the department will go beyond land acknowledgments to critically interrogate the role of non-Native designers working on colonized land, and how Native knowledge and practices can fundamentally reshape our understandings of land, ecology, and nature. Establish a network of support for Indigenous students at Weitzman and connect them with the university's Indigenous student organizations. Endeavor to establish and maintain Indigenous student and/or faculty representation on the DJWG.



PennPraxis

PENN PRAXIS DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

January 27, 2021

The mission of PennPraxis is to support design action and thought leadership to advance inclusion, innovation, and impact in communities that design doesn't typically serve. PennPraxis does projects that demonstrate the power of interdisciplinary design, art, planning, and heritage preservation to respond to the major challenges of the built and natural environments, and the communities that inhabit them.

PennPraxis prioritizes creating work for students on “beyond the market” projects that actively promote justice and social impact and enrich the forms of training school provides. Our best projects create resources and support for diverse groups of students to work together to develop agency in the world. Praxis is a platform for collaboration that is increasingly mobilized by students and faculty to counter oppression, bias, and disregard of people from other countries; of Black, Indigenous and people of color; and of people with low incomes. We strive to act in solidarity with students, graduates and faculty working for change, and to cultivate diversity among the next generation of leaders.

As the non-profit applied practice arm of the school, PennPraxis is uniquely positioned to support interdisciplinary efforts of Weitzman students, alumni, and faculty to reduce racism, and increase equity and inclusion *outside* the university. This document outlines our action plan for 2021 and 2022, and evaluates our performance on diversity, equity, and inclusion in 2020. Both sections are focused on the external justice and inclusion mission, but also address the diversity and equity dimensions of our internal processes.

ACTION PLAN

The following section outlines Praxis’ positive agenda for project development, alliances, studio and teaching initiatives, hiring and transparency, and curation of events. Our focus is on the next 2 years, after which we will assess our progress and update the action plan.

1. PROJECTS

PennPraxis is an engine for project formation and fundraising. Through our business development efforts, we generate fee-for-service consulting contracts, and projects funded by grants and gifts. We work for local, regional, and international clients, sometimes leading a complex project with many consultants, and sometimes supporting other practices by delivering a focused scope of work. We add donor resources and talent to low-budget projects to make them more generous, to over-achieve and to attract other money to issues and communities that are not getting attention. With a tiny staff, our primary aim is to develop paid work and opportunities for faculty and students.

Our practice areas are expanding and now include Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Conservation, Planning, Housing Policy, Heritage Preservation, Community Engagement, Education, and Spatial Analysis.

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In the last 18 months, two faculty members have based their active consulting and applied research practices within PennPraxis. Randy Mason's Urban Heritage Project and Vincent Reina's Housing Initiative at Penn deepen the capacity of the organization to develop strategic equity and inclusion projects that create powerful learning experiences for students.

- Praxis will shape, seek funding, and provide coordination for worthy projects that explore the agency of design, art, planning and preservation in creating racial justice, equity, and inclusion.
- We will build on our expanding project experience over the last 2 years to develop deeper and more significant justice, equity, and inclusion projects in 2021/2022.
- Through the Design Fellows Program, we will pay students and alumni a fair wage to work on these projects, since many qualified students are struggling to pay for their education.
- Through employment opportunities on well-formed, mission-driven projects outside the university, as well as our teaching and convening, we will train students for high impact, two-way, community engagement, a prerequisite skill for justice, equity, and inclusion work.
- As a platform for interdisciplinary and interracial collaborations on justice, equity and inclusion projects, Praxis will enrich students' experience of the diversity already present in the school but distributed unevenly across the departments.
- By helping the Weitzman school do pioneering justice, equity and inclusion projects, Praxis will attract more justice activists, and students and faculty of color to the school. Initiating a positive cycle of doing, and attracting more doers based on our action, will be transformational for the school.
- Wherever possible, we will work on projects with and for Black, Indigenous and communities of color. (See Alliances goals below.)
- Praxis will identify foundations that are supportive of justice, equity and inclusion work, and develop and leverage our board of directors to build relationships with new foundations and organizations doing this work.
- Support diversity initiatives of Weitzman faculty and students with effort and advice, help find partners and funds, and when available, funding to pay Design Fellows. Praxis is a small organization with limited staff time and resources, but we are well-situated to serve as a conduit for money for DEI initiatives, offered on a competitive basis.

2. ALLIANCES

PennPraxis initiates projects for which we seek grant funding and shapes the teams and communities we propose to work with. We also form teams to respond to Requests for Proposals. Many of our ideas and strategic partnerships come from sustained relationships with communities and leaders of color.

- We will strengthen the Weitzman School's solidarity with collaborators of color in communities, and organizations and movements working for justice, equity, and inclusion. We will work to advance their agendas and projects, and to attract resources to them. We will convene Weitzman students and faculty to explore how a school of design can contribute to world-building and self-determination by specific communities of color.

- In putting teams and storylines together to compete for public commissions, we will center our proposals on justice, equity and inclusion, build unconventional teams that feature the expertise and voices of Black, Indigenous and people of color and, when we win, bring money to community-based organizations and businesses led by and employing LGBTQ professionals, women, and people of color.
- We will develop strategies to connect and cultivate the next generation of leaders, particularly our alumni who are Black, Indigenous and of color, and other alumni working for justice, equity, and inclusion.
- We will support the New Ruralists, an alumni-led collective working to increase reciprocity between urban and rural communities, and invest in rural places to reduce racism, stimulate climate action and increase economic viability because we believe these actions will benefit Black, Indigenous and people of color through improved political processes.
- PennPraxis will prioritize working with diverse external partners and continue to collaborate with and bring resources to BIPOC-led allies like Philly Thrive, The Village of Arts and Humanities, SEAMAAC, Make the World Better Foundation, the Lenape Turtle Clan, The Point CDC, Beam Center, Grounded Strategies, Slate Belt Heritage Center, and others.
- Support diversity initiatives of Weitzman faculty and students with effort and advice, help find partners and funds, and when available, funding to pay Design Fellows. Praxis is a small organization with limited staff time and resources, but we are well-situated to serve as a conduit for money for DEI initiatives, offered on a competitive basis.

3. STUDIO AND TEACHING INITIATIVES

PennPraxis staff and Senior Fellows teach and develop courses and opportunities for collaboration on justice, equity, and inclusion. Through our teaching work and choice of teaching partners and studio clients, we inject diverse voices into school conversation. This year, we are initiating a major push to create new social impact studios that build long-term relationships between the school and Black, Indigenous and communities of color.

- Praxis will offer design education, career exploration, credentialing, and community-building experiences for teenagers of color. The first iteration of our *Fresh Air Everywhere* summer studio in 2020 was led by Weitzman students in Fine Arts, Landscape Architecture, and Architecture for 150 youth in New York City. This studio is an example of a student-led Praxis project that offers low-income young people something valuable at no cost, increases awareness of our professions, increases the diversity of applicants to design schools in the future, and educates Weitzman students about communities of color. (We have already raised funds for a 2021 studio.)
- We will create an interdisciplinary committee of faculty from the five departments to find new ways to be a resource to communities of color, particularly the Black communities of Philadelphia and the Lenape Nation. The immediate focus of the group is shaping the Praxis Studio + design justice initiative (below), but it may also shape other justice, equity, and inclusion collaborations. Committee members include Ellen Neises (LARP), Eduardo Rega and Simon Kim (ARCH), Akira Drake Rodriguez (CPLN), Brent Leggs and Randy Mason (HSPV), and Sharon Hayes (FNAR).
- Praxis will lead an interdisciplinary Studio + initiative that will increase the school's capacity for service to Black, Indigenous and communities of color. This will be a 700-level studio to be offered

annually as a collaborative studio between three Weitzman departments. Methods will include longitudinal research and engagement, and new forms of interdisciplinary work on design problems of interest to communities of color. In addition to the learning goals of all Weitzman interdisciplinary studios, the aims of Studio + are 1) innovation and impact in Philadelphia communities; 2) long-term dialogue between communities of color and the University to shape new agendas and partnerships; 3) awareness among young people of color of the relevance of design, planning, art and preservation professions; and 4) engagement skills development for Weitzman students.

- Praxis will continue to support “+” dimensions of other studios and courses wherever possible. In 2020, Praxis Design Fellows were able to work on a number of projects (Danskammer power plant in Newburgh, Slate Belt, and Kingston Quarry to name a few) with non-profits and community leaders that extended studio work and made it more useful to change leaders.
- We will discuss with faculty how Design Fellows might will help leverage the work of the school to greater effect, asking questions like:
 - How can we package studio work for greatest utility to a community engaged in action?
 - Can we put the work online so more community members could access it?
 - Can we present the edited, relevant package of work to more people of color in a community to build capacity and power?
 - Can Design Fellows multiply the capacity of local leaders to write grant proposals, or find needed partners, to support implementation of projects with significant racial justice effects?
 - Can Praxis become a point of contact for faculty so community leaders can reach out to the school for help on ideas and projects they want to explore?

4. HIRING AND TRANSPARENCY

PennPraxis anticipates that we may again have many applicants for Design Fellows and that these applicants will be more diverse than in years when the job market is strong. Our focus will be on creating a fair and transparent hiring process for an unusually high number of people and positions with limited staff. Last year, 65% of the students and alumni that Praxis staff hired as Design Fellows were Black, Indigenous, Asian, or students of color, and 37% were international students.

- Praxis will advertise all Design Fellows positions online on the listings maintained by Career Services, posted on the Career Opportunities webpage, and distributed to departments and on social media. Praxis job listings include clear stipulation of hourly pay and hours.
- We will reach out to department chairs and staff to make them aware of positions, to diversify the applicant pool, and to give departments an opportunity to let us know about students in financial need or students with other special situations (undocumented students, students with concerns about maintaining their OPT status, for example).
- We will continue to lead information sessions for new students, and students in different departments to ensure that all students are aware of Praxis as a potential employer, and the location of our job listings and hiring procedures. We will reach out to Inclusion in Design and others to diversify the Design Fellows applicant pool, as we did in 2020.

- In response to an August 6, 2020 letter from international students to the Dean, PennPraxis will give special consideration to creation of job opportunities for international students in summer 2021 to help offset the financial and educational impact of reduced work opportunities for international students, which especially affect the OPT status of graduating students.
- Praxis will publish our hiring methods and outcomes each year, as we did in 2020, to make the level of diversity we achieve completely transparent. We will share this document with Inclusion in Design, chairs, and the Dean's Office.
- We believe the best way to achieve a high level of diversity of hires for the Design Fellows program will be to cultivate a mix of projects in 2021 and 2022 that reflect BIPOC students' priorities and interests and offer socially relevant learning experiences. Partnering with faculty of color to manage or collaborate on Praxis projects may also lead to high engagement of diverse students in the Design Fellows Program. We will pursue both.
- New staff hires are not currently planned, but if Praxis does hire staff, we will prioritize the development of diverse candidate pool, and the hiring of a candidate who is Black, Indigenous, Asian or of color.

5. EVENTS

PennPraxis regularly hosts events and speakers that invite students, faculty, and the community together to learn from practitioners and hear about topics of current interest. These events may be an outgrowth of a project (for example, The Farm of the Future or the Civic Infrastructure project) or an independent Praxis Dialogue.

- We will feature speakers and issues of importance to Black, Indigenous and people of color, and other marginalized groups in the curation of all events.
- We will promote these open and public events to communities of color outside the University. Wherever our budget and the format allow, we will record the event and make the content available to the public through the School's website. With the Farm of the Future project, we found this made the value of the symposium events accessible to public middle and high school students and many other communities and individuals. It also encouraged engagement of more policymakers and foundations with successful strategies for promoting food and environmental justice, and humane treatment of animals.

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN 2020

This section outlines PennPraxis' performance on diversity, equity, and inclusion in 2020, and also provides context on projects and alliances from 2018 to 2020. More detail on our projects, alliances, curriculum initiatives, hiring and recruitment of new board members is available in other documents.

1. PROJECTS AND ALLIANCES

Below we list all PennPraxis projects from 2018 to 2020, including Praxis Central, faculty consulting projects, and faculty projects that were supported by Design Fellows during Summer 2020. Many of Praxis' projects within the last three years have incorporated goals of advancing justice, equity, and inclusion—such as advancing housing equity and affordability, expressing diverse heritage stories, mapping inequities, and developing strategies to overcome them. The focus of a few projects on diversity, equity, and inclusion and on partnership with BIPOC community organizations is elaborated as an example of our approach.

Sample of PennPraxis Projects that advance justice, equity, and inclusion:

Fresh Air Everywhere Virtual Design Studio

Fresh Air Everywhere worked with a mission-aligned nonprofit (Fresh Air Fund) and three community organizations in New York as grounded, local liaisons for the project. Praxis hired almost entirely students and alumni of color to lead the project, reflecting the make up and languages spoken by the 150 low-income youth, mostly of color, that the project served.

Park at Penn's Landing Civic Engagement

Praxis hired three local community organizations representing and staffed by communities of color from North and South Philadelphia, as well as one woman and minority owned business, to co-lead the engagement strategy to inform the design of this new citywide public space. Focus groups made connections with residents that would not have been possible through traditional engagement.

Neighborhood Preservation Toolkit

This toolkit was co-developed and written based on the input of residents from twenty Philadelphia neighborhoods. Engagement was done in partnership with twenty paid community liaisons who connected with their neighbors to generate a broad base of input, collected by trusted neighbors rather than consultants.

Civic Infrastructure Research and Summit

The multi-year Civic Infrastructure project researched and described the techniques and voices involved in the creation of and maintenance of civic infrastructure for underserved communities, largely of color. The Summit brought many BIPOC voices and perspectives to the attention of policymakers, funders, planners and academics, and advanced equitable decision-making for the City of Philadelphia's Rebuild Program.

Other 2018-2020 Praxis Central Projects furthering DEI goals:

Philly Thrive Collaboration on PES Site Future
Design Advocacy Group Grays Ferry Waterfront Plan for Advocacy
New York State Park at Quarry Waters
Smart Cities PHL + Covid Data Project
Kennett Square Covid 19 Business Recovery & Outreach Plan
Lehigh Valley Catalyst
Pennsylvania Humanities Council Evaluation
Lehigh Valley Comprehensive Plan
Research on Women and the CCC
Community Design Collaborative Sacred Places | Civic Spaces Evaluation
Stamford, CT East End Neighborhood Study
Urban Action Studio+ with New Kensington CDC
South Whitehall Township Development Plan
Tuskegee Heritage Partnership (Mason)
Strawberry Mansion Housing Evaluation (Mason)
Multi-City Housing Insecurity Study (Reina)
Los Angeles Rent Relief Evaluation (Reina)
Cleveland Housing Study (Reina)
Cincinnati Housing Study (Reina)
Pennsylvania Housing Plan (Reina)
Cultural Footprint – NYC (Fichman)
Cultural Footprint – Tokyo (Fichman)
San Xavier del Bac Preservation Plan (Matero)
Housing Plan for Philadelphia (Reina)
Preserving Rwanda Genocide Memorials (Mason)
Managing Equitable Development in West Philadelphia (Kromer, Vitiello, Reina, Pritchett)
Slate Belt Design and Feasibility Study
New York Energy Transition Studio +
Chester A. Arthur Schoolyard Guidebook

2018-2020 Faculty Projects furthering DEI goals:

Black Narratives and Histories of the Caribbean Diaspora (Hartt)
Detroit Tactical Urbanism (Mason)
Galapagos Islands Design for Sea Level Rise (Van der Sys/ M'Closkey)
If We Had Had: New Orleans Identities and Bodies in Space (Hayes)
Overtime: Public Art and Preservation (Farber)
Pay Day Loans and Other Loan Options for Low-Income Households (Servon)
Pit & Quarry Research Study (Matero)
Policy and Communication for the Nighttime Economy (Fichman)
Predit, Align, and Prevent (Steif)
Salvador de Bahia (Mason and Rojas)
San Francisco Legacy Business Program (Mason)
SEPTA Station Design for Elderly and Differently Abled (Ryerson)
South Philadelphia Refinery and Data Visualization (M'Closkey)
State Gun Mapping Project with Azavea (Tomlin)
UNICEF Mongolia Energy Modeling (Braham)
Water Infrastructure Design for Patna, India (Mathur)

2018-2020 Student Led Projects that further DEI goals:

Stages of Learning (Fine Arts student-led, with student collaborators in Architecture and Landscape)

2018-2020 Praxis Central Projects without explicit DEI components:

Boonton Firehouse Preservation Plan
Glassboro Growth Management Plan
Penn Campus Updated Building Inventory
The Oval+ Evaluation with PORT Urbanism
Pennovation Programming and Research
Social Impact Collaborative with ImpactED
Chestnut Hill Conservancy Toolkit

2018-2020 Faculty Projects without explicit DEI components:

Baroque Architecture (Saunders)
Carbon Sink Site Research, Mapping and Quantifications (Pevzner)
Center for Innovation and Precision Dentistry (Stuart-Smith)
CHOP and Design Thinking Toolkits (Rottenberg)
Data Modeling and Simulation with Animation and Motion Analysis (Mosely)
Digital Design for Robotic Fabrication (Stuart-Smith)
Mapping for Environmental Law (Fichman)
Parametric Models of Complex Spatial Designs (Akbarzadeh)
Real-Time Modeling Techniques for Landform Comprehension (Van der Sys/ McCloskey)
Research for the World Park (Weller)
Salinity and Protection of Drinking Water Supply (Lassiter)
Simulation for Cooling and Net-Zero Climate Design (Aviv)
University of Pennsylvania Energy Audit (Braham)
Zhengzhou Campus Design with Futurepolis (Lin)
Morris Arboretum Energy Audit (Braham)
New Bolton Center Energy Audit (Braham)
Aree Ex Falck Urban Design Plan (Morabito)
Mott McDonald Wayfinding Study (Ryerson)
Vizcaya Heritage Plan (Matero)
Indianapolis Museum of Art (Mason)
Roche Cummins Building Evaluation (Mason)
World Bank (Guerra)
BioDesign Research (Telhan)

2. STUDIO AND TEACHING INITIATIVES

PennPraxis staff developed two courses in 2020.

Social Impact in Practice, taught by Julie Donofrio and Michael O'Bryan, is a CPLN course for gaining knowledge in methods and perspectives for community engagement. Knowing that lived experience and weighing different perspectives is essential to conveying the nuance behind this work, the course is intentionally co-taught by a practitioner of color. The first half of the course includes reading and speakers to build students' appreciation for the challenges of this work, and the second half is dedicated to

students taking on real practice projects that allow them to put their skills to use. Invited lecturers are prioritized to include BIPOC individuals and themes. This past fall, five of seven lectures were given by people of color: Molly Rose Kaufman, of the University of Orange, Sharelle Barber, Assistant Professor of Public Health at Drexel University, Thoi Nguyen of SEAMAAC, Michaela Pommels, of the Village of Arts & Humanities, and Rachel Knox of the Hyde Family Foundation. Other speakers work directly with communities of color (Andrew Goodman, Office of the 3rd District, and Ken Tomczuk, Make the World Better Foundation). Additionally, projects were selected to serve specific client needs and manage expectations for what is possible within half a semester. Several small projects begun in this class have resulted in larger projects developed by Praxis.

Ellen Neises working with Black and Indian-American teaching assistants to create a core course for landscape students called *Critical Thinking*. The course presented a much wider view of the field of landscape architecture that people commonly perceive, including many projects by Black, Indigenous and people of color, and many modes of action beyond the traditional commission. The majority of the speakers were of color or otherwise diverse (gay, women, and representing many power bases). Readings explored key justice issues for landscape thinkers including place-keeping, environmental justice, and gentrification. The course featured a high degree of conversation across cultures about race and difference and got outstanding reviews from students.

3. HIRING AND TRANSPARENCY

PennPraxis did not hire any new staff in 2020.

In an effort to provide emergency support for students during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the board, staff and faculty collaborators of Praxis created positions for 101 Design Fellows, including 92 during the summer of 2020--a substantial increase from previous years (14 in 2019, 7 in 2018). We did this by making a push to bring in new fee-for-service projects, by writing successful grant proposals, and by raising money from donors with help from our board and the Dean's Office. Hiring began in March and continued to early July, with more students and recent graduates hired as resources were found.

Of the 51 Design Fellows hired by our staff for Praxis projects, 33 (65%) were Black, Indigenous, Asian, or students of color, and 19 (37%) were international in their legal work status. For faculty projects where Praxis provided resources to support Design Fellows hired by faculty, the percentage was slightly lower: of the 50 Design Fellows hired by faculty, 27 (54%) were Black, Indigenous, Asian, or students of color, and 14 (28%) were international in their legal work status.

Overall, of the 101 students and recent graduates employed in 2020, 60 were Black, Indigenous, Asian, or people of color; 33 were international in terms of their legal work status, and even more were bi-national, foreign-born, and multi-lingual with family living in other countries. Some of the white students hired as Design Fellows on Praxis projects were first generation university students or LGBTQ, also measures of diversity. Faculty and chairs reached out to Praxis to let us know about students in financial need, including students in Lebanon, undocumented students, and others facing hardships.

In 2020, the percentage of Black, Indigenous, and people of color other than Asians was significantly higher than the percentage they represent in our student body. The percentage of international Design Fellows from China was lower this year than the percentage they represent in our student body. Many factors were in play, including differentials in the number who applied and could work during Eastern

Standard Time work hours this summer, indicators of financial need, and requirements of the projects for which we were able to bring in funding (many in disciplines other than Architecture and Landscape Architecture, which have higher numbers of Asian students).

One Praxis project was led and staffed mostly by BIPOC and international students—the virtual studio for 150 low-income youth in New York City—and this created a powerful experience for all of the 20 students and recent alumni we hired to teach and mentor, and for their students. One of the two student coordinators of Praxis’ virtual design studio was a Black artist, the other a Latina architecture student. Eight of 20 Design Fellows were Black, 5 were Latino, 2 were Asian, 1 was Lebanese, and 4 were white Americans. One of the 2 supporting faculty was Latino, the other a woman. This majority BIPOC and international team allowed us to connect with young people in 5 languages, and to bring many kinds of cultural competence to New York City kids’ summer of Covid-19 and racial reckoning. It also created a space where students and alumni of color could work together to shape a new kind of studio curriculum.

To increase transparency and awareness of job opportunities at Praxis, we took several major steps in 2020.

- In January 2020, Praxis staff presented our projects and hiring program to faculty at the all-school faculty meeting, and we invited faculty to apply for Design Fellows. We followed up through the spring with chairs and faculty, letting them know about opportunities.
- In August 2020, Praxis staff and Design Fellows led a session for all incoming students as part of the school’s New Student Orientation, introducing everyone to the organization and 3 of our major projects.
- In September 2020, Praxis worked with Kali Meeks in Career Services to create an online listing of all Design Fellows opportunities. Design Fellow positions available in Fall 2020/ Spring 2021, were posted on the Career Opportunities webpage, and distributed to departments and on social media. Listings include clear stipulation of hourly pay and hours.
- Throughout 2020, Praxis also worked closely with Communications to publish more stories about Praxis work and the roles students play in leading that work, including quotes by the students.
- We reached out to Inclusion in Design to identify more BIPOC candidates for the Design Fellows program and developed what we hope will be an ongoing relationship that supports awareness of job opportunities and recruitment.
- We produced a report to Inclusion in Design and the 2020 Design Fellows on our hiring practices and numbers and held a town hall to discuss the report. None of the nearly 50 students participating in the town hall felt there were issues regarding the diversity of hires.

4. NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND NEW SENIOR FELLOW

In 2019, PennPraxis began a push to diversify its board of directors, allowing white board members whose terms were ending to step off the board and actively recruiting new members of color. With the addition of two outstanding Black women to our board, 37.5% of the board seats are held by Black, Indigenous or people of color; 62.5% are women; and members’ skill sets are diverse. (We had invited a third new board member who was also Black, but in June he said he had to reconsider his commitment in favor of volunteering his time to Black-led organizations.)

In 2020, Praxis made Eduardo Rega Calvo, a Senior Fellow (the only new Fellow this year). Eduardo, who is originally from the Canary Islands, teaches studios and seminars in the Architecture Department that

explore strong diversity, equity, and inclusion agendas. Eduardo worked with PennPraxis to support the Fresh Air studio teaching team in Summer 2020 and participated in strategic planning meetings with our board of directors in Fall 2020.

5. EVENTS

The events of 2020 caused a sharp decrease in the hosting of events and programs worldwide, and at the Weitzman School. However, Praxis was able to bring content to design audiences in new ways—through projects rather than through singular events. The Farm of the Future Symposium provided an opportunity for community members, students, and practitioners to learn from and contribute to a project, learning alongside the client and contributing to a base of knowledge for future phases of the project. Speakers included many women and BIPOC speakers, that were not only of diverse backgrounds, but perspectives—sharing viewpoints not typically seen and heard within the design community.

PennPraxis welcomed Jerome Chou, from the Kuonkuey Design Initiative (KDI) in Los Angeles to speak in the Fall of 2020. Jerome is an activist landscape designer and planner who is skilled at putting his finger on the real problem to be solved in any change effort and has explored the merits and limits of many bases of practice over the course of his career. During *Make Your Own Projects*, Chou touched on the work of KDI, the Van Alen Institute, Flint Public Art Project, the Design Trust for Public Space, James Corner Field Operations, the Baltimore City Department of Planning, Brooklyn ACORN, and the Working Families Party, as well as his teaching experiences at Columbia University, Harvard University, USC, and the Baltimore Free University. Jerome's work experience spans landscape architecture, urban planning and community organizing in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. He has masters degrees in Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture from Harvard's Graduate School of Design.

6. TRAINING

All Praxis staff participated in diversity, equity and inclusion trainings at Weitzman and the Center for Teaching and Learning at Penn, as well as elsewhere.