The URA Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

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2020-2023 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The goals and objectives of the Equity and Inclusion[i] Plan are designed to help move the URA from its current state toward the future to which we aspire. Each strategic goal exemplifies the responsibility of the URA's role in providing the human and financial capacity to effectively carry out the objectives.

By the year 2023, the URA plans to accomplish the goals established in this strategic plan, which builds upon the URA's commitment for an equitable Pittsburgh regardless of an individual's socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, and physical ability.

The goals, objectives and strategies contained in this document were informed by the feedback from the Executive Director, Human Resources Director, the Equity and Inclusion Coordinator and the URA Board of Directors.

This strategic plan will be reviewed and updated every six months by the Director of Human Relations (HR) and The Equity and Inclusion Coordinator to ensure the proper resources are being utilized to reflect internal and external changes.

Mission

The URA acknowledges economic development has not been distributed evenly throughout the city and has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

In order to promote an inclusive work environment which ensures equal employment opportunities for all, values diversity and empowers employees, the URA has created this Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. The URA is committed to recruit, retain, and develop an inclusive high-performing workforce from all segments of society, while demonstrating diversity and valuing equal fairness to ensure the URA is inclusive and diverse.

The URA will model the way for a respectful and innovative work environment by being faithful to its values of engagement, collaboration, integrity, service excellence and inclusiveness.

Departmental Goals

The nine departments within the URA are organized into four specialty areas with different goals and objectives. Due to the unique focus of each department, the following questions from Living Cities will be used by each department to ensure the desire of an equitable outcome for every resident is reflected in all decision making from start to finish.

1. Are all racial/ethnic groups who are affected by the policy/practice/decision at the table?

2. How will the proposed policy/practice/decision affect each group?

3. How will the proposed policy/practice/decision be perceived by each group?

4. Does the policy/practice/decision worsen or ignore existing disparities?

5. Based on the above responses, what revisions are needed in the policy/practice/ decision under discussion?

By implementing the questions from Living Cities, additional opportunities are created to engage those who have been adversely impacted by past URA decisions and to establish stronger trust with the public.

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE)

The URA has a long history of diversity and inclusion within its programs and other activities. The URA encourages the full participation of minority and women business owners and professionals in this effort. The URA requires respondents to URA related opportunities/proposals demonstrate a good faith effort to obtain minority and women-owned business participation in work performed in connection with URA initiatives.

The URA acknowledges and adheres to the city's goal of 18 percent (18%) minority and 7 percent (7%) women participation. The MWBE Program Office supports this effort by sponsoring and actively promoting opportunities for MWBE talent to network and to build new partnerships with other MWBE and non-MWBE firms.

Over the next three years, the MWBE Program Office will continue to build upon its success as serving as an advocate for minority and women-owned businesses. The following goals will assist the MWBE Program Office in achieving these objectives.

Goal One: Continue to incorporate MWBE methodology into all future URA projects.

Goal Two: Host MWBE open houses throughout the city for increased MWBE participation, and to provide the opportunity for MWBE participants to meet and network.

Goal Three: Create a MWBE database that can be used both as an internal and external resource by all relevant parties for URA and non-URA projects.

Equity Working Group

Established in 2016, the Equity Working Group is comprised of URA staff members, directors and board members who have played a crucial role in creating current policies regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.

Recognizing the commitment to equity and inclusion is an ongoing process and will take time to implement new policies, the Equity Working Group will assist staff and leadership in this ongoing commitment.

Goal One (Communication): Ensure all information regarding equity and inclusion is coming from one location and leadership is clearly communicating the importance of these principles.

Objectives:

1. In conjunction with the URA Board, senior leadership, and Communications Department, establish equity mission statement and ensure agency values are clearly communicated with staff and the Greater Pittsburgh Community.
2. Oversee analysis of staff surveys to determine improvements to equity and inclusion practices.

Goal Two (Collaboration): Create an environment that encourages cross-department and city-wide communication by building upon current equity and inclusion practices.

Objectives:

1. Implement an internal communication system to update staff members on community meetings, departmental projects and services offered by the URA.
2. Creation of marketing materials located in the public drive to aid community events and employee education.
3. Provide quarterly agency wide meetings which allow interested employees to further discuss issues of equity and inclusion.

Community Engagement "ENGAGE"

ENGAGE began in the first quarter of 2018 as a self-created and unofficial internal working group. Comprised of external-facing URA staff, its goal was to revive the Hill District Quarterly Meetings. Through this work, it became clear a broader strategy was needed, both, in the Hill District and City-wide.

ENGAGE has evolved since forming in 2018 to understand and improve the URA's external-facing practices. For the next three years, the main goals of ENGAGE are as follows:

Goal One: Create community engagement protocol to be used for community meetings and additional outreach.

Goal Two: Assist with staff education to further improve current engagement practices.

Goal Three: Continue the incorporation of community representation at all stages of future projects.

Human Resources (HR)

To ensure the URA recruits, retains and develop a diverse workforce, the URA will adopt the following goals to ensure all segments of society see themselves represented within the URA, and support is provided to current and prospective staff members to foster a positive work environment.

Goal One (Recruitment): Increase authority-wide recruiting methods in order to compete for top talent in the city, state, and country.

Goal Two (Inclusive Excellence): Commit to the principle of inclusive excellence to help create an environment where employees of all backgrounds can thrive.

Objectives:

1. Establish confidential reporting system where URA employees can address concerns about equity and inclusion without fear of retaliation.

2. Provide ongoing equity and inclusion training to ensure URA employees have the best practices as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion.

3. Identify institutional barriers or challenges to EEOC compliance and ways to remove those barriers.

4. Provide oversight for the elimination of physical barriers that deny access to individuals with disabilities.

5. Create quarterly surveys to assess current URA equity measures and possible improvements.

6. Support institutional equity and inclusion initiatives through best practices process for decision making, compliance oversight, policy updates, and strategic collaboration and support regarding the URA's direction.

Goal Three (Retention): Improve employee retention by leading efforts for adoption of strategies which create a positive climate.

Objectives:

1. Establish community through the formation of employee resource groups for minorities, LGBTQIA, veterans and young professionals.

2. Deepen and strengthen consultative relationship with senior leaders, employees and the URA Board and stakeholders to support change initiatives.

3. Implement equity and inclusion metric, and input information into standard operating procedures.

4. Provide additional avenues for alternative dispute resolution to ensure equitable approaches for all employees to resolve workplace conflicts.

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Goal Four (Talent Development): Support the talent development of all URA employees through professional and career development.

Objectives:

1. Re-examine current recruitment processes to include guidelines for equity and inclusion to support the URA's best practices for hiring.

2. Implement supervisory development programs designed for new URA supervisors

3. Establish a mentor and mentee program to expand professional development expertise at the URA.

4. Introduce training opportunities for professional development at various employee levels.

5. Identify online resources pertaining to inclusion and diversity for staff members to use in addition to staff trainings.

6. Create promotional and career enhancement opportunities through the development of policies, but not limited to department and URA-only postings, non-competitive promotional actions and search exemptions for staff.

7. Develop a comprehensive communication plan to market professional development opportunities.

8. Systematically review the performance evaluation process for administrative and professional URA staff.

9. Review and develop a new leadership competency model.

Goal Five (Value Added HR): Deliver HR services, programs and communication that add value for our prospective employees, current employees and retirees.

Objectives:

1. Define and communicate HR best practices process model for all URA employees.

2. Consult with appropriate departments to develop a system in support of management and staff.

3. Assess all employee needs for workplace related issues.

4. Implement a competitive bid process for a talent management system to ensure talent management, position descriptions and on-boarding meets the URA needs.

5. Develop a systematic approach to leverage technology, streamline HR processes and eliminate paper using innovative technologies.

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6. Expand and improve benefits, compensations and promotions process.

7. Incorporate the Rooney Rule into the interview process by ensuring individuals from underrepresented demographics are not being intentionally excluded from the interview process.

8. Create standard interview procedures to ensure the best candidates for the position are being considered.

Goals of the Equity and Inclusion Plan-Who is Responsible:

GOAL 1 - WORKFORCE DIVERSITY: Recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all segments of society.

🔴 **Priority 1.1:** Design and perform strategic outreach and recruitment to reach and include all segments of society.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Collect and analyze applicant flow process and information	Develop capability to collect and analyze applicant information data	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
Coordinate outreach ad recruitment to maximize ability to a broad spectrum of potential applicants including a variety of geographic regions, academic sources, and professional disciplines	Implement action items and proper job posting processes and policies	Human Resources Director and Department Director	Ongoing
	Recruitment applicant flow process	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
	Recruit new talent by establishing job posting with a large diverse audience	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
	Establish a pool of Diversity and Inclusion Ambassadors (internal/external) to increase brand awareness of a talent pipeline for entry-level and internship positions at the URA	Human Resources Director and Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
	Establish mutually beneficial relationships with partners and stakeholder organizations	Everyone	Implemented/ ongoing
Ensure outreach and recruitment strategies are designed to draw from all segments of society when using	Build alliances with other agencies to increase capacity of diverse applicant pools and build	Human Resources Director and Equity/ Inclusion Coordinator	Ongoing

staffing flexibilities and alternative hiring authorities	sustainable talent pipelines Implement discussion around vacant positions with department directors about including a diverse pool of candidates	Human Resources Director and Department Directors	Implemented/ ongoing
Develop strategic partnerships with a diverse range of colleges and universities, trade schools, diversity and inclusion programs, and affinity organizations across the Pittsburgh region	Identify opportunities for employees to support implementation of inclusive workplace strategy Assess current partnerships and practices to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness and work more collaboratively around recruiting top talent from every background and community	Executive Director, Human Resources Director, Department Directors, Equity/ Inclusion Coordinator, Equity Working Group Human Resources Director	Ongoing Ongoing
Involve managers and supervisors in recruitment activities and take appropriate action to ensure that outreach efforts are effective in addressing barriers to employment	Institute a equity and inclusion effort to educate the workforce about equity (what it is, why it is important) and to achieve it	Equity/Inclusion Coordinator, Equity Working Group, ENGAGE	Implemented/ ongoing

🔴 **Priority 1.2:** Use strategic hiring initiatives for people with disabilities, bias of gender, minorities, LGBT, and for veterans, discuss challenges and barriers and implement a plan

to promote diversity within the workforce.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Review and discuss barriers and challenges with the Executive Director, Equity/Inclusion Coordinator, Human Resources Director and Department Directors	Implementation of action plan around employment barriers and challenges	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
Using hiring best practices techniques (considering racial minorities, people with disabilities, bias of gender, LGBT+ and veterans) as part of strategy to recruit and retain a diverse workforce	Integrate noncompetitive/special hiring authorities training into supervisory training programs	Human Resources Director and Equity/ Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
Support Executive Director, Managers, and Department Directors on hiring, retaining, and promoting a diverse workforce	Develop and deliver a course of instruction designed to strengthen talent management processes and procedures to have in-place integrated human capital	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing

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GOAL 2 - WORKPLACE INCLUSION: Cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential and further retention.

🔴 **Priority 2.1:** Promote equity and inclusion in leadership development programs, senior management and promotions.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Discuss with leadership the development of programs to determine if hiring practices draw from all segments of society and develop strategies to eliminate barriers where they exist	Finalize and implement the URA Leadership Roadmap, which outlines leadership opportunities appropriate for employees at all grade levels.	Executive Director and Human Resources Director	Implemented
	Advertise announcement of leadership programs on the URA website; throughout the URA newsletter	Human Resources Director and Communications Department	Implemented/ ongoing
Enhance mentoring program within the agency for employees at all levels with an emphasis on aspiring executive level employees	Institute formal and informal mentoring programs that encompass guided mentoring opportunities and self-directed mentoring options	Executive Director, Human Resources Director, and Department Directors	Implemented/ ongoing
Develop and implement a succession planning system for minion critical occupants which include broad outreach to a wide variety of potential leaders within the URA	Design and deploy new strategic workforce and succession planning programs that use guided inquiries and incorporate risk assessment of funding workloads, people and positions	Executive Director, Department Directors and Human Resources Director	Implemented

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Priority 2.2: Cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and fair work environment.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Use flexible workplace policies that encourage employee engagement and empowerment including, but not limited to: flexible wellness programs, and other work-life flexibilities and benefits	Establish goals for each department. Form a steering committee composed of senior executives to provide governance to the program and promote the use of fair work and flexibility across the URA	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
Support participation in employee training, employee workplace discussion and resource groups while providing such groups with access to senior leadership	Conduct training for employee groups for the purpose of framing the future role of employee groups in obtaining and keeping good talent	Human Resources Director and Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
Administer a robust orientation process for new employees	Evaluate current employee and new employee orientation programs and practices to identify opportunities to improve effectiveness	Executive Director	Implemented/ ongoing

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GOAL 3 - SUSTAINABILITY: Develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, refine approaches on the basis of such best practices processes, and engender a culture of inclusion.

🔴 **Priority 3.1:** Demonstrate leadership accountability, commitment and involvement regarding diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Affirm the value of workforce diversity and inclusion in the URA's strategic plan and include them in workforce planning activities	Communicate the URA's Diversity and Inclusion plan vision for a highly skilled workforce that reflects diversity of the communities we serve in *Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2018-2023*	Executive Director, Human Resources Director, and Department Directors	Implemented/ ongoing
Develop an agency-specific diversity and inclusion strategic plan, and implement the plan through the collaboration and coordination	Require each URA department to develop diversity, equity and inclusion plans with discussion on how to implement plans for a diverse and inclusive workplace	Executive Director, Human Resources Director, Department Directors, and Equity/ Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
Ensure all Directors, Managers, Supervisors, and employees throughout the agency have performance measures in place to ensure the proper execution of the agency's strategic plan	Implement diversity performance element for senior executives, managers, and supervisors to hold appropriate leaders accountable for the successful implementation and proof of diversity and inclusion plans	Executive Director, Department Directors and Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing
	Provide diversity and inclusion training to the URA workforce	Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
	Provide recruitment, interviewing and	Human Resources Director	Implemented/ ongoing

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
	application training to the URA management staff		
Develop and widely distribute a set of diversity and inclusion measures to track URA's efforts and provide a mechanism for refining plans	Develop and widely distribute a measurement component for diversity and inclusion plans to track progress towards a more inclusive workplace	Human Resources Director and Equity/ Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing
	Institute quarterly diversity and inclusion performance briefings to keep the Executive Director aware of progress and achievements	Human Resources Director, Equity/Inclusion Coordinator, and Equity Working Group	Implemented/ ongoing

🔴 **Priority 3.2:** Fully and timely comply with all Federal/State laws, regulations, management and Board directives, and policies related to promoting diversity and inclusion in the URA workforce.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Employ a diversity and inclusion process with metrics as a tool for the URA's workforce planning and reporting	Develop a diversity and inclusion metrics as a tool for workforce planning and reporting	Executive Director, Human Resources Director, Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Implemented/ ongoing

Priority 3.3: Involve employees as participants and responsible agents of diversity, mutual respect and inclusion.

Action Required	URA Strategic Activities	Responsible Manager(s)/ Director(s)	Target Completion Status
Participate and contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion best practices trainings, conferences, and seminars	Participate and contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion best practices trainings, conferences, and seminars	Executive Director, and Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Ongoing
Ensure all employees have access to diversity and inclusion training and education including the proper implementation of the URA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan	Utilize Diversity Change Agents to train and Educate the workforce about diversity, equity and inclusion implementation plans Provide ongoing diversity, equity and inclusion training to the URA's workforce	Human Resources Director and Equity/Inclusion Coordinator	Ongoing

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[i] **Diversity: Diversity has come to refer to the various backgrounds and races that comprise a community, nation or other grouping. In many cases the term diversity does not just acknowledge the existence of diversity of background, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation and so on, but implies an appreciation of these differences.**
Equity: fairness or justice in the way people are treated
Inclusion: The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

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