



RLF Board Statement on the Essential Role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in our Environmental Work

Resources Legacy Fund (RLF) partners broadly to build effective alliances among innovators in communities, philanthropy, government, science, business, and advocacy to protect people and natural resources. People are fundamentally at the center of our environmental work. In this complex world of seemingly compounding problems—from the climate crisis to rampant racial injustice—we must engage diverse voices and welcome inclusive approaches to achieve durable, equitable outcomes.

Energizing Our DEI Efforts

As RLF board members, we are accountable for the strategic direction and financial health of the organization. In response to the social and environmental challenges we face, it is imperative that RLF's strategic approach centers the inclusive engagement and empowerment of diverse voices and people of color to achieve results benefitting people and the planet. We believe that RLF can expand on its past work of building capacity in frontline communities to meaningfully advance justice and equity. In 2019, we took the following actions to fortify RLF's capacity to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI):

- Updated RLF's Board Governance Committee charter to include oversight of DEI
- Designated a board member to ensure staff and board coordination on DEI efforts
- Contributed resources to hire a DEI consulting firm to guide staff and board on this journey

Since laying that groundwork, we commenced DEI training, in sync with staff, and have supported the development of RLF's DEI statement and work plan. We are inspired by staff's ambition and earnest commitment to building an inclusive organizational culture and working externally with grantees and partners to advance justice and equity through our work.

Putting Our Commitments to Work

We are eager to continue financially and programmatically supporting RLF's DEI commitments through the following:

1. **Strategy:** Ensure that RLF's DEI efforts align with real-life impacts that advance equity and justice in the environmental field, promote ongoing development of new and evolving tactics, assess our collective impact, and hold ourselves accountable to continual progress.
2. **Culture:** Expand and diversify RLF's board and staff, foster an inclusive board and staff culture, create time and space for DEI board trainings and discussions, support staff DEI trainings and activities, and increase opportunities to engage with staff.
3. **Resources:** Ensure that budgeting and financial decisions, including for fiscally sponsored projects, are made with consideration of DEI goals.
4. **Donor and grantee engagement:** Work with donors to help promote and elevate DEI goals as a long-term commitment and ensure that grantees are advancing DEI.

RLF plays a unique role as an intermediary between grantees and philanthropic partners, keenly listening to the goals and values of both to find meaningful alignment. As board members, we have a responsibility to engage our donors in discussions about DEI goals and values to meet their needs and accelerate our collective impact, while holding the organization responsible to inclusive and diverse grantmaking. We acknowledge our privilege and the fact that we, especially in the environmental and philanthropy fields, are growing together to repair the injustices of the past. As we intentionally invest in building the capacity of organizations from predominantly Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, low-income, rural, and marginalized communities, new leaders will grow the environmental movement, in alignment with their communities' most pressing needs.

The DEI work we are engaging in fortifies the backbone of a premise we have long believed in and a promise we commit to actualizing: environmental work can help build racial, social, and economic equity. We look forward to working with RLF staff, and funders and partners both new and long-standing, to advance a more just and resilient world for people and nature.

Adopted and signed on June 22, 2021 by RLF Board Members:

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