



# Galveston Island Park Board of Trustees

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

### Plan

September 2021

Compiled by

Scale Strategic Solutions and Elevate Your Image



## DEI Planning Process Overview

Given the Park Board's No. 1 tourism market is the most diverse city in America (Houston), and the island has its own rich cultural history and tourism offerings, creating a plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is an important aspect in supporting the overall vitality of tourism business in Galveston.

The Park Board developed a DEI plan in an iterative nine-month process consisting of a current state review and future state planning. It involved a committee of staff and external stakeholders that operated in four subcommittees to draft the plan with the following components:

- Education and Training
- Inclusive Experiences
- Marketing
- Workforce and Organizational Leadership

This document is a result of the process.

## DEI GOVERNANCE

### The Mission Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Park Board of Trustees' mission is to promote and support tourism on Galveston Island in order to foster an environment that establishes a great place to live, work and visit.

The Park Board's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies advance the mission by:

- a. Promoting Galveston Island and all its assets and rich heritage in an inclusive manner
- b. Attracting a diversity of visitors with exemplary and inclusive experiences
- c. Cultivating belonging and equity within the Park Board so that we deliver on our mission and have opportunities to grow and lead
- d. Preparing the Park Board and its collaborators to excel in multicultural interactions with a diversity of stakeholders

We believe the DEI strategies help generate resources to carry out the mission including:

- a. Increased tourism spend
- b. Fortified local relationships to facilitate the Park Board's work
- c. Enhanced staff retention and satisfaction for a productive organization
- d. Strengthened skills of our workforce and partners to deliver quality services

## DEI Definitions

**The following working definitions are the basis for the terms referenced in this plan.**

**Diversity:** The ways we are different; having a variety of differences represented

**Equity:** Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve the same outcome

**Inclusion:** How we bring our differences together so people feel like they belong, are valued, are respected, are safe, can grow, and are empowered

## Accountability

The DEI plan has accountability that mirrors the organization’s overall strategic accountability system. The Board of Trustees and senior staff hold the ultimate responsibility for organizational DEI performance, and every staff member is responsible for implementing the DEI plan and acting in alignment with the DEI mission case.

Each of the strategies in the DEI plan should be owned by staff and stakeholders that have the authority to make decisions and allocate resources for execution. The Park Board can also forge partnerships to co-develop and implement strategies.

## DEI Key Performance Indicators

Each DEI goal area has metrics and measurements to confirm implementation and define success regarding the strategy. Below are the proposed DEI key performance indicators (KPIs) for the organization to monitor over time that cut across several strategies. These metrics are based on recommendations from the DEI committee and the project consultants. Several of the metrics reflect the organization overall and are not exclusive to DEI.

The Park Board will measure current performance in these areas as a benchmark for year one. The Park Board should set 2–3-year performance targets for these metrics by year two of the plan implementation. These metrics should be calculated annually and reported internally. Where possible with an appropriate *n*-size, the metrics should be disaggregated for performance among subgroups, including demographic groups and work units. Disaggregated data will aid in identifying equity gaps that need to be addressed.

*Table 1: Suggested DEI Key Performance Indicators*

Key Performance Indicators	Description	Notes
<b>Employee Retention: Annual Turnover Rate</b>	The percentage of the year’s headcount that turns over in the year. The denominator for headcount is the headcount at the beginning of the year plus the end of year headcount divided by two. Disaggregate the indicator by demographic subgroups also.	May also look at turnover by business unit for insights.
<b>Employee Diversity</b>	Demographic representation among staff. The percent of the employees by race, ethnicity, gender, age range/generation, and disability status.	May also look at diversity by business unit for insights.
<b>Diversity in Promotion</b>	Demographic representation among staff members who received a promotion within the year. Promotions by race, ethnicity, age range/generation, and disability status.	
<b>Leadership Diversity</b>	Demographic representation among leadership team, stakeholder committees, and trustees. Leaders by race, ethnicity, gender, age range/generation, and disability status.	May track by each leadership role and collectively among the roles of senior staff leaders, committee members, and trustees

<b>Inclusion and accessibility audit performance</b>	Audit performed by a DEI professional or organization to assess accessibility and inclusivity of recreation and tourist assets	Regional higher education institutions or DEI specialists may assist
<b>DEI professional development saturation</b>	Percent of staff who completed specific professional development training objectives	Disaggregating the indicator by demographic subgroups would provide additional insights
<b>Confirmed meetings and groups</b>	Number of confirmed meetings and groups that materialized from DEI marketing tactics	
<b>Stays from new products, events, and meetings</b>	Number of nights from new products, events, or meetings initiated by the DEI marketing tactics	

## DEI Tactical Plans

The Park Board DEI committee developed tactical plans for each of the goal areas and their related objectives:

1. **Marketing:** Attract diversity of tourists to a diversity of experiences
  - a. Diverse demographic representation and voice in advertising and marketing materials
  - b. Showcase a diversity of local assets for a more inclusive tourism offering
2. **Workforce and Organizational Leadership:** Enrich the diversity of the Park Board workforce and cultivate equitable access to leadership opportunities
  - a. Recruitment and retention of diverse staff across business units/ departments
  - b. Increased promotion and leadership development for a diverse workforce
  - c. Foster diverse stakeholder engagement in board membership
3. **Education and Training:** Develop multicultural skills/ cultural intelligence of staff and partners
  - a. Boost skills of Park Board staff to be successful in multicultural interactions
  - b. Partner with external stakeholders to educate the community for inclusive experiences
4. **Inclusive Experiences:** Create a more inclusive experience for tourists and residents
  - a. Improve accessibility for people with disabilities
  - b. Develop linguistically appropriate tourism strategies
  - c. Expose a diversity of residents and visitors to Galveston Island parks and attractions

These tactical plans are an initial foundation for implementation and should continue to be honed and refined by staff. One of the first steps is to confirm who may own various objectives and how the actions may integrate into existing activities. Please find the Tactical Plans in the Appendix.

## DEI Training and Professional Development

Based on the tactical plans for the Education and Training and Inclusive Experiences subcommittees, general best practices, and what staff expressed in surveys, an initial training plan is provided in Table 2.

The Education and Training program desires to have a DEI curriculum for staff, volunteers, and external stakeholders. The training curriculum can be a mix of offerings from consulting organizations and internally developed resources. Many of the components can also be incorporated into the onboarding process and the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program. Additional training can be offered in a planned schedule. An initial DEI training plan is proposed for the first 12-24 months of implementation.

*Table 2: Initial DEI Training and Professional Development Plan\**

TRAINING TOPICS	TRAINING OBJECTIVE	PROPOSED FORMAT	AUDIENCE
Multi-lingual skills	Develop conversational skills in languages common among visitors. Potential priority languages are Japanese, Mandarin, Spanish, and Vietnamese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Resource Guides</li> </ul>	Park Board staff and volunteers, particularly in guest relations
Inclusive language	Understand and apply language that is inclusive and respectful to stakeholders, especially referring to race, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identification, and disability status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language guides, including ways to ascertain someone's identification preferences</li> <li>• Micro-lessons for reinforcement</li> <li>• Include in onboarding</li> </ul>	Park Board stakeholders
Unconscious Bias	Learn how unconscious bias is formed and how it affects how we work and interact with others. Identifying skills and strategies to mitigate unconscious bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Prompts/ micro-learnings in organizational communication</li> </ul>	Park Board staff
Inclusive Leadership	Foster a culture that encourages collaboration and contribution at all levels Empower supervisors to manage staff to increase satisfaction and retention and review data with an equity lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Routine quarterly agenda review</li> <li>• Include in supervisor onboarding</li> </ul>	Park Board staff with supervisory responsibilities
Microaggressions and micro-affirmations	Learn how to avoid microaggression and respond constructively to microaggressions. Practices ways to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through micro-affirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Micro lessons for reinforcement</li> </ul>	Park Board staff
Diversity in Galveston's Cultural Assets	Orient stakeholders to a diversity of community recreation and tourist assets including history, places, and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training (series)</li> <li>• Basic introduction to diversity in orientation</li> </ul>	Park Board staff and Certified Tourism Ambassadors
Personal Cultural Values	Assessing and understanding individuals' cultural values and how those values influence beliefs and behaviors in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and training</li> </ul>	Park Board staff, potentially conducted by department or unit
How to have conversations about DEI topics	Give people skills and tools to have conversations related to DEI, including race and racism, generational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> </ul>	Park Board staff

	differences and ageism, LGBTQ+ discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routines/ opportunities for practice such as lunch and learns</li> </ul>	
--	---	---	--

\*Some of these training topics may be combined.

## Communicating DEI Plan

A communications approach to the DEI Plan and its implementation can be organized into communicating the plan, the progress, and the practices.

The Park Board should have a strategic rollout of the DEI Plan including:

- Introducing the DEI plan to Park Board.
- Reviewing the DEI plan in an all-staff meeting.
- Providing a comment period on the plan for staff.
- Refining the plan based on comments and feedback. For feedback that has not been incorporated, create a discussion summary about why the feedback was not applied to the plan at this time.
- Making the DEI plan available in a shared platform.
- Promoting awareness of the DEI plan in routine communications for the organization.
- Encouraging supervisors and team leaders to have debriefing conversations on the DEI plan after the all-staff presentation to answer questions of team members. Having this as an agenda item in one-on-one direct report meetings may be a good option.

The Park Board should communicate progress by:

- Providing status updates on key objectives being implemented in routine communications such as internal memos or newsletters, all staff meetings, and team/unit meetings.
- Analyzing KPIs annually and reporting progress on the indicators to staff members in staff meetings and internal memos/newsletters.
- Creating a DEI impact brief that it can share with partners and staff. The impact brief can be developed annually.

To re-enforce the implementation of the plan, the Park Board should continue to highlight DEI in action within the organization by:

- Featuring DEI practices or micro-lessons in internal communication platforms and team meetings.
- Post refreshers or reminders on organization policies or procedures (e.g., language guides, open-door policies) that advance DEI and ensure best practices.

## Additional Support

Scale Strategic Solutions and Elevate Your Image were honored to facilitate this portion of the Park Board's DEI journey. For additional services and training as you continue your DEI work, feel free to contact:

Calista Smith  
Scale Strategic Solutions  
[chs@scalestrategicsolutions.com](mailto:chs@scalestrategicsolutions.com)

[www.scalestrategicsolutions.com](http://www.scalestrategicsolutions.com)

Steven J. Baines  
Elevate Your Image  
[stevenjbaines@gmail.com](mailto:stevenjbaines@gmail.com)  
<https://www.stevenjbaines.com/>

## Acknowledgments

The following members of the Park Board staff and the Galveston community made special contributions to the process as members of the DEI planning committee. Their time, efforts, and input are greatly appreciated. We also honor the memory of Don Gulis who participated in this process.

Miguel Aleman  
Mary Beth Bassett  
Dottie Bossley  
Kelly DeShaun  
Tiffany Gonzales  
Shannon Guillot-Wright  
Don Gulis  
Jacquelyn Helton  
Schel Heydenburg

Ann Hobing  
Susan Keeble  
Raymond Lewis  
Lamica Mackey-Davis  
Sarah Reimer  
Sherry Rooks  
Hannah Walker  
Will Wright