

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

PROGRESS UPDATE

At the Port of Portland, we stand together against racism, discrimination, bigotry and intolerance. Because we know that our actions influence the socioeconomic and environmental fabric of our region, we believe that our work should help all communities prosper. That's why we focus on addressing historical inequities and why we aim to leverage our resources to make the region we love even better.

While the Port has always valued inclusion and service, our formal diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts began in 2013 when we hired two consultants to advise us. In 2018, the Port of Portland Commission approved our first-ever [social equity policy](#). Using the guiding principles from this policy, which leads with race, we asked the 18 different departments across the Port to develop their own equity action plans. Department leaders consulted with individuals from community-based organizations, other public agencies and private companies to develop their plans and set measurable goals. The common themes across these strategies became our [equity plan](#), which features three business priorities:

1. INCREASE SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION
2. CREATE AN EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING PLACE TO WORK
3. ENGAGING COMMUNITY

The Port began formal implementation of our equity plan in July 2019. We believe it is important to reflect on our progress constantly. Leaders meet each quarter to discuss and share results, and these conversations are combined with quantitative data related to our three business priorities. Below are some of the highlights from our work over the 2019-20 fiscal year.

1. INCREASE SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

We believe in the power of small businesses and work to help them bid for contracts, expand their operations and connect with mentors.

We are focused on eliminating barriers for small business participation – with a particular emphasis on women and minority-owned businesses – and applying an equity lens to rethink how we conduct business and award contracts.

For example, our Business Development and Properties team developed a quality jobs strategy, which prioritizes development partners who are committed to attracting businesses that offer quality jobs – including those that provide a living wage, training and growth opportunities and health benefits. The strategy was recently used to select a development contractor at Lot 5 of the Port-owned Gresham Vista Business Park.



Public agency contracting can be a lengthy, time-consuming process, – especially for small businesses. That is why, across all 18 departments, we set an aspirational goal of 20% Small Business Enterprise (SBE) utilization on our locally funded projects and 11% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization measured by dollars spent on our federally funded projects.

Contracts awarded (Targets)

Utilizing SBEs (local)

17%

| 20%

Utilizing DBEs (federal)

10.2%

| 11%

To further empower small businesses, we offer the support they need to better position themselves for contracts with the Port and other public agencies. In the last year, we provided technical assistance to all 30 small businesses that requested the extra support. For example, Key Electric purchased safety equipment – two lanyards and harnesses – with a \$3,500 technical assistance grant. The grant also sent an employee to a 30-hour Occupation Safety and Health Administration class. We’re grateful to have the opportunity to help small businesses like Key Electric expand what’s possible.

2. CREATE AN EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING PLACE TO WORK

Welcoming and inclusive organizations have a high-performing, innovative workforce.

Advancing racial equity and creating a welcoming and inclusive workplace requires organizations to embark upon systemic and organizational change. To get started, we closely examined our culture, how we promote and retain our employees and our demographic makeup. This work resulted in the Port developing strategies to enhance employee-centered programs, eliminate recruitment and advancement barriers, and elevate employee understanding of DEI and cultural competency.

Last year, we developed employee-centered programs focused on growing and strengthening our workforce. Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and Business Resource Groups (BRGs), a PoP Culture team, and employee wellness and training programs contribute to the Port being a dynamic organization – one that hosts cultural events for colleagues, intentionally leads tough conversations on racial equity and now has six ERGs and one BRG, each sponsored by a member of the Port’s Executive Leadership Team. In addition, ERG chairs/co-chairs receive a supplemental stipend to recognize their cultural contributions to the organization.

We regularly survey Port staff about their overall work experience and have used that survey to develop a retention and inclusivity measurement tool. We are on track or exceeding our goals around inclusivity and retention across several employee groups.

Inclusivity and Retention Rate Success Metrics

White employees	92.7%	Men	94.1%
Employees of color	93.4%	Women	89.9%
Employees with no disabilities	92.6%	Non-veterans	92.7%
Employees with disabilities	94.7%	Veterans	91.9%

A more inclusive culture starts with recruiting, which involves more than simply having a diverse slate of candidates. We apply an equity lens across the entire hiring process – looking at how we can reduce barriers for applicants, remove bias from the interview process and create a welcoming environment for new hires. Actions at all levels of the Port have led to the hiring and promotion of women and people from minority communities.

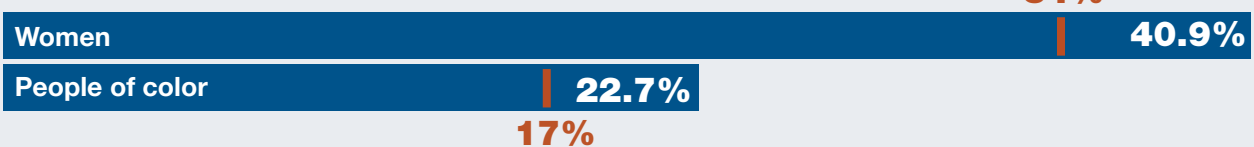
For example, the Information Technology (IT) team partnered with Human Resource Recruitment to develop an IT-specific hiring guide for its managers. The guide – now used across departments – was designed to provide tools needed for expanding networks, broadening candidate pipelines and reaching more diverse candidates. The objective of these actionable steps was to improve the hiring and promotion of women and people of color within the department. The IT department is now 26% women – close to the Port’s overall percentage of 34% – and 21% of IT employees are people of color, which exceeds the Port’s percentage of 17%.



Recruitment may be the first step, but that’s not the end. In addition to creating a welcoming space for employees, we want all Port staff to have equitable access to growth within the organization. Our goal is to ensure that the rate of promotions for women and people of color is equal to the percentage of employees who work at the Port. In the 2019/20 fiscal year, we were able to exceed this goal.

Promotion Success Metrics (Targets)

The rate of promotions is at least equal to the % at the Port as of the end of the preceding fiscal year and based on opportunity



3. ENGAGING COMMUNITY

Historically, policies and practices in Oregon have produced persistent racial inequities that resulted in unfair outcomes for under-served communities. Addressing these inequities will help further expand economic prosperity in our region.

Exchanging ideas and information with community partners helps us make better decisions. While public agencies like the Port have shaped policies through community input for decades, we now incorporate an equity lens into our planning and processes to ensure the way we seek feedback and distribute resources is equitable.

Our Community Engagement team will focus on matching department needs with diverse community expertise. Our goal is to deepen these relationships so that community organizations get as much value from the partnership as the Port. Are we sharing resources with one another? Are there equitable opportunities for feedback and meaningful ways for partners to guide our work? For example, in coordination with a series of construction projects at PDX, we engaged diverse stakeholders, including individuals living with disabilities. Their recommendations serve as the guiding principles for airport design and services, both now and into the future.

We are also working to develop a deeper understanding of how our engagement is perceived by community partners and asking for their feedback on opportunities for improvement.



CHALLENGES & NEXT STEPS

While we have made significant progress in our equity, diversity and inclusion efforts, there is still work to be done. Some employees perceive the diversity and inclusion work in a negative manner, from a fad to a change that devalues them and their background. It has been challenging for several departments to develop meaningful quantitative metrics to measure success and opportunity for improvement. In addition, department directors would like staff to take more responsibility for the implementation of their equity plans – to feel more ownership of the effort. We see an opportunity to challenge ourselves to grow and improve coordination across the Port.

The Port of Portland remains committed to long-term, systemic work to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. We know we must do more to challenge ourselves to find the racism embedded in the structures and systems of our organization and leave these discriminatory legacies behind.

Learn more about the Port’s equity work at www.portofportland.com/diversityequityinclusion.